Students' Mental Health as a Relevant Agent Influencing Academic Achievement: Teachers' Contribution as Potential Counsellors. The Case of 2nd Year EFL Students.

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in Didactics.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby solemnly declare that this submission is my own work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution. I also certify that the present work contains no plagiarism and is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated.

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Dedication

This research work is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents, who stood by my side in this long journey while i was striving to reach my full potentials. Thank you for your unconditional love and support. Your patience, boundless encouragement, and unwavering faith in me are what has carried me through this long and sometimes arduous journey. Thank you for believing in me, your push for tenacity still rings in my ears, and if it were not for you, I would not make it this far. My debt to you is beyond measure.

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Last but not least, I dedicate this dissertation to all those who are struggling in silence, to all those who felt like there is no light by the end of the tunnel, be strong for life is not about waiting for the storm to pass...It is about learning to dance in the rain. May you find the grace of endurance and the strength of will to overcome each and every obstacle that might come your way.

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Abstract

College is indeed a thrilling experience in a students' life, yet the challenges and the immense stress it generates makes it quite difficult to enjoy every bit of it. Mental health problems are notably triggered during this period where everything seems so hard to handle in an unfamiliar environment, far away from home, where an abrupt responsibility imposes itself on students. These problems can often yield to a learning handicap, especially when students lack resilience and coping mechanism to overcome them. As potential counsellors, teachers are put into a position where they can intervene and provide adequate support to prevent those problems from escalating. Correspondingly, the present research work attempts to probe into the role of educators in addressing student's mental health problems, as it unveils various strategies, and instructions that teachers can implement in their classroom on a daily basis to support the overall mental health and wellness of all students. In this regard, a multi-faceted survey was conducted at the University of Dr. Moulay Taher, Saida, Department of English with a target population that consists of 57 second year EFL license students and 7 English language teachers. This study relies on a qualitative and quantitative approach in which two research instruments have been employed employed. A semi-structured questionnaire is initially addressed to students to attain their perceptions about different dimensions of mental health, and to identify the most salient psychological problems that they are subjected to. An interview was also conducted with seven teachers to elicit their view points about students' mental health crisis, and about the potential strategies and support tools that can be integrated in the classroom to ensure adequate support to those who are struggling. To this vein, the findings reveal that second year license students are prone to different psychological problems that are namely depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, suicide ideation, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. To attend to those problems, teachers can opt for different affective instructions that may entail the establishment of a friendly atmosphere, encouraging the involvement of parents and therapists, maintaining a positive rapport with students, and inviting them to use metacognition, and self-regulatory strategies to control and overcome their psychological struggles.

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ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

CBT: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

GPA: Grade Point Average

LMD: License-Master-Doctorate

MPFC: Medial Pre-frontal Cortex

TVIC: Trauma-and-Violence-Informed-Care

WHO: World Health Organization

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General Introduction

Mental health is more than the absence of a mental disease, as it is a state of well-being in which each individual is able to realize his or her own potentials, cope with typical stressful life-events, work productively and use a range of cognitive and emotional capacities to meet the ordinary demands and functions in the society. For these reasons, it is of a paramount importance to treat mental health in the same way physical conditions are treated given that the brain and the entire human body are interwoven. If the brain is damaged then it can influence the overall wellness yielding to other health problems.

Collegiate life is deemed as a rewarding yet a challenging experience in a young person's life. The idea of a typical students 'time at college' may be characterized by hedonistic and impulsive experiences with new friends that are often erupted by sporadic examination. But in fact, the pressure that the university may generate can feel impossible and draining rather than fueling students' passion and wellness to progress. Students may be academically but unemotionally prepared for such unfamiliar environment which may result in an immense input of inevitable stress driven by concerns about an uncertain future, financial constraints, new academic demands and responsibilities. In the same vein, university students in particular are perceived to be vulnerable strata in the society, as they face a lot of obstacles spurred by issues of anxiety, depression, and other psychotic problems which are mainly unavoidable, uncontrollable, and most importantly not visible to be easily detected and treated. Such problems can represent a learning-handicap for students, which in its turn renders it arduous for them to accomplish any given academic task.

The motive behind choosing this topic revolve around the fact that mental health in the university setting is an emerging exigency which recently became a subject of interest for educators, given the detrimental effect it has on students' academic achievement, learning progress, their life and physical well-being as a whole. It goes without saying that university students are in need of mental health support, and teachers are first in line to intervene and take part in the prevention and treatment of these psychological problems. Hence, they are perceived to have a significant role that is characterized by an engagement in "a pastrol care" for students, since they consider it a part of their remit. Teachers can be proactive in attending to students' mental health, as they can implement potent strategies in the classroom to produce conducive space for positive mental health. Teachers can also opt

for some affective instructions to moderate the effect of poor mental health on students' academic progress.

In the light of what has been mentioned above, the present research work seeks to advance knowledge about the role of instructors as potential counsellors in attending and promoting students' mental health. It also sheds light on the impact and the causes that contribute to increasing and exacerbating these problems. Moreover, it attempts to identify the different barriers that preclude students from seeking out for help, as it tries to unveil the major prevention and intervention strategies that teachers can utilize to ensure adequate support to students.

In this vein, the present study was directed to answer the following research questions:

> What are the salient psychological inhibitions that influence students' performance and academic achievement in the classroom?
> What are the potential strategies and affective instructions that can be integrated by educators in order to moderate the effects of poor mental health on students' academic performance?

To pursue that, the following hypotheses were suggested:

> Depression, chronic anxiety, bipolar disorder, attention deficit, and other psychotic disorders are among the major problems that second year EFL students are subjected to.
> Educators can have recourse tometacognitive awareness and self-regulatory skills as potential learning-related supports that could benefit students with mental health concerns in both academic and a non-academic setting.

The present exploratory survey has been conducted at the level of the English Department at the University of Moulay Tahar-Saida. The target population involved in this study was notably second year license students and English language teachers. Moreover, the research instruments that have been employed to test the validity of the above hypotheses are mainly a questionnaire and an interview. These tools helped in gathering both qualitative and quantitative data. Hence, the approach opted for in this study is a mixed-method design. Also, the inquiries that were opted for in both of those tools had a specific aim to attain, as they were open-ended and close-ended to give some room to the informants to share their opinions and personal experiences.

Mental health is a burgeoning crisis that was of a less priority in a number of countries across the world, and only recently it has received a focal attention in a growing body of research particularly at the international level. The most prominent figures that investigated this issue in the field of education were mainly: Morrow (2008) Storrie (2010), Pedrelli et al (2014), Chaudary (2016), Ciampa (2016) Andrade (2015) Baik et al (2017), and Lipson et al, (2019). While on the national level, mental health in the university setting has not witnessed considerable attention.

This research work consists of three main chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the review of previous literature. It is also deemed as a preliminary endeavour to delve into different dimensions of college students 'mental health problems. It initially tackles the main definitions of concepts, it highlights the prevalence and causes of students' psychological problems, unmet mental health needs, and teachers' mental health literacy. It also covers barriers and facilitators to help seeking behaviors and the role of educators in promoting students 'mental health. The second chapter on the other hand is devoted to the practical side which functions as the pedestal of this research work. It is divided into two sections. The first part attempts to delineate the research design. It describes the target population, the aim of the study, and the instruments employed in this research paper. The second part, however, aims to provide a detailed analysis and interpretation of the obtained qualitative and quantitative data. The third chapter encompasses a set of suggestions and recommendations that are addressed to both students and teachers. It also provides some practical frameworks to help motivate students, sustain their concentration, and promote their self-regulatory skills.

