

Societal Factors Affecting the Mental Health of Junior High School Students

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Abstract: In this study, the researchers aims to uncover the social factors that affects the students mental health of the junior high school students. The study participants are the Junior High school students of Northwestern Agusan Colleges. Based on the results, social factors contributes on the upbringing of the students and how they view their own selves. Furthermore, the results show the extent of the effects of community programs and occurrence of incidents have greatly affects the mental health of the students.

Keywords— mental health; social factor; Junior High School;

1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is crucial for overall well-being as it impacts every aspect of a person's life. According to the World Health Organization (2004), mental health is characterized as a state of well-being in which individuals have a clear understanding of their own abilities, can effectively cope with the demands of daily life, perform adequately in their work or studies, and make meaningful contributions to society.

The impact of mental health often remains obscured behind the behaviors exhibited by students, which teachers may deem as unfavorable. Instead of considering the underlying causes, teachers often react by demanding an immediate cessation of such behaviors. However, it is essential to recognize that for certain students, these actions may be beyond their control. In light of this, it becomes crucial for teachers to ask themselves the fundamental question: "What are the factors affecting the students' behavior?"

According to Erickson's Psychosocial theory, as cited in the study of Orenstein & Lewis (2022), during the early adolescence stage, "individual weighs out their previous experiences, societal expectations, and their aspirations in establishing values and 'finding themselves". Thus, making society a great factor in their upbringing. This led the researchers to query the societal factors such as crime-related incidents, poverty, violence, discrimination, and natural disasters which may contribute to the development of their personality.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

Name:

Grade Level:

Age:

Gender:

1. Have you seen or heard the following incidents in your community?

i. Crime related activities _____

ii. Poverty _____

iii. Violence _____

iv. Discrimination _____

v. Natural Disaster _____

2. From 1 to 10, rate the following Personal Attributes

a. Personality _____

b. Intelligence _____

c. Self – Esteem _____

d. Emotional Intelligence _____

e. Values _____

Research Design

The researcher initiated a survey to gather quantitative data from the students. The first part of the tool gathers the occurrences of incidents within the participant's community, and the second part of the tool gathers the data on how the students view themselves. This research targeted the whole population of Grade 7 & 8 students of Northwestern Agusan Colleges in the Academic Year 2022 -2023.

Participants of the Study

The study was conducted on the first week of April 2023 at Northwestern Agusan Colleges. The participants are from Grade 7 and 8 students regardless of the sex, and parents background.

Grade Level	Population
7	61
8	63

Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers prepared a letter to ask for permission to the School Director. After the approval, the researchers scheduled a day to conduct the survey. The researchers tabulated the data gathered.

Statistical Tool

- Frequency – this will describe the composition of the population

- Pearson Correlation Coefficient Calculator – measures the correlation of two variables
- Likert Scale – measures the participants attitudes and opinions.
- Chi square - a statistical test used to compare observed results with expected results

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the participants Age, Sex and level of Personality

Tables 1 – Sex, Personality, and Crime Related Incidents

Sex	III.1.a	I.1.i		Total
		no	yes	
female	1	27	28	55
	2	0	42	42
	3	14	199	213
	4	96	247	343
	5	70	193	263
	Total	207	709	916
male	1	60	119	179
	2	29	127	156
	3	28	147	175
	4	42	117	159
	5	43	136	179
	Total	202	646	848
Total	1	87	147	234
	2	29	169	198
	3	42	346	388
	4	138	364	502
	5	113	329	442
	Total	409	1355	1764

Chi-Squared Tests

Sex		Value	df	p
female	X ²	73.729	4	< .001
	N	916		
male	X ²	18.124	4	0.001
	N	848		
Total	X ²	73.750	4	< .001
	N	1764		

The chi-squared test conducted on the data examines the relationship between sex and crime-related incidents. The highest chi-squared value observed is 73.750, indicating a

significant association between sex and crime-related incidents with a p-value below the conventional threshold of 0.001. This suggests that there is a strong relationship between sex and the occurrence of crime-related incidents. The figure also illustrates that females are more susceptible to being affected by crime-related incidents, which may potentially influence their personality traits.

