Post-Millennials Stressors, Ego Resilience, Gratitude, and Life Satisfaction: The Basis for Mental Health Program

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ABSTRACT
Resilient and grateful individuals experienced a high level of adversity and demonstrated a high level of competence and adaptation. The study aimed to determine the respondents' sources of stress, while knowing the level of ego resiliency, life satisfaction, and gratefulness as a basis for a contextualized mental health program. It used a descriptive-exploratory research design. The researchers utilized an adapted instrument called the Revised University Student's Hassle Scale (RUSHS) to gather the needed data. The respondents of the study were the 278 post-millennials, who are currently enrolled at Capiz State University. The constructs of the study focused on the sources of stress, ego resiliency, gratitude, and life satisfaction of the respondents. The findings revealed that stresses experienced were the academic and personal related. Their ego resilience was moderately high, but it was affected by various factors that they could not handle, which directly affect their life satisfaction and their being grateful and ungrateful of the things happening in the world and their personal life.

Keywords: Bayani Hub, Ego Resiliency, Gratitude, Life Satisfaction, Mental Health, Post-Millennials, Stressors

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past years, psychology has shifted its concentration from treating and preventing mental disorders, which could aid individuals in attaining well-being and living a fulfilled and satisfied life. As proposed, well-being goes beyond the absence of illness such as aspiration, enthusiasm, and confidence for life [31]. Positive psychology, an approach concentrating on strengths and virtues, changed its focus of the mental health field from primarily treating health problems (e.g., medical model) to using powers to buffer individuals from mental disorders and obtain well-being [30].

It is indispensable to investigate the relationship between stressors, ego resiliency, gratitude, and life satisfaction. In some human life panorama, we could not control everything, specifically certain things that would happen (e.g. being born into dysfunctional families or poverty, having accidents, encountering natural disasters); however, we could control the response to those events. In this case, resiliency is very essential in coping with hard knocks in life to be able to continue in pursuing life's wants. With this, character strength like gratitude could help attain well-being.

It is worthwhile, therefore, to find out stressors related to resiliency, gratitude, and life satisfaction for people to cope with life's adversities, attain eudaimonia and eventually have a fulfilled, prosperous life. With the challenges our youth today encountered, their mental health is already at risk. There were suicide incidents reported, drug-related cases, and others, which the child was involved. The researchers then looked upon these cases to conceptualize mental health programs, hence this study.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The study explored and examined the sources of stress, ego resiliency, life satisfaction, character strengths, and resiliency of the students as a basis for mental health programs.

Specifically, it sought answers to questions:

1. What are the stresses most often experienced by the post-millennials in terms of significant life events?
2. What is the ego resiliency level of the post-millennials?

3. What is the life satisfaction level of the post-millennials?
4. Are the stresses experienced by the post-millennials significantly affect their ego resiliency level?
5. Is the ego resiliency level of the students significantly predict their life satisfaction?
6. Are there significant differences in the resiliency level and life satisfaction of the students?
7. Is there an important relationship between life satisfaction and the gratefulness of the post-millennials?
8. How to utilize the findings of the study in developing a contextualized mental health program?

1.2. Theoretical Framework

Resiliency Theory, System Theory, System Framework, and the Republic Act No. 11036, otherwise known as the Mental Health Law of 2018 were the theories and framework, which the study was anchored .
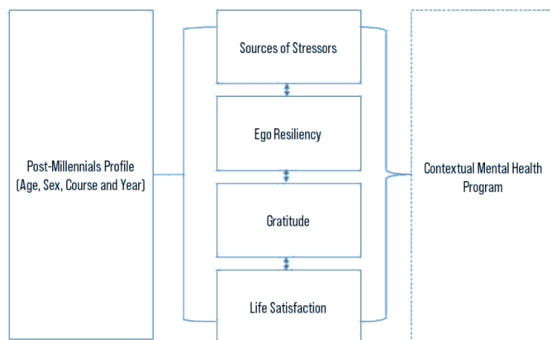
The Framework of the Study

Figure 1. Showing the framework of the study

2. METHOD

This is a descriptive research utilizing the quantitative and qualitative methods in gathering the data to explore and examine the respondents' sources of stress, life satisfaction, gratitude, and ego resiliency as a basis for the mental health program. The researchers did an in-depth random interview with the post-millennials. An adapted and revised research instrument was utilized in gathering the data, for gratitude questions [24]; Ego Resiliency [4]; The Revised University Student's Hassle Scale (RUSHS) [27]; and, The Satisfaction with Life Scale [9]. The researchers used a stratified random sampling for the sample size. For four hundred (400) total population, the sample size was 278 of which 139 were males and 139 were females from the first to fifth-year level, and they belonged to

the College of Education, College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology, and College of Management. Those respondents, who were not born from 1997 to present were not allowed to participate in the study. The reliability coefficient result was 0.902.