Chapter One :

Mental Health and Well Being of University Students: A Systematic Review of Literature

Chapter I: Mental Health and Well Being of University Students: A Systematic Review of Literature

1.1 Introduction:

Mental health, which was once a segregated topic, has been, and still is a serious matter and a burgeoning concern particularly in the university setting. Students may be prone to a number of academic stressors that can precipitate the first onset of mental health problems, and yield to the exacerbation of pre-existing conditions. In the same vein, a myriad of research papers has investigated this critical issue given the detrimental effect that it has on students' learning progress and academic achievement, however some significant factors were not thoroughly scrutinized.

In this regard, the present chapter is a preliminary endeavour to probe into college students 'mental health problems. It aims to highlight the different dimensions of mental health which are notably the causes of students' psychological problems, unmet mental health needs, and teachers' mental health literacy. As it also tries to unveil the barriers and facilitators to help seeking behaviours, and the role of educators in moderating students 'mental health problems.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

1.2.1 Mental Health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is not merely the absence of a mental disease, it is a substantial and integral constituent of health. Moreover, the WHO constitution indicates that mental health is "*a state of well-being whereby individuals recognize their abilities, are able to cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to their communities*" (2003:7).

1.2.2 Mental Illness

Smit (2015) demonstrated that mental illness alludes to all the psychological inhibitions that an individual may be diagnosed with. Additionally, a mental disorder is perceived to carry out a variety of denotations due to its amorphous nature, such as 'mental illness', 'mental health problems', 'mental health difficulties' and 'mental health issues' (College Report CR166, 2011). For that reason, it was difficult for the psychiatric profession to reach an agreement to what is or is not a mental disorder (College Report CR166, 2011,

p.19). Moreover, it was noted that mental illness "*feature abnormalities in cognition, emotion or mood, and the highest integrative aspects of human behaviour, such as social interactions*" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001, p. 6).

1.3 Mental Health in the Educational Context

Educational contexts are replete with affective experiences that can either be positive or negative, such as enjoyment and apprehension, disappointment and fulfilment, deceit and pride (Shuman, & Scherer ,2014).

Students' mental health in particular plays a significant role in school settings, since youngsters spend more time in schools than in any other institutional framework (Fazel, Hoagwood, Stephan, & Ford,2014). According to Engelhardt (2016), school has a substantial role in the identification, intervention, and prevention of mental health problems. In the same vein Johnson in Lipson et al. (2019:5) indicated that "*We are preparing our students for life and in order for them to make the most of their intellectual strengths and their education, they have to be as healthy as they can possibly be...both mentally and physically.*"

Moreover, recent research denoted that mental health and education are intertwined (Civic Issues,2019). This implies that students' psychological well-being can affect their education and vice-versa. Students who exhibit a psychological disorder may not be able to engage in a given task as they will find it difficult to meet academic standards (Bostani et al.,2014; Thompson,2018). Besides, although there is no exact study that indicates the impact of education on students' mental health, thereare few which denote that academic requirement can exacerbate students psychological state, especially for those who take their grades very seriously (Flatt,2013; Civic Issues,2019; Rubin,2011). Furthermore, mental health contribution to education is mainly through the facilitation of the learning process, and not the accomplishment of certain tasks and goals (Bower,1962).

The integration of mental health and education can be supported if the purpose of mental health entails effective teaching, and the aim of effective education is a healthy functioning of students (Atkins, Hoagwood, &Seidman,2010). There is a dearth of studies covering students 'mental health in the Algerian context in which certain aspects like the role of educators and barriers to help-seeking behaviours have been ignored.

1.4 College Students' Mental Health

As thrilling as it might seem, attending college is still a very challenging experience in students' life. According to Weitzman (2004), the university context is perceived to be

critical for investigating mental health in youth. Similarly, Benton, and Benton (2006) noted that college-student mental health is a prominent problem for higher education and has even been considered as an epidemic.

Students in higher education have consistently been subjected to an immense input of apprehension, which can enhance the risk of psychotic and emotional disorders (Landow,2006; Morrow,2008). Stallman affirmed that students 'psychological wellbeing is at "high risk" during their first year in the university, as it continues throughout the degree (2010). In the same vein, Eastwood (1959:972) stated that, *"Mental illness in a student has for him the implications as damage to the hands would have for a manual worker"*

Psychological problems are more common among college students, since they are perceived as a very vulnerable and sensitive strata in the society (Bostani, Nadr, & Nasab,2014; Chaudary,2016; Pedrelli et al,2014; Rayan, & Jaradat,2016). As they are also considered as a unique group, given that the epidemiology of psychological problems is mainly described on the university setting (College Report CR166,2011).

In the same framework, recent research revealed that college students encounter maladjustment and psychological inhibitions more than their same aged peers who do not go to college (Kurtović, Vuković, Gajić, 2018). Besides, while some students reported the onset of a psychological problem before attending college, others indicated that their illness started during college due to some institutional factors (Storrie et al.,2010; Tyrrell,1997; Becker,2020). Kitzrow (2003) has also revealed that students are attending college with more overwhelming and detrimental problems than previous years.

Problems such as attention deficit, and other psychotic disorders usually have their first onset during childhood or adolescence, however, they can be worsened during the collegiate year (Personal and Psychological problems of college students, 2021; Pedrelli et al.,2014).

The university setting is particularly important for learners since it makes them aware of their responsibilities and decisions that they are obliged to make in their lives (Morrow,2008). These stress inducive factors can generate the onset of depressive episodes in vulnerable students , which in its turn influence their academic achievement by altering memory function and other learning processes (Dyrbye, Thomas,&Shanafelt; Hysenbegasi, Hass, & Rowland; Murphy & Archer, in Morrow , 2008).In the same vein , the university atmosphere is perceived to play a substantial role in supporting or

undermining students' psychological well-being by either amplifying or alleviating factors and psychological resources associated with mental health (Baik, et al.,2017)

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that not all college students are susceptible to mental health problems, some of them are positively vigorous. However, this depends on individual differences such as psychological resources, circumstances, and environmental factors (Baik et al.,2017)

College students' mental health was not thoroughly investigated in the Algerian context. However, one relevant study conducted by Khelifi (2018) in TiziOuzou, department of psychology, revealed that poor mental health correlates negatively with students' academic achievement, and psychological well-being.

Students' feelings of tension encompass external and internal pressures by the world to succeed, pecuniary concerns, uncertain future, social issues, and most importantly academic requirements such as high stakesexams, deadlines, and homeworks in many intricate subjects which require concentration and readiness with often incompatible priorities(Landow ,2006; Vasquez, Torres, Lopez et al., in Morrow, 2008).In the same context , students reported that psychological inhibitions negatively influence their capacity to accomplish an academic task (Drum et al., 2009; Eisenberg, Golberstein, Gollust, 2007; Monk, 2004 , in Andrade ,2015).

Good mental health is therefore essential for college students to handle all challenges by university life, to be able to progress and attain their academic potential (Barden&Caleb ,2019; Baik et al.,2017).

1.5 Causes of College Students Mental Health

College students are perceived to be susceptible to different psychological inhibitions due to many determinants which are either academic or non-academic stressors (Chaudary,2016; Pedrelli et al.,2014). These factors, however, depend on students' surrounding and context (Chaudary,2016).

Coping mechanism is one of the factors that aggravates students' psychological distress as it is very crucial for students since college itself is regarded as a transition stage between dependence and independence in which many students have to cope with moving away from their homes to university at an age where most of them rely on their parents for financial support. However, there are some students who tend to rely on themselves and take a part-time job to meet their basic needs, and as they strive to undertake adult-like responsibilities, they often fall behind and become unable to accommodate to both

academic and non-academic requirements (Morrow,2008;Pedrelli et al.,2014).In the same vein, financial concerns are also perceived as constraints that compound students' psychological well-being in college(Chaudary,2016; Eisenberg et al.,2013; Holterman,2018; Stallman, 2010).