Quinn (2005) conducted a research study titled "A qualitative exploration of the effects of crime victimization for victims of personal crime" to understand the profound impact of crime on individuals' lives. The study reveals that crime can have a transformative effect, significantly influencing victims' emotions, occupations, relationships, and daily activities. Personal crime victims, in particular, are acutely aware of their vulnerability and find their lives consumed by the aftermath of the criminal event. Moreover, the research highlights the importance of offender mediation, expressions of remorse, or post-sentencing conversations as crucial elements in the recovery process for some victims. The findings shed light on the complex and multifaceted nature of the consequences experienced by crime victims, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support and intervention strategies.

Tables 2. Sex, Personality, and Poverty

Sex	III.1.a	I.1.ii		Total
		no	yes	
female	1	13	42	55
	2	0	42	42
	3	43	170	213
	4	126	217	343
	5	28	235	263
	Total	210	706	916
male	1	56	123	179
	2	31	125	156
	3	15	160	175
	4	31	128	159
	5	43	136	179
	Total	176	672	848
Total	1	69	165	234
	2	31	167	198
	3	58	330	388
	4	157	345	502
	5	71	371	442
	Total	386	1378	1764

Chi-Squared Tests				
Gender		Value	df	p
female	X ²	72.870	4	< .001
	N	916		
male	X ²	29.250	4	< .001
	N	848		
Total	X ²	57.983	4	< .001
	N	1764		

The data presented in Table 2 illustrates the relationship between sex, personality, and poverty.

Females show a higher proportion of individuals experiencing poverty compared to males, as indicated by the higher number of "yes" responses in the poverty column for females. This finding is consistent across all personality levels (1-5). The chi-squared values for both females (72.870) and males (29.250) are highly significant ($p < .001$), indicating a strong relationship between gender and poverty. These results suggest that females may be more vulnerable to poverty compared to males, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and support to address gender disparities in economic well-being.

In the study titled "The Impact of Family Poverty on Children's Development: Exploring the Influence of Social Structure and Interpersonal Relationships," Fan and Xu (2022) examine how the social structure and interpersonal relationships resulting from family poverty can significantly impact children's physical and brain development. The study highlights that the persistent stress experienced by children in poverty can lead to the replication or intergenerational transmission of poverty, ultimately influencing the social class of both parents and their children. The findings emphasize the complex interplay between socioeconomic factors, family dynamics, and child development, underscoring the predictive relationship between parents' social class and their children's social class.

Table 3. Sex, Personality, and Violence

Sex	III.1.a	I.1.iii		Total
		no	yes	
female	1	27	28	55
	2	0	42	42
	3	54	159	213
	4	139	204	343
	5	97	166	263
	Total	317	599	916
male	1	30	149	179
	2	39	117	156
	3	28	147	175
	4	15	144	159

Table 3. Sex, Personality, and Violence				
Sex	III.1.a	I.1.iii		Total
		no	yes	
Total	5	56	123	179
	Total	168	680	848
	1	57	177	234
	2	39	159	198
	3	82	306	388
	4	154	348	502
5	153	289	442	
Total	485	1279	1764	

Chi-Squared Tests				
Sex		Value	df	p
female	X ²	41.297	4	< .001
	N	916		
male	X ²	30.904	4	< .001
	N	848		
Total	X ²	28.861	4	< .001
	N	1764		

Table 3 examines the relationship between sex, personality, and violence. The chi-squared tests indicate significant associations between gender and violence. Notably, females have a lower proportion of individuals involved in violent incidents compared to males, as reflected by the higher number of "yes" responses in the violence column for males. This trend persists across all personality levels (1-5). The chi-squared values for both females (41.297) and males (30.904) are highly significant ($p < .001$), underscoring a strong link between gender and violence. These findings suggest that males may exhibit a higher propensity for involvement in violent behavior compared to females.

In the study conducted by Mohamedamin and Fatahi (2022), it was found that there is a noteworthy positive association between extraversion, neuroticism, and involvement in violent behaviors. Conversely, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness exhibited a negative correlation. Regarding demographic variables, the research indicates that boys are more prone to engage in violent activities compared to girls. The findings further demonstrate that personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness can serve as predictors of violent behavior.