The statistical tools used were mean, ranking, regression analysis, and f-test.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Post-Millennials Stresses

Table 1 discloses the post-millennials' stressors and their severity. The total grand mean was 2.97 with a verbal interpretation of occasionally. It implied that the stressors occurred sometimes, affecting the post-millennials because of their severity. The post-millennials rated the severity of the stressors experienced from 1 to 10. Furthermore, the results showed the top 10 stressors as: (1) when they make friends; (2) studying the lessons for various classes; (3) school-related expenses; (4) too many things to accomplish; (5) coping with the class assignment deadlines; (6) safety of their personal belongings; (7) organizing time; (8) the pressure to get good grades; (9) traffic; and (10) balancing school and social relationships. This implied that the stressors, which often occur were primarily academic and personal-related. Hence, when it comes to the severity of the stressors, it happened frequently and occasionally. It was also highlighted that those post-millennials had a hard time balancing academic-related and personal things. Since they had a hard time managing their time, it also stresses them on the social relationships with their friends, family, and partners.

The stresses the post-millennials experienced were comparatively small and unanticipated events disturbing their life [15]. Thereby, these daily stressors were unexpected irritants and frustrations. Although daily stressors are less striking than life's important events, they are already sensed as stressful when people acknowledged them they had happened [15][17]. Whereby, research indicates that daily stressors are negatively related to an individual's overall well-being.

Thus, individuals reported physical and psychological discomfort on days when they experienced stressors compared to those without stress [2]. Other studies found a better mood on an individual with stress-free days that followed a day with stressors than those without any stressors [41].

Table 1. Post-millennials stressors often occurred and their severity

Statements	S.D.	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Fear of losing valuables	1.04	2.84	Occasionally	36.5
2. Traffic	1.29	3.35	Occasionally	9
3. People making fun of their religion	1.27	2.31	Occasionally	54
4. Making friends	.92	4.15	Frequently	1
5. Weight concerns	1.12	3.15	Occasionally	18.5
6. Balancing school and social relationships	1.24	3.33	Occasionally	10.5
7. Problem on the job and school	1.26	2.81	Occasionally	39
8. Demanding parents	1.29	3.00	Occasionally	28
9. Studying for class	1.00	3.88	Frequently	2
10. Being treated differently because of race, ethnicity, and sexuality	1.18	2.21	Rarely	58
11. Not enough money for emergencies	1.30	3.24	Occasionally	15
12. Concentrating on school-work	1.18	3.31	Occasionally	12
13. Safety of personal belongings	1.05	3.42	Frequently	6
14. Parking	1.46	2.75	Occasionally	45
15. Concerns about meeting high standards	.92	2.98	Occasionally	29
16. Not enough money for entertainment	1.12	3.23	Occasionally	16.5
17. People assume I am rich/poor because of my race/ethnicity/class status	1.10	2.76	Occasionally	43
18. Financial security	.85	2.84	Occasionally	36.5
19. Driving around city/municipality	1.13	2.28	Occasionally	55
20. Physical appearance	1.03	2.91	Occasionally	31
21. Not enough money for housing	1.16	2.86	Occasionally	33.5
22. The pressure to get good grades	1.12	3.41	Frequently	7.5
23. Not enough time for family	1.11	2.85	Occasionally	35
24. Owing money	1.19	2.83	Occasionally	38
25. School expenses	1.13	3.61	Frequently	3
26. Getting into shape	.91	2.56	Rarely	48
27. People unable to relate to a different personality, color, and sexuality	1.18	2.55	Rarely	49.5
28. Too many responsibilities	1.03	3.12	Occasionally	21
29. Feeling neglected by my race, status, and sexuality	1.00	2.50	Rarely	51
30. Trouble relaxing (hard time coping with stress, anxiety, and depression).	.98	3.02	Occasionally	27
31. Personal Safety	1.21	3.08	Occasionally	23.5
32. Not having close friends	1.35	2.23	Rarely	56.5
33. Feeling discriminated	.96	2.37	Rarely	53
34. Life Satisfaction	.94	3.06	Occasionally	25.5
35. Being treated differently due to gender	1.20	2.23	Rarely	56.5
36. Not enough personal energy	1.16	3.13	Occasionally	20
37. Introducing myself at school	1.14	3.23	Occasionally	16.5
38. Not taken seriously because of my gender	1.34	2.64	Occasionally	47
39. School learning material is difficult	.94	3.27	Occasionally	13
40. Organizing time	1.06	3.41	Frequently	7.5
41. Not enough money for clothing	1.05	2.86	Occasionally	33.5
42. Going out with friends	1.12	3.10	Occasionally	22
43. Denied opportunities because of gender	1.04	2.45	Rarely	52
44. Being lonely	1.16	2.76	Occasionally	43
45. Dependence on parents	1.12	3.25	Occasionally	14
46. School schedule	1.16	3.15	Occasionally	18.5
47. Perceptions of others have been based on cultural stereotypes	1.12	2.80	Occasionally	40.5
48. Communication problems with friends	1.05	2.76	Occasionally	43
49. Parental expectations	1.12	2.89	Occasionally	32
50. Someone saying, "Here, let me do that," thinking I cannot do it because of my gender disabilities	1.26	2.69	Occasionally	46
51. Class assignment deadlines	1.19	3.43	Frequently	5