The majority of college students tend to have high career aspiration which is mainly associated with apprehension and fear of not being able to reach certain expectations (Chaudary,2016, p51; Holterman,2018). Such hopes and dreams about a perfect future can often lead to severe psychological disorders especially for low-achievers (Chaudary,2016). Worrying about unemployment and uncertain future is also a common issue among Algerian university students as it can have a drastic impact on their mental health.

Additionally, contemporary research assumed that the trend of 'helicopter parenting,' in which parents over monitor everything about their kid's life before engaging in college, often prompts students whom university directors refer to as "crispies" or "teacups" to feel so worn out and unable to efficiently take part in the collegiate environment, or so delicate that they abruptly give up when confronted by a sign of an obstacle (Iarovici ,2014).

Teacher-student relationship is also regarded as a substantial factor which can influence students' psychological well-being and their academic performance (Chaudary,2016). According to Arnold (1999), a strained relationship can often lead to anxiety.

Academic stressors can also aggravate students' mental health. Students feel obliged to adhere to the changes related to the educational curriculum, from one that is monitored and structured to one that requires activeness, planning, and student's autonomy (Pedrelli et al. ,2014; Stones & Glazzard,2019). Furthermore, high stakes exams are perceived as a stress inducing factor especially for competitive students (Chaudary,2016).

These pressures to succeed and achieve optimum results can often lead to severe psychological problems such as depression and anxiety (Holterman,2018; Chaudary,2016; Becker,2020). Other academic requirements such as assignments, presentations, and other workload can also aggravate student's mental health (Chaudary,2016; Stones & Glazzard,2019).

Unsuccessful accommodation, financial obligations, and academic stressors can yield to the first onset of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and other psychotic concerns (Landow,2006; Morrow ,2008).

University years can be both a thrilling and a challenging experience, thus it is substantial for students to overcome any obstacles and stress-inducing factorsto establish the foundation for their own academic achievement (Bahrami ,2007 in Bostani, Nadri, &Nasab ,2013).

1.6 Prevalence of Mental Health Problems

The World Health Organization has recently indicated that psychological problems influence almost half the population worldwide (Storrie,2010). It is also reckoned that mental illnesses are exceedingly rampant and common, particularly in young adults aged 16-24 years (Patton et al.,2009; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007).

Mandracchia and Pendleton (2005) reported that college students' mental health concerns received a focal attention in the past few decades.

A wealth of research has concentrated on the study of the prevalence of mental health issues in the university population, and the results indicate that a significant number of college students around the world are facing psychological problems (Auerbach et al., 2018; Saleem, Mahmood, & Naz,2013) One in four in the world may experience a mental health problem during their lives (WHO,2001).

Furthermore, Vlasova noted that mental health statistics of university students reveal that they are one of the groups that are seriously affected by mental health problems (2020). Many university students have severe psychiatric disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, depression, and suicide ideation (Vlasova, 2020). In the same vein, Nami et al, indicated that faculty and staff members reported that complicated clinical issues are highly prevalent among the students they teach and counsel (2014).

A meticulous survey on college students in particular displayed an alarming rate of acute psychological inhibitions where approximately 14% of undergraduate students screened positive for a depressive disorder and nearly 5% screened positive for either panic or general anxiety disorders (Eisenberg et al., 2007, as cited in Mandracchia and Pendleton, 2015).

Smit (2015) stated that some field studies revealed that many Dutch students are subjected to mental health problems, even though the scientific evidence for the high prevalence of psychological problems among Dutch university students is limited.

Stallman and Shochet conducted a study about the prevalence of mental health concerns among college students in Australia, and their findings revealed that 45,1% of the

participants were serious mental health problems, and 24,4% were having mild psychotic disorder (2009).

In another research paper, Shiels, Gabbay, & Exley (2008) examined the prevalence of mental health concerns among college students through an email survey, and reported that approximately 47% of the participants had anxiety, and 10% had depression.

Moreover, a relevant study conducted by Rayan and Jaradat (2006) in Jordanian university reported an alarming rate of psychological problems among students.

A study conducted by Chakali (2017) investigating mental health problems in the Algerian population reported that unipolar depressive disorder ranks first place with 4,56% in the distribution of the burden of disease related to neuropsychiatric disorders followed by the schizophrenia1,83%, bipolar disorder1,81% then epilepsy1,04% of which a large number of cases are still taken in charge of mental health services in Algeria.

There is a paucity of research investigating the prevalence of mental health problems in the Algerian universities. Nonetheless, one relevant study conducted by Khelifi (2018) indicated that the findings of different studies investigating mental health in the university population revealed that approximately 7% to 16% of college students suffer from a psychological maladjustment. Moreover, it's worth mentioning that some psychological problems such as bipolar disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are so prevalent among Algerian college students. Yet, they are most likely to go unnoticed.

According to Mandracchia and Pendleton (2005), some research papers in which a broader range of psychological problems were investigated, displayed even higher prevalence. Additionally, Hunt, & Eisenberg (2010) noted that research has shown that college students mental health problems are increasing in both number and severity.

Higher education must be cognizant that an ample proportion of undergraduate students are, or will be influenced by a mental illness (Personal and Psychological Problems of College Students,2021).

1.6.1Continuum of Severity

According to Still (1961), such incidences of psychological inhibitions among students varied in severity "*from the completely disabling breakdown to the quite trivial, transient, and unimportant symptoms*" (p.20). The types of mental health problems observed at student's health centres have been categorized into three groups: mild, moderate, and severe cases (Ryle ,1969, as cited in Tyrrell ,1997). Similarly, recent research reported that

mental health exists on a continuum, labelled as the continuum of severity (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

Students may encounter various facets of the continuum throughout their academic lives asit is displayed in the diagram below.
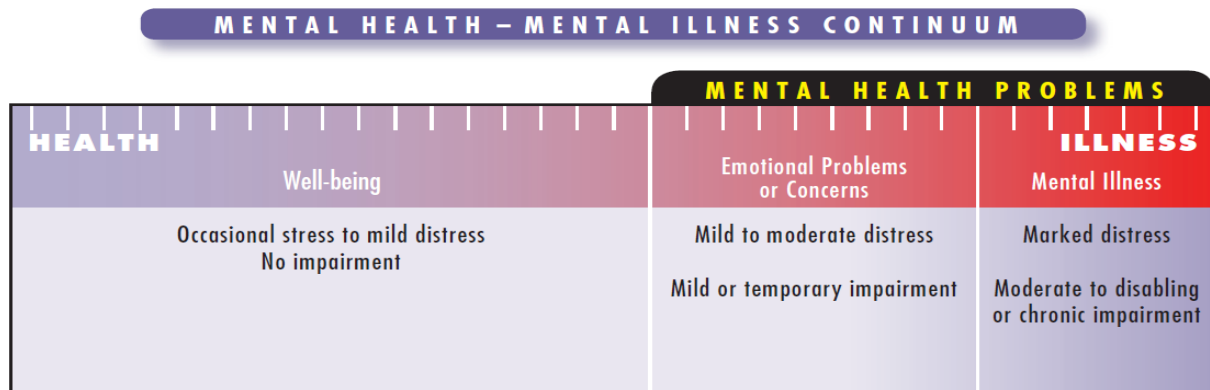
Figure1.1: Mental Illness Continuum (Ontario Ministry of Education ,2013:10)

On the basis of *Students Health Center Statistics*, it was reported that chronic and severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia and manic depression were estimated to be between1% and 2% over a 3- or 4-years course (Tyrrell, 1997) Additionally, students with severe psychotic problems such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia are of paramount concern for National Health psychiatric services, as they are mostly handled by mental health teams (College Report CR166,2011).