Table 4. Sex, Personality, and Discrimination

Sex	III.1.a	I.1.iv		Total
		no	yes	
female	1	27	28	55
	2	13	29	42
	3	52	161	213
	4	138	205	343
	5	54	209	263
	Total	284	632	916
male	1	42	137	179
	2	39	117	156
	3	59	116	175
	4	56	103	159
	5	66	113	179
	Total	262	586	848
Total	1	69	165	234
	2	52	146	198
	3	111	277	388
	4	194	308	502
	5	120	322	442
	Total	546	1218	1764

Chi-Squared Tests

Sex		Value	df	p
female	X ²	39.876	4	< .001
	N	916		
male	X ²	12.208	4	0.016
	N	848		
Total	X ²	20.163	4	< .001
	N	1764		

Table 4 explores the relationship between sex, personality, and discrimination. The chi-squared tests reveal significant associations between gender and discrimination. Females exhibit a higher proportion of individuals reporting experiencing discrimination compared to males, as evidenced by the higher number of "yes" responses in the discrimination column for females. This pattern holds across different personality levels (1-5). The chi-squared value for females (39.876) is highly significant ($p < .001$), indicating a strong link between gender and discrimination. However, the chi-squared value for males (12.208) is also significant ($p = 0.016$), though to a lesser extent. These findings suggest that both genders experience discrimination, but females may face a higher prevalence of discriminatory incidents. In the study conducted by Suldo et al. (2013), it was hypothesized that participants' experiences with racism and

discrimination would have distinct effects on their personality traits, which, in turn, would contribute to increased rates of recidivism. Specifically, the research indicated that experiences of racism and discrimination could lead to the development of low warmth, excessive dominance, hypervigilance, low rule-consciousness, and low self-control. These personality traits were believed to influence the likelihood of repeat offending. The original predictions of the study suggested a direct impact of racism and discrimination experiences on an individual's personality, ultimately affecting their propensity for recidivism.

Table 5. Sex, Personality and Natural Disaster

Sex	III.1.a	I.1.v		Total
		no	yes	
female	1	13	42	55
	2	0	42	42
	3	53	160	213
	4	85	258	343
	5	27	236	263
	Total	178	738	916
male	1	71	108	179
	2	29	127	156
	3	28	147	175
	4	31	128	159
	5	73	106	179
	Total	232	616	848
Total	1	84	150	234
	2	29	169	198
	3	81	307	388
	4	116	386	502
	5	100	342	442
	Total	410	1354	1764

Chi-Squared Tests

Sex		Value	df	p
female	X ²	35.175	4	< .001
	N	916		
male	X ²	52.211	4	< .001
	N	848		
Total	X ²	30.524	4	< .001
	N	1764		

Chi-Squared Tests

Sex	Value	df	p
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Table 5 examines the relationship between sex, personality, and natural disasters. The chi-squared tests reveal significant associations between gender and natural disasters. Females show a higher proportion of individuals reporting experiencing natural disasters compared to males, as evident from the higher number of "yes" responses in the natural disaster column for females. This pattern holds across different personality levels (1-5). The chi-squared value for females (35.175) is highly significant ($p < .001$), indicating a strong relationship between gender and natural disasters. Similarly, the chi-squared value for males (52.211) is also highly significant ($p < .001$). These findings suggest that both genders are affected by natural disasters, with no clear distinction in vulnerability.

In the research conducted by Makwana (2019), it was observed that emotional instability, stress reactions, anxiety, trauma, and other psychological symptoms are commonly experienced after disasters and traumatic events. These psychological effects have significant implications for individuals as well as communities. The study highlights the importance of resilience as a crucial factor in the recovery process and emphasizes the effectiveness of post-intervention techniques and individual strengths in facilitating healing and recovery. However, it is worth noting that in certain cases, recovery may be incomplete, resulting in the persistence of severe psychotic symptoms.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that societal factors have significant effects on the mental health of the participants, thus, the following points emerged from the present study:

1. There are strong relationship between sex and crime-related incidents and that contributes greatly to the upbringing of the participants.
2. Females participants shows higher proportion of individual experiencing poverty.
3. Male participants shows higher tendency to be involved in violence.
4. Female participants shows higher proportion of experiencing discrimination in the society.
5. Female participants shows higher proportion of being affected by natural disasters.

The result of the study will make several worthy applications to teachers that will handle the students to fully understand how they develop and what influence their characters as an individual.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

With the data gathered and discussed, the researchers recommends the following:

Schools may give emphasis on the factors that may have caused a student to behave in a certain way.

Teachers as the second parent may seek advice from the guidance counselor or schools in cases that a student exhibits unwanted behavior.

Further experimental investigations are needed to estimate the extent of the societal factors to students.

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