52. People making gender jokes	1.24	3.06	Occasionally	25.5
53. Too many things to do	1.21	3.54	Frequently	4
54. Driving or commuting to school	1.32	3.33	Occasionally	10.5
55. Close mindedness toward my religious beliefs	1.19	2.80	Occasionally	40.5
56. Locking up personal belongings	1.10	2.94	Occasionally	30
57. Feeling unaccepted because of my religion	1.42	2.55	Occasionally	49.5
58. Health condition	1.10	3.08	Occasionally	23.5
Grand Mean		**2.97**	**Occasionally**	

Note: 4.21-5.0=Always Occurred; 3.41-4.20=Frequently; 2.61-3.40=Occasionally; 1.81-2.60=Rarely; 1.0-1.80=Did not occur

Table 2. Post-millennial ego resiliency

Statements	S.D.	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I am generous with my friends.	.71584	2.98	Moderately High
I quickly get over it and recover from being anxious.	.77835	2.61	Moderately High
I tend to buy things on impulse.	.82830	2.38	Low
I enjoy dealing with new and unusual situations.	.92735	2.66	Moderately High
I usually succeed in making a favorable impression on people.	.71609	2.61	Moderately High
When I get bored, I like to stir up some excitement.	.86457	2.78	Moderately High
I enjoy trying new foods I have never tasted before.	.86580	2.81	Moderately High
I am regarded as a very energetic person.	.78507	2.77	Moderately High
I often get involved in things I later wish I could get out.	.83299	2.56	Low
I like to take different paths to familiar places.	.78606	2.65	Moderately High
I am more curious than most people.	.82636	2.65	Moderately High
Sometimes I instead enjoy going against the rules and doing things I am not supped to do.	.92736	2.70	Moderately High
Most of the people I meet are likable.	.83215	2.70	Moderately High
I usually think carefully about something before acting.	.68931	3.21	Moderately High
I finish one activity or project before starting another.	.78469	2.92	Moderately High
I like to do new and different things.	.81559	3.07	Moderately High
My daily life is full of things that keep me interested.	.87763	2.74	Moderately High
At times I have worn myself out by undertaking too much.	.66884	2.57	Low
I would be willing to describe myself as a pretty "strong personality."	.94621	3.00	Moderately High
I get over my anger at someone reasonably quickly.	.74699	2.96	Moderately High
Grand Mean		**2.77**	**Moderately High**

Note: 4.21-5.0=Very High; 3.41-4.20=High; 2.61-3.40=Moderately high; 1.81-2.60=Low; 1.0-1.80=Very Low

3.2. Post Millennials Ego Resiliency

Table 2 reveals the post-millennials' level of ego resiliency. The results show a grand mean of 2.97 with a verbal interpretation of moderately high. There were some findings that ego resiliency was interpreted as low as post-millennials tend to become impulsive buyers; they often involved in various things and later had a hard time getting out from the situation or circumstances they dealt with, and became worn out of the undertakings they do. It implied that the ego resiliency of the post-millennials was dependent on their adaptability to the changing demands of the internal and external environment.