According to Tyrrell (1997), a moderate category of 10% to 20% of students' population presented with psychological and emotional concerns adequate to the need of treatment (p.390). These incidences often entail personality or neurotic disorders which are frequently relevant to late adolescent identity crises (Tyrrell,1997). The less severe incidences are conditions which are milder in relation to distress and disability. Ultimately, another 20% of the students reported transient psychological or psychosomatic disorders as milder cases (Tyrrell,1997). Ryle (1969) says that these involve responses to normal age and environmental pressures, and often only require reassurance or brief medicine. This category included stress responses pre-examined. Nonetheless, it is worth to mention that no matter how milder these psychological handicaps may seem to be they still have a deleterious effect on students' academic performance as they make it difficult for them to effectively prepare themselves for an examination (College Report CR166,2011).

In spite of the fact that the prevalence of psychological problems such as schizophrenia seems to be comparatively low among university students, the pervasiveness of neurotic disorders such as anxiety and depression, are by all accounts higher than that in the non-college peer group (Tyrrell,1997).

1.6.2 Classifications of Students Mental Health

Youngsters' mental health concerns can mainly be divided into two main fields, namely, internalizing problems with the signs of withdrawal, trepidation, anxiety, and depressed moods, and externalization of problems with actions like violence, rebellion, breaking of rules and disruptive conduct (Achenbach, 1991).

In the same vein, mental health symptoms have conventionally been categorized into two groups which are labelled either 'neurotic' or 'psychotic' symptoms (Patiyal, Choudhary, and Mehta ,2018). Neurotic entail signs that are severe forms of 'normal' emotional experiences such, depression, panic, and anxiety. Incidences which were formerly regarded as 'neurotic' are periodically called 'common psychological problems. Less common are psychotic symptoms which may influence a person's perception of reality, as it may entail delusions such as hearing, seeing, and feeling things that no one else can (Patiya et al.,2018).

According to Patiyal et al., psychological concerns are mainly categorized and defined to enable experts in the field to assist individuals to get the adequate care and treatment (2018).

1.7 Recognizing Students' Mental Health Problems

Students' psychological problems are not transparent, but this doesn't mean that they are not there as they can seriously impact an individuals' life and wellbeing (Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association,2020). Moreover, inadequate or limited knowledge of mental health can result in negative attitudes towards mental illness and the pursuit of psychiatric care (Samouilhan&Seabi ,2010). Therefore, understanding, psychological problems and recognizing the symptoms of mental disorders can enable students to identify the signs in themselves and in others, as it will also provide them with the knowledge needed to seek out treatment before it gets worse (Paradigm Treatment, 2019).

According to Tyrrell (1997), multiple screening questionnaires can be utilized to gauge the pervasiveness of psychiatric symptomatology in the college population. Nonetheless,

these screening instruments are not designed to substitute a doctor's medical expertise, hence a follow-up interview is imperative to determine whether a high scorer has some sort of psychological disorder (Tyrrell,1997).

Furthermore, early identification of alarming symptoms can lead to interventions that can minimize the seriousness of mental conditions, and promote the process of recovery, management, and treatment (Paradigm Treatment ,2019).

1.7.1 Anxiety

Anxiety disorders are the most pervasive psychological problems among college students (Pedrelli et al.,2014; Elliott & Smith,2010). The school environment itself can precipitate students' anxiety. According to Arnold (1999) "*when anxiety is present in the classroom, there is a down-spiralling effect*" (p.9). Furthermore, research revealed that anxiety disorders correlate negatively with students' academic achievement (Dobson,2012; Shakir,2014).

Students with anxiety disorders exhibit a passive attitude in their studies including lack of interest in learning and poor performance as a result of low self-confidence, lack of concentration, and a reduced memory span (Vitasari et al.,2010). In the same vein, Bisson (2017) reported that females are most likely to experience anxiety disorders than males

1.7.1.1 What is anxiety?

Anxiety is considered as "*an abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physical signs (such as tension, sweating, and increased pulse rate), by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat, and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it*" (Merriam-Webster, n.d).

1.7.1.2 How does it look like?

Anxiety is mostly perceived as an inner experience. External signs of anxiety are hard to identify since the demeanour and the symptoms are not usually apparent, as they do not show themselves in a disruptive way. Students may not inform their parents or teachers that they are distressed because they themselves may not be able to recognize it. Anxiety may manifest itself as procrastination, perfectionism, avoidance, overwhelming feelings, concerns about time constraints, as well as physical problems such as stomach-aches and headaches. Moreover, anxious students may quickly become irritated, or find their work difficult to complete (Ontario Ministry of Education,2013).

1.7.2 Depression

University students who now represent a significant proportion of their age group in many countries share a general trend of depression being the most common disorder in particular among women (Davies et al,2016; Vázquez et al., as cited in Morrow,2008; Pedrelli et al.,2014).

Depressive episodes can not only influence those who are subjected to them but they also cause considerable distress to their families, as they disrupt and complicate their daily life, productivity and their physical health, as they also increase the risk of suicide (Wang and Kessler, 2006). Furthermore, The American Health College Association indicated that students subjected to depression found it arduous to take part in any activity (2013). Depression should not be perceived as "just sadness' especially if it persists and affects students' thoughts, feelings, behaviour, and the way they interact with others (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

1.7.2.1 What is depression?

Depression is categorized as a mood disorder, associated with persistent feelings of sorrow, irritability, loss of interest in activities that an individual once enjoyed, or anger that meddle with a persons' everyday life (Higuera,2020; Ontario Ministry of Education,2013). Depression is also referred to as clinical or major depressive disorder, as it affects a persons' thoughts and behaviour and can result in physical and emotional issues (Mayo Clinic Staff,2018).

1.7.2.2 How does it look like?

Depressed students display a cluster of symptoms that reflect their lack of interest and low mood. In an educational setting, signs of depression in a student entail exhaustion, lack of concentration, low self-esteem, frequent absences, frustration, and irritability (Ablow, 2011; Ontario Ministry of Education,2013). These symptoms can influence students' academic performance and lead to further mood difficulties (Ontario Ministry of Education,2013; Iarovici,2014).

For educators and parents, it is often hard to identify whether such signs are a cause of a serious issue, or are a transient demeanour as a response to a stressful event or a part of atypical developmental period (Ontario Ministry of Education ,2013). However, according to Miller (2007) it is crucial not to consider such symptoms as "just a phase" (e.g., "teenage phase"), due to the existing correlation between depressive disorder, academic

difficulties, and developmental impairment, alongside with connection between depression and the risk of suicide.

1.7.3 Bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is considered as a relatively common psychological condition which is usually developed in late adolescence or early adulthood. Thus, it has its first onset during a period where most students are enrolled in college (Iarovoci,2014; Lejeune,2011). Additionally, students with a bipolar disorder can encounter certain obstacles that influence their academic performance as well as their coping mechanism (Dentzau,2017; Hoos,2016). These challenges posed by bipolar disorder can often result in dropping out of college (Hoos,2016).

1.7.3.1 What is bipolar disorder?

Bipolar disorder, formerly labelled as manic-depressive illness, is a brain disorder marked by peculiar shifts in a persons' mood, energy, and ability to function (American Psychiatric Association, 2021). According to Fink and Kraynak "*bipolar disorder is a medical illness characterized by alternating periods of abnormally elevated and depressed mood*" (2015: 24).