The ego resiliency concept encompasses traits emphasizing flexibility and resiliency toward the constantly varied situations and the general personality resourcefulness. Moreover, it is a proper behavior since ego resilient individuals are intelligent, resourceful, and adaptive to nerve-wracking conjunctures [15]. By that, ego resiliency is associated with a flexible invocation of the available repertoire of problem-solving strategies, promoting socialization.

When individuals experience risk in life, they may feel that the experience is a crisis. Thus, there is also an opportunity [6]. Individuals who encounter troubles may acquire more competence and knowledge because of the incidents, develop maladaptive strategies or regress to lower levels of competence than before meeting the crisis.

As Shakespeare wrote in *As you Like It,* "Sweet are the uses of crisis/risks" [15]. Adversity may weaken or strengthen the individual, depending on how they "use" it. Encountering hardship could be very painful. It may strike the individual to the point that they may not continue with a healthy life. On the other hand, if the individual can overcome adversity, that would serve as an opportunity or a challenge allowing them to grow stronger and gain more competence (i.e., be resilient).

3.3. Level of Life Satisfaction

Table 3 discloses the post-millennials' level of satisfaction. The results show a grand mean of 4.93 with a verbal interpretation of somewhat satisfied. It was revealed that among five (5) questions, there were some questions, which the post-millennials were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, such as "they have forgotten the important things they want in life" and "if they could live their life again, they will change almost nothing." It implied that their present life had no complete satisfaction because of the challenges and hardships they experienced. Hence, they also devalue the importance of the life they want, and if given a chance, that will change something in the present life they have.

Life satisfaction varies among post-millennials. Those who were motivated for intellectual activities reported higher levels of life satisfaction than those who did not [8]. A sense of identity was related to overall life satisfaction [16]. Life satisfaction was associated with happiness. Delighted people are more satisfied with life than unhappy people [12]. People's levels of life satisfaction were closely related to their overall physical and mental health [1].

Research also highlighted that life satisfaction is associated with social relationships: the more satisfying the social connection, the more incredible life satisfaction is. Nevertheless, in the present study, the results are not the same as the previous study since social relationship is one of the major stressors of the post-millennials.

Table 3. Level of life satisfaction of post-millennials

Statements	SD	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. In most ways, my life is close to my deal.	.99	5.42	Mostly satisfied
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.	1.38	4.86	Somewhat satisfied
3. I am satisfied with my life.	1.41	5.80	Mostly satisfied
4. So far, I have forgotten the important things I want in life.	1.84	4.27	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	1.81	4.28	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Grand Mean		**4.93**	Somewhat satisfied

Note: 7.0-6.14= Highly satisfied; 6.13-5.27=Mostly satisfied; 5.26-4.44=Somewhat satisfied; 4.43-3.57=Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 3.56-2.70=Somewhat dissatisfied; 2.69-1.83=Mostly dissatisfied; 1.86-1.00=Complete dissatisfied

3.4. Gratefulness of Post-Millennials

Table 4 shows how grateful are the post-millennials. The results reveal a grand mean of 4.44 with a verbal interpretation of somewhat appreciative. However, there were some statements, which the post-millennials were neither grateful nor ungrateful on the present happenings of the world. It implied that post-millennials were not happy and thankful for the uncontrollable things happening in the world and their personal life.

Research suggests that gratitude is beneficial to one's personal well-being and society. Gratitude motivates people's prosocial behaviors toward others [26]. Gratitude was positively correlated with

spirituality/religiousness and negatively correlated with materialism. It causes happiness and reduces the harmful effects of materialistic pursuits leading to life's dissatisfaction (i.e. feelings evoked by receiving help from others) among university students in Japan and Thailand. It was found out that students from these two countries reported positive feelings (e.g. joy, warmth, happiness, and thankfulness) and negative feelings, indebtedness (e.g. shame, regret about causing a problem, and uneasiness indebtedness) after receiving a favor. Both positive feelings and feelings of indebtedness were components of gratitude. Positive feelings were associated with facial and verbal expressions of gratitude, giving back (e.g. giving money or goods), and enhanced prosocial behaviors. Feelings of indebtedness were associated with the cost to the benefactors and giving back to the benefactors [25].

Table 4. Level of gratefulness of post-millennials

Statements	SD	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.	1.23	6.25	Very Grateful
2. If I had to list everything I felt gratitude for, it would be a very long list.	1.16	6.03	Most Grateful
3. When I look at the world, I do not see much to be grateful for.	1.97	3.96	Neither grateful nor ungrateful
4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.	1.06	5.75	Most Grateful
5. As I get old, I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.	1.14	5.97	Most Grateful
6. Extended amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful for something or someone.	1.45	4.90	Somewhat Grateful
Grand Mean		**4.44**	**Somewhat Grateful**

Note: 7.0-6.14= Very grateful; 6.13-5.27=Most grateful; 5.26-4.44=Somewhat grateful; 4.43-3.57=Neither grateful nor ungrateful; 3.56-2.70=Somewhat ungrateful; 2.69-1.83=Mostly ungrateful; 1.86-1.00=Completely ungrateful

3.5. Stresses significantly affect the ego resiliency of the post-millennials

Table 5 shows that stresses the post-millennials experiences significantly affect (r-value-.297; sig.value-.000) their ego resiliency. It implied that problems they experienced, whether academically or personally, directly impact their ego resiliency in coping with the situation or crisis and adversity. Individuals under high-stress levels sought help and support to decrease their stress levels to increase their resiliency and satisfaction.

Resilience is a positive adaptation by individuals despite the experience of significant adversity [18]. A diagnostic model of resilience was proposed. The model utilized two criteria in identifying resilient individuals: (1) risk/adversity level the individuals experienced; and (2) individuals' competence/adaptation level. Those who experienced a low level of risk/adversity and demonstrated a low level of competence/adaptation were considered a highly vulnerable group, while those who experienced a high level of risk/adversity and exhibited a low level of competence/adaptation were considered a maladaptive group. Moreover, those who experienced a low level of risk/adversity and demonstrated a high level of adaptation were considered competent unchanged. Resilient individuals experienced a high level of risk/adversity and demonstrated a high level of competence/adaptation [22].

Table 5. Stressors significantly affect the post-millennial ego resiliency level

	Pearson-r	Sig. Value
Stress Experienced Ego Resiliency	.287	.000

p<.05% significant

3.6. Post Millennials Ego Resiliency Predict their Life Satisfaction

Table 6 discloses that the post-millennials' ego resiliency did not significantly predict (f-value-.70; sig.value-.792) their life satisfaction. It implied that the post-millennials' level of ego resiliency varies from each other, how they handle and cope with it that directly predict their life satisfaction.

Various research results postulate that the relationship between life satisfaction and resiliency is not consistent. Resiliency was correlated to life satisfaction [14]. Resiliency was not only positively related to life satisfaction, but also significantly predicted life satisfaction [16]. There was no relationship between resiliency and life satisfaction. That is, resilient individuals' levels of life satisfaction did not relate to non-resilient individuals [15][7].

Table 6. The Ego-Resiliency level significantly predicts life satisfaction

	F-value	Sig. Value
Ego resiliency Life satisfaction	.070	.792

p>.05% not significant

3.7. Significant Difference in the Ego Resiliency and Life Satisfaction of the Post Millennials

Table 7 shows the result of the significant difference in the ego resiliency and life satisfaction of the post-millennials (f-value of 6.280 with a substantial value of .000). It implied that individuals' ego resiliency and life satisfaction differed depending on their competency, experience, and background.

Resiliency used to be sensed as some remarkable attributes within only some individuals [23]. Factors contributory to resilience (e.g. individual characteristics, life satisfaction, and supports from the environment) seem to be universal, crossing ethnicities, cultures, and socioeconomic strata [40]. The effectiveness of protective factors, varies with the individual's developmental level and forms of risk [29]. People can be resilient and satisfied at some points in their lifetime, coping with some types of adversity, but not at others [15][18][19].