1.7.3.2 How does it look like?

Bipolar disorder can have a drastic impact on students 'cognitive functioning, thus makes it difficult for them to concentrate, recall and organize information, and unable to use problem-solving and critical thinking skills (Ontario Ministry of Education,2013; Dentzau,2017; Pedersen,2019).Additionally, students with a bipolar disorder may seem in need ofa little sleep due to the insomnia associated with this illness, as they may also alternate between highly productive periods at school and times of having difficulty in completing a given task (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013; Macgill,2019).

1.7.4 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention deficit disorder (ADD) is a common but an extremely misunderstood, and often underdiagnosed psychological condition in university students with or without hyperactivity (Faigel,1995). Moreover, individuals with ADHD are usually diagnosed before college, however, some may not recognize its 'symptoms until they attend college (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry,2019).

Students with ADHD are believed to have a neurological deficit which influences the executive functioning part of the brain (Johnston,2013). Poor executive functioning in its

turn can result in low academic achievement and many studies related issues that prevent students from attending and graduating college (Weyandt& DuPaul,2006; Low,2020).

1.7.4.1 What is ADHD

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder marked by an inability to maintain attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, as it has its first onset in childhood and persists into adulthood (Weyandt&DuPaul, 2006; Sulkes,2020).

1.7.4.2 How does it look like?

Students with ADHD exhibit certain symptoms which are associated with poor executive functioning, for instance deficits in working functioning, for and finishing a given task and response inhibition (Rogers, et al.,2011; Low,2020). Students with ADHD can also find it arduous to remember and memorize certain facts, and to acquire new knowledge (Rogers et al.,2011; Daley & Birchwood,2010; Low,2020). Moreover, they may seem messy, unable to focus on certain details, rush in doing assignment, and often make reckless mistakes (American Psychiatric Association,2000). Besides, both inattention and hyperactivity can influence students' academic achievement. However, research indicates that academic problems are more related to attention deficit than hyperactivity/impulsivity (Rogers et al.,2011).

1.8 Effect of Mental Health on Students' Learning

Students' psychological well- being is a substantial component of academic success (Talawar& Das, 2014; Keong et al., 2015).

A growing body of research findings reported that students' academic performance can negatively be influenced by poor mental health (Keong et al.,2015). Mental health problems are considered as an obstacle which can impede the learning process and academic progress of university students (Negrete,2016; Vanderlind,2017).

According to Arnold: "*in the presence of overly negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, stress, anger, or depression, the optimal learning potential may be compromised*" (1999:3).

Brackney and Karabenick noted that students who exhibit high rates of psychological distress are less academically successful, as they are marked by poor academic self-efficacy, higher test-anxiety, inappropriate use of learning strategies, and poor time management skills (1995). It is also worth to mention that these distressed students are unable to concentrate on their assignments, as they are less likely to proceed when faced with a distraction or a certain dilemma (Brackney and Karabenick,1995).

Student's mental health is considered as a significant problem in the university setting, since not only does it impede their learning process but can also influence their retention and graduation rate (Kitzrow,2003; Gorczynski,2018). In the same framework, Lipson et al, (2019) posited that psychologically disturbed students are characterized by lower grade point average (GPA), and discontinuous enrolment, as they are also most likely to leave an institution without completing their degree.

In a longitudinal study conducted by Eisenberg, Golberstein, and Hunt (2009), it was reported that mental health can have an influence on students' academic progress along two margins which include the decision to remain in college, and performance/ productivity. Mandracchia and Pendleton assert that student's psychological concerns can also influence their physical health, alongside with their learning outcomes, which in its turn result in dropping out of college (2015).

According to Barrington, mental health problems can precipitate a number of educational challenges that can result in poor academic outcomes (2017). These challenges entail nervousness about engaging and participating in the classroom, inability to cope with stressful events, difficulties in connecting and maintaining friendly relationship with peers, lack of motivation, and disrupted sleeping patterns which can lead to fatigue and lack of concentration (Meldrum et al.,2009, Barington,2017). In addition to that, poor mental health is perceived to have a detrimental influence on students' academic achievement, as it can interfere with their motivation, perseverance, class attendance, memory, and study habits to an extent where their cognitive functioning is considerably impaired (Sharkin,2013, p.10; Son, 2020). In the same vein, Holmes and Silvestr' study which examined the rates of psychological problems and its association with academic performance reported that common mental illnesses such as anxiety and mood disorders can have a drastic impact on students' memory/executive functioning, attention span, energy level, and interpersonal relationship (2015). Nonetheless, it is substantial to know that psychological problems may have different effects, thus students may not experience the same difficulties as their peers, although, they may exhibit similar disorders (Barington,2017).

Furthermore, psychologically disturbed students may hold a negative academic self-image, which can influence their perceived competence and result in poor cognitive functioning (Masi, et al., 2001). Another relevant study indicated that students who are subjected to severe psychological problems are twice as likely to have poor academic

efficacy and study progress than those with mild and moderate conditions (Grøtan, Sund, & Bjerkeset,2019).

Previous studies have also emphasised that students exhibiting comorbid diagnosis such as depression and anxiety can be susceptible to additive educational challenges and acute academic performance deficit than those with a single diagnosis (Eisenberg et al.,2009; Holmes & Silvestri, 2015).

Mental health problems can influence different areas of students' life. Therefore, "*For students to be successful in academics and in life beyond college, mental health is just as important as physical health. It touches every aspect of life and affects us all*" (Fenves in Lipson et al.,2019:6).

1.9 Unmet Mental Health Needs of Students

A large proportion of students experience psychological problems that can interfere with their academic performance, however, most of these students are not receiving adequate health care, nor a professional treatment, hence their mental health needs are not appropriately catered for (Kaffenberger, O'Rorke-Trigiani,2013; Sheppard, Diane, and Ciarrocho,2017).

Students' psychological well-being is an increasingly substantial problem in higher education, since college students in particular have more serious challenges and needs for services on campuses (Gallagher, 2012; Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). Additionally, university students are considered as a significant population in which access to mental health can be examined (Eisenberg, Goberstein, and Gollust ,2007). This implies that the university staff must consider how to best serve this population through appropriately meeting their mental health needs. It is also worth mentioning that unsupported mental health needs can frequently interfere with students' learning leading them to suffer not only from amental disorder but also a low academic achievement (Bonneville,2020). According to Andrade (2015), some campuses have posed many inquiries about how students' mental health needs are being addressed, as they have also identified the grievous consequences that unmet needs can have on campuses.

A study by Gallagher (2013) revealed that the number of students seeking counselling services and the acute psychotic problems that students are susceptible to have significantly increased, as students who screen positive for a mental disorder are not provided with adequate therapeutic assistance even when it is available on campuses. The increased rate of college students' mental health needs highlights the importance of

providing students with adequate professional support (Andrade 2015; Sheppard et al.,2017).

Understanding students' unmet needs can promote efforts to deter and adequately treat mental disorders (Eisenberg et al.,2007). In the same vein, Kaffenberger (2013) denotes that certain barriers can prevent counsellors from appropriately addressing student's mental health needs such as the increased number of students in need, and limited access to mental health services. When addressing students' needs to have appropriate mental health services, it is crucial to see to which extent these services are available, especially in the Algerian context.

1.10 Barriers and Facilitators of Help Seeking

Mental health problems are regarded as a substantial and prominent issue among college students (Vidourek, King, Nabors &Merianos,2014). According to Andrade, help seeking for university students is so crucial, since it can be a matter of life and death (2015). Moreover, despite of the alarming rates of psychological problems among university students, many of them avoid seeking professional help (Smit,2015; Milin et al.,2016; Gulliver et al.,2017).

Students' reluctance to seek professional help for psychological problems indicates the presence of several barriers that deter appropriate help seeking behaviour (O'Keeffe,2013). Additionally, Rayan and Jaradat (2016) noted that this reluctance can have a detrimental effect on students' life.

Psychologically disturbed students are most of the time faced with unenviable difficulty, as to whether keep their condition hidden, and struggle in silence without specialist support, or incur stigma and discrimination by revealing their mental health condition (Wilson &Griffin,2012; Andrade, 2015).

Students are hesitant and reluctant to disclose that they have a psychological problem, as they are concerned about how others will perceive them, especially their teachers (Storrie,2010; Stones & Glazzard,2019). In the same vein, students may refrain from revealing their psychological problem to a teacher, the university staff, or their peers, since they fear to be labelled as crazy, weird, different or in some cases "an attention seeker" and a hypochondriac (Andrade,2015; Irovici,2014; Martin, 2018; Rowe,2014; Smit,2015; Wilson, & Griffin,2012; Woodhead et al.,2020).

Students may perceive mental health problems as a sign of weakness; thus, they feel embarrassed to inform others about it, and avoid seeking help (Gulliver et al.,2010;

Storrie,2010; Wilson, & Griffin,2012). Furthermore, it is noted that students who are subjected to psychological problems may consider their distress a part of the college experience, as they tend to be more "self-absorbed", and prefer to deal with the problem on their own, instead of seeking professional help (Andrade,2015; Stallman,2010; Samouilhan&Seabi,2010; Sharkin,2013).

Several research have investigated students' help seeking behaviour, and identified many barriers associated with this problem, particularly in college population (Andrade,2015;Dunn,2014).These barriers included lack of time , preference for self-reliance,skepticism about the effectiveness of treatment, lack of confidentiality, normalisation and trivialization of psychological problems , financial constraints, lack of emotional competence stigma and negative attitudes associated with mental health (Eisenberg, Hunt,& Speer,2012; Gulliver et al., 2010; Smit,2015;Rickwood et al.,2005;Vidourek et al.,2014;Wilson,& Griffin,2012).

Mental health in itself is perceived as a stigmatized trait, and a lot of research has shown that stigmatic attitudes towards a person with a psychological problem are highly prevalent (Lally et al.2013). Stigma is perceived as a potential obstacle that can prevent students from seeking help for a psychological problem (Kosyluk et al.,2016; Milin et al.,2016; Pang et al.,2017; Vidourek et al.,2014). Moreover, stigma can be as debilitating as the diagnosis of a psychological disorder since it can influence an individuals' self-esteem, exacerbate their psychological symptoms, and lead to a sense of alienation (Belch,2011; Link et al.,2001). According to Lally et al, stigma can take two peculiar forms, which are public and personal stigma (2013). Eisenberg, Downs, Golberstein, &Zivin (2009) defined perceived public stigma as "*negative stereotypes and prejudices about mental illness held collectively by people in a community*" and personal/self-stigma as when "*an individual identifies himself with a stigmatized group and applies corresponding stereotypes and prejudices to the self*" (p. 523). Additionally, Goguen et al, (2006) indicated that barriers to help-seeking may originate from both public and self-stigma. Teachers can help in reducing the stigma attached to mental health, and encourage their students to open up about their problems to be able to provide them with adequate care and guidance (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). Moreover, it is substantial that the institution promotes positive messages about mental health to reduce stigma (Stones & Glazzard,2019).

In the same vein, the encouraging factors/ facilitators of help seeking behaviour have also been studied to reduce the stigma attached to mental health problems (Rickwood et

al.,2005; Smit,2015). These facilitators entail sufficient mental health literacy, positive previous experiences with professional help, and character trait, which is mainly linked with emotional competence (Rickwood et al.,2005; Smit,2015). Furthermore, an awareness of the barriers and encouraging factors to help-seeking is substantial for the development of support services and interventions to assist adolescents with mental health challenges (Aguirre Velasco ,2020).

According to Pedrelli et al (2014) the use of technology can resolve the issue of low-treatment in college students, and increase help-seeking behaviour. In the same line of thoughts, Andrade (2015) noted that having recourse to technology can be considered as an informal type of help-seeking behaviour. Moreover, technology-based programs such as internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy can be beneficial for providing anonymity and effective treatment to the person struggling, as they are also accessible at any time and cost-effective (Pedrelli et al.,2014).

1.11 The Role of Educators in Supporting Students' Mental Health

Although educators cannot and should not endeavour to diagnose mental health issues, they still have a vital role to play in fostering positive mental health, recognize and identify students with psychological problems, and connect them with appropriate mental health supports (Ontario Ministry of Education,2013). Educational research indicates that what university educators do with the class design, and the way they communicate with students can create "a learning environment" that can influence students' academic engagement and well-being (Baik et al.,2017). In the same vein, students need a good and healthy personal relationship, and teachers are required to be encouraging, collaborative, and sympathetic to alleviate stress among students (Chaudary,2016). According to Millis, adopting a collaborative instead of an instructive approach can ensure a positive and a friendly teacher-student relationship (2012).

Additionally, teachers are believed to be in a good position to foster positive mental health among students through the implementation of positive psychological principles such as the promotion of health, resilience, and subjective well-being, that are incorporated into the academic context (Daniszewski,2013).

Educators are mainly in the forefront of their students' lives, so not only are they often the first to detect signs of a psychological problems, but also affect the way students perceive mental health (Stone,2013).

According to Baik et al (2017) academic educators can support student's psychological well-being through adopting strategies and creating a positive learning atmosphere that enhances the opportunities for learners to pursue their objectives and interests, as it enhances students' autonomy, sense of belonging, positive relationships, and competence, thus making students independently motivated. In the same vein, teachers can also help in enhancing students' self-esteem, since it functions as a buffer against students' psychological problems (Torres et al.,2017). Moreover, teachers can adopt an individualized educational plan to help students enhance skills such as self-awareness, and self-control to succeed academically (Ontario Ministry of Education,2013)

Teachers' contribution in recognizing students in need, providing mental health resources, and promoting mental health and interventions can have a profound influence on students and teachers' ability to monitor and manage the classroom (Han & Weiss, 2005; Kirby & Keon, 2006; as cited in Daniszewski,2013).

Teachers are often unable to provide adequate help to psychologically disturbed students due to their insufficient mental health literacy, lack of skills, and time constraints (Ciampa, 2016; Ekornes,2016). Thus, they feel a mismatch between their perceived responsibility towards students with a mental health problem and their ability to properly help those students, which often result in stress, worry, and helplessness (Ekornes,2016).

1.11.1 The Implication of Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognition is defined by Wells (2004) as "*the cognitive process, strategies and knowledge that are involved in the regulation and appraisal of thinking itself*" (p. 167). Metacognition as a form of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) plays a substantial role in clinical psychology, as it can influence the way a person responds to negative feelings and convictions (Weight,2018).

According to Vanderlind, metacognition can function as a potential learning-related support, as it can also be taught by educators in the classroom to help students with their learning processes and psychological well-being (2017). Educators can also help their students to appropriately transfer metacognitive and self-regulatory skills from academic to non-academic settings (Vanderlind,2017).

Moreover, metacognitive strategies are perceived to correlate positively with students' self-esteem, and self-efficacy, which are on the other hand regarded as predictors of positive mental health (Chamanabad, Mirdoragh, &Pakmeh ,2011; Foumany, Salehi &Ifaei,2014; Weight, 2018).

Marino et al. (2016) noted that metacognitive beliefs can play a significant role in either hindering or enhancing positive mental health, as they can trigger maladaptive mechanism such as avoidance, apprehension, rumination and thought suppression which in its turn results in the aggravation of psychological distress. If students exhibiting psychological problems are able to transfer metacognitive skills to their daily lives, they will have tools that will help them in both academic and non-academic contexts (Vanderlind,2017).