Table 7. The significant difference in the Ego Resiliency and Life Satisfaction of the post-millennials.

	F-value	Sig. Value
Ego resiliency	6.280	.000

p<.05% significant

3.8. Significant Relationships between Life Satisfaction and the Level of Gratitude of Post Millennials

Table 8 shows significant relationships (r-value-.429; sig.value-.000) between life satisfaction and the level of gratitude of post-millennials. It implied that post-millennials' life satisfaction directly correlated to their perspectives and beliefs on gratitude. Being grateful for small and big things poses unique life satisfaction. Compared to less grateful people, grateful people experience more intense feelings of gratitude when experiencing a positive event and experience feelings of gratitude more frequently each day. Also, grateful people feel gratitude for more aspects of their lives (e.g. family, religion, work, society) in general and for more people in response to the same positive event than do less grateful people.

Gratitude has an amazing power in uplifting and focusing people on what is still whole and enjoyable in life, even at the worst of times [28]. Gratitude is an emotional state and attitude in life serving as a source of human strength in enhancing one's personal and relational well-being [15]. Gratitude is one of the

characteristics (e.g. integrity, optimism) shared by adolescents with a sense of purpose, one of the protective factors for resiliency; thus, gratitude may also be related to resiliency [5]. It seems reasonable then to suggest that gratitude may help people cope with adversities, to be resilient.

Table 8. Significant relationships between life satisfaction and the level of gratitude of post-millennials

	Pearson-r	Sig-Value
Life satisfaction Gratitude	.429	.000

p<.05% significant

4. CONCLUSIONS

The research findings in this paper are a springboard in providing inclusive and equitable mental health services for the post-millennials. Stresses, ego resiliency, life satisfaction, and gratitude are the facets of diverse and empowered individuals. It would be only a criterion for a broader scope of prevention and intervention activities.

This research was carried before the pandemic and offers recommendations for achieving a new post-millennial with resiliency and having a grateful and satisfying life. However, other researchers may uncover other areas to help post-millennials achieve good health and well-being despite life's volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

Proposed Mental Health Program

Based on the present findings of the study, it is imperative to develop a contextualized mental health program that is school-based. The proposed program would anchor on the concept of inclusiveness and equity. The program would be called Project *Bagani* (a Filipino term that means warrior). Why *Bagani?* The researchers want to prove that post-millennials are born warriors, strong, resilient, grateful in all the circumstances they encounter. Hence, it would also be a benchmark project for other State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Region to consider. The project will focus on the inclusiveness and equity of the delivery of various activities intended for the post-millennials. Below is the continuum framework of Project *Bagani*.
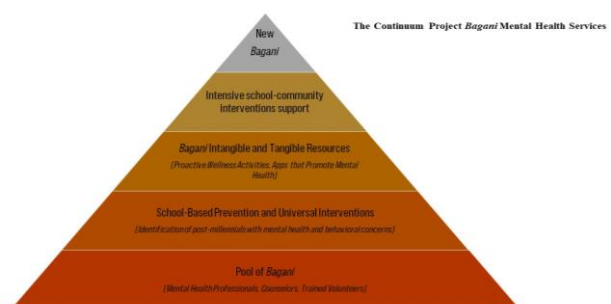
Figure 2. The continuum framework of Project *Bagani* Mental Health Services.

The Pool of Bagani. This pool of trained volunteers (faculty, parents, staff, students) and mental health professionals are the prime movers of mental health services. They will be trained in handling cases, identification of post-millennials with mental health and behavioral concerns.

School-Based Prevention and Universal Interventions. After the volunteers and professionals identify cases and mental and behavioral concerns, they will process and develop a prevention and intervention plan depending on the matter handled. Researchers will do a series of mental health activities.

***Bagani* Intangibles and Tangibles Resources.** This project will utilize and prepare apps that promote mental health and proactive wellness activities that directly employ the handled cases.

Intensive school-community interventions support. The school and community will work hand in hand in making proactive, inclusive, and equitable mental health interventions.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The researchers contributed equally to finish the present study. The impact of this research is the inclusion and approval of the mental health programs in Capiz State University and utilization of the results to the improvement of health services in various Local Government Units in the province of Capiz.

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