Nonetheless, Goldman (2018) asserted that metacognition neither eliminates mental health problems, nor disregards their importance since it is merely one potent strategy among many that students can utilize to improve their processing in different academic and non-academic settings.

1.12 Students' Self-regulation and Mental Health

Self-regulation is regarded as a significant skill that can help individuals to proactively plan, manage, evaluate, and adapt feelings, thoughts, and behaviours for the purpose of attaining a particular goal in their changing environment (Zimmerman, 2000). Moilanen (2006) on the other hand defines self-regulation as "the *ability to flexibly activate, monitor, inhibit, persevere and/or adapt one's behaviour, attention, emotions and cognitive strategies in response to direction from internal cues, environmental stimuli and feedback from others, in an attempt to attain personally-relevant goals*" (p.835).

According to Vanderlind (2017), self-regulated skills can be implemented in both academic and non-academic context, as they can help students to appropriately adjust to the collegiate life. Along the same line, Van Nguyen et al (2014) noted that encouraging the use of self-regulated strategies can enable students to optimise both their educational attainment and mental well-being. Similarly, Durand-Bush et al (2015) stated that self-regulation can function as potential skill that students employ to appropriately manage their mental health. That on the other hand is quite evident given the significant connection between self-regulation and students' cognitive motivational processes (Tavakolizadeh, Yadollahi, Poorshafeic, 2012). In the same vein, self-regulated learning is believed to have a substantial relationship with different arrays that can strongly influence students' psychological well-being such as emotion and self- management, self-control, self-observation, self-monitoring, intrinsic motivation, optimism and self-efficacy (Meintjes,2020; Tavakolizadeh, Yadollahi, Poorshafeic, 2012; Vanderlind, 2017).

Moreover, research has also revealed that self-regulatory learning strategies can positively influence different dimensions of students' mental health, since they are both intertwined and have a reciprocal influence on one another (Goldman, 2018; Tavakolizadeh, Yadollahi, and Poorshafeic, 2012).

One study conducted by Durand-Bush et al (2015) revealed that university students exhibiting mental health problems and psychological difficulties are more likely to possess ineffective and low self-regulatory skills, as they are unable to manage their thoughts, personal behaviours, and emotions that are consistent with attaining desired positive results. Whereas, those who have the ability to effectively regulate themselves by frequently employing performance facilitating techniques, and adaptive well-being strategies may be more likely to sustain adequate levels of mental health when faced with a given academic adversity or life related stress (Durand-Bush, 2015).

According to Hagerty, Bathish, and kuchman (2018) self-regulation can also help in managing and controlling depressive episodes. They believe that one way to do so is through managing ones' emotions, and regulating the illness through "recognizing symptoms, generating appraisals about the symptoms, and making informed decisions on how to cope with them" (Care and Kuiper, in Hagerty et al, 2018).

Additionally, emotional regulation as a component of the self-regulatory process can also to coexist with elevated levels of anxiety, and depression (Loevaas,2018). According to Campbell-Sills et al (2006) maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, such as avoidance, and suppression are strongly associated with depression. Similarly, Levin et al (2017) asserted that depressive symptoms are also associated with a reduced capacity to shift attention, and reappraise unsettling negative feelings. In the same framework, Wyman et al (2010) mentioned that such association between mood disorders and emotional problems highlights the need to strengthen emotional regulation – a strategy that individuals use to cope with stressful life-events – especially since it includes processes that help in moderating the intensity and duration of emotional problems. As stated by Verhofstadt (2017) these processes encompass "monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions" (p.4). Wyman (2010) on the other hand believes that emotional regulation is more of feelings check-in which is a standard procedure that functions as a teaching instrument and help in managing emotions.

Furthermore, a contemporary study conducted by Park et al (2012) found that self-regulation skills of first year American university students were significantly connected to

positive adjustment, as they helped them minimise any unsettling feelings such as depression, stress, and anxiety. For this reason, it is highly recommended to teach the use of self-regulation as a tool to prompt students' mental health (Tavakolizadeh, Yadollahi, and Poorshafeic, 2012). Similarly, Meintjes (2020) added that teaching self-regulation techniques to learners can contribute in enhancing their self-esteem, and reducing their negative moods (depression) which in turn leads to optimum learning outcomes. In the same framework, Durand-Bush et al (2015) believe that "*providing ongoing self-regulation training to students through counselling and formal courses may be one way to help them remain healthy and successful while completing their studies and when entering the workforce*" (p.270).

1.13 Educators' Mental Health Literacy

Educators play a significant role in the identification, intervention, and prevention of students' mental health problems, since they spend a considerable time with their learners, hence they are often the first to observe a student demeanour, which may represent signs of a psychological problem (Whitley, Smith, and Vaillancourt,2012; Carr& Frank, 2019). Therefore, "*it is imperative that teachers are equipped with the practical tools and knowledge required to recognize and intervene appropriately in situations where mental illness may be a concern*" (Meldrum, Venn., & Kutcher,2009: 3).

Nonetheless, many teachers have reported that they don't know how to appropriately respond to students' psychological problems due to the insufficient knowledge and the attitudes that they may hold with regard to this matter (Carr& Frank ,2019; Gulliver, Farrer, Bennet & Griffiths,2017). Similarly, another relevant study reported that the university staff who are perceived as "potential gatekeepers" also lacks the required skills to deal with students' psychological problems even though they are well positioned to provide initial assistance to students (Storrie, Ahern, & Tuckett,2010; Gulliver et al.,2017).

Insufficient mental health literacy can often present itself as a barrier that prevents educators from providing adequate help for their students. Therefore, improving teachers' MHL is inevitable.

The betterment of teachers' mental health literacy can be done through providing effective mental health training for teachers, both in pre- and in-service settings, and adopting an approach that integrates mental health literacy in the educational curriculum such as a classroom mental health literacy resource (Whitley,2012; Carr& Frank,2019;

Kutcher et al.,2015; Kirby & Keon,2006). Additionally, there are also other guides that can be beneficial for both teachers and students to enhance their mental health literacy such as "*Supporting Minds, 2013: An educator's guide to supporting student mental health and well-being*."

Appropriate mental health literacy can then help teachers comprehend how to sustain positive mental health, understand psychological disorders and their treatment, reduce the stigma associated with mental health, and increase help seeking efficacy (Phoeun et al.,2019).

1.13 Conclusion

College student's mental health is a critical issue which has been discussed in abundant empirical research due to the profound impact it has on students' lives and academic success. Thus, educators should be cognizant of their students' psychological well-being, alongside with the barriers that prevent them from seeking out for help, so as to be able to provide them with initial support and connect them with appropriate mental health services.

The following chapter stands as a pedestal of this research work by which a detailed analysis is going to be carried out so as to obtain results that are going to help find solutions to the research problem.

Chapter Two:

Research Design and Procedures: Data Collection and Analysis

2.1 Introduction

Before undertaking any given research, one should consider the methodology that would fit it appropriately, and help in collecting solid and valuable information. For this research paper, a mixed methodology has been used to collect the data needed to obtain solutions to the research problem.

The current chapter is devoted to the practical side which functions as the crux of this research work. It is divided into two parts. The first part aims to delineate the research design, as it describes the target population, the aim of the study, and the instruments used for this research paper. The second part, however, aims to provide a detailed analysis and interpretation of the obtained qualitative, and quantitative data.

2.2 The Aim of the Study

This research paper is a preliminary endeavour to investigate the role of educators in moderating the impact of mental health problems on students' leaning process and academic achievement. It also attempts to analyse students 'and teachers' perceptions with regard to mental health problems, causes, and barriers to help-seeking behaviours.

Mental health problems have always been an overlooked topic particularly in the university setting. Students were not encouraged to disclose their psychological problems nor were they provided with appropriate mental health services. Teachers were also unable to provide help to students who are suffering due to their insufficient mental health literacy and the attitudes they may hold towards such phenomena. In addition, they feel that such problems are more personal, and cannot be easily approached. Moreover, it goes without saying that student's psychological well-being is a substantial component for their academic success, for this reason, the following study was undertaken by the researcher to raise awareness about this disregarded problem and encourage teachers to consider appropriate and potential strategies that would help students who are psychologically disturbed to progress both in academic and non-academic settings.

2.3 The Target Population

According to Houser (1998) the target population is defined as "all individuals or objects the researcher is interested in and to which the study results are applied "(p.98).

The population of this research paper consists of second year LMD students and English Language teachers from the department of English- Saida University.

2.3.1 Students' Profile

The participants selected in this study are second year licence students from Dr. Moulay Tahar Saida University. The number of the population is fifty-seven (57) students (42 females and 15 males) with different social, and academic background. Their age ranged from eighteen (18) to forty (40) years old. They currently have no specific field of research. Yet, they take courses in nine different modules, that aim to pave the way for them to enhance their English language competence. Moreover, the allotted time of each subject matter depends on whether it is fundamental or not. Students' language proficiency varies from elementary to intermediate. Additionally, the entire population is divided into five different groups, however, only 3 groups were randomly selected to be involved in this study, so as to make it more accurate and specific.

2nd year EFL students were chosen to take part in this study since most of college students are most likely to experience psychological inhibitions during their first year given the maladjustment that may be subjected to in the university setting. Their psychological problems will therefore persist throughout their collegiate years, and worsen their educational attainment. For this reason, 2nd year students were chosen as the best fit to share their perceptions with regard to mental health problems on the basis of their first-year experience.

2.3.2 Teachers' Profile

The present study deals with a sample of seven English Language teachers (4 males and 3 females) from Saida University Dr.Moulay Tahar Department of English. The sample was selected randomly from the entire population of about 30 teachers. An interview was conducted with these teachers who had a teaching experience that varies from 7 to 16 years. Some of the study participants hold a magister degree while others have a doctoral degree in English Language. These teachers are specialized in different fields of study and their age ranged from 30 to 45 years old. Besides local teachers from Saida, some of them come from different cities, mainly Mascara, Sidi Belabes, Elbayadh, andTlemcen.The reason behind such selection was to elicit teachers' perceptions with regard to students' mental health problems and the remedial measures suggested to moderate such problems.

2.4 Research Instruments

This research paper was carried out through the use of mixed methods design. A semi-structured questionnaire was submitted to second year EFL students and semi-structured interview was directed to English Language teachers. Both methods have been perceived to provide authentic and solid data in terms of both quantity and quality.

2.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a systematic research instrument consisting of a set of questions and prompts, that serves for the purpose of gathering primary data from a large number of respondents. In the same vein Richterich and Chancerel stated that "Questionnaire are structured instruments for the collection of data which translate research hypothesis into questions" (1980, p.59). Moreover, a questionnaire is more quantitively oriented, as it aims to analyse data in terms of numerals and statistics.

2.4.1.1 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is composed of twenty-two (22) questions that are consistently arranged and grouped into two sections (see Appendix I). The first section is devoted to the student's personal information, as it tries to gather data about the informant's gender and age. The second section is devoted to student's perceptions with regard to mental health problems, and it holds twenty questions. The types of queries used were mostly close-ended questions (13/22 questions) in which the participants were provided with a number of choices, and were required to tick in the corresponding box(es). Additionally, a mixture of both close and open-ended questions was used in which students were required to choose and justify their responses. The questionnaire also entailed open-ended (3/22) questions in which the respondents were provided with the freedom to express their perceptions with regard to mental health problems, causes...etc.

The questionnaire was administered to fifty-seven (57) students from three different groups (G1, G2, and G4) in which the researcher was present to provide further clarifications to any ambiguities the respondents may encounter. Students were also notified about the purpose of the questionnaire, and their role in providing authenticity and validity to this research paper.

2.4.2 Interview

An interview was used as a secondary research tool to obtain solid and adequate information. Unlike the questionnaire, an interview is more qualitatively oriented, as it is considered as an oral conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. In the same context, Mathers, Fox, & Hun stated that "The interview is an important data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the subject. Interviews are commonly used in survey designs and in exploratory and descriptive studies" (1998, p.1). The interview is mainly recorded to ensure a complete and faithful account. According to Edwards and Holland "*the interview is probably the most widely used method employed in qualitative research*" (2013, p.1). Moreover, Hodgkin (2008) stated that qualitative studies help in elaborating and enhancing some of the results obtained in quantitative studies.

2.4.2.1 Description of the Interview

The interview is composed of 12 open-ended questions which aim at gathering descriptive and elaborated data with regard to students' mental health problems (see Appendix II). It was conducted with seven English language teachers at Saida University Dr. Moulay Tahar. The questions used were chronologically arranged from general to specific. The answers provided were audio recorded, and then transcribed by the researcher to provide valid analysis and interpretation.

2.4.3 Mixed Methods

It goes without saying that any research work cannot be comprehensively and successfully conducted through the use of a sole research instrument. For this reason, a mixed methodology (questionnaire and interview) was used by the researcher to attain an in-depth understanding of the research problem and to ensure inclusive and elaborated data. According to Cresswell and Cresswell "mixed methods involve combining or integration of qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research" (2018, p.51). Furthermore, it is noted that "mixed methods encompass multifaceted approaches that combine to capitalize on strengths and reduce weaknesses that stem from using a single research design. Using this approach to gather and evaluate data may assist to increase the validity and reliability of the research" (Kabir,2016, p.).

2.5 Data analysis and interpretation

At this level, a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data obtained are going to be carried out. This phase is particularly substantial since it helps in obtaining solutions to the research problem. Questionnaire data are going to be analysed in a qualitative and quantitative manner through the use of tables, pie- charts, and bar-graphs, whereas the data obtained from the interview are going to be analysed in a descriptive and qualitative manner.

2.5.1 Questionnaire analysis

The questionnaire consists of two sections which aim at eliciting students' personal information, and their perceptions with regard to mental health problems. Students' responses were filled in google form and google sheet to facilitate the process of data analysis. The data collected have been analysed quantitatively, and qualitatively as the following:

Section one: Personal information

Question 1

The first question aims to reveal the students' population gender. As shown in the pie chart and table below, the results display that the targeted participants consist of 42 females which represents 73,7% of the entire population (57) and 15 males which represents merely 26,3%. The latter highlights that female participants outnumber male subjects.

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Female	42	74%
Males	15	26%
Total	57	100%

Table 2.1: Student's gender
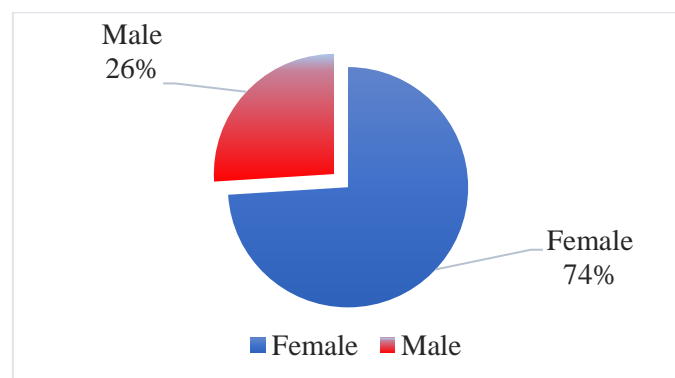
Figure 2.1: Students 'gender

Question 2

This question tries to find out students' age range, and to see if the results are compatible with Patton et al., (2009) statement which indicates that psychological problems are more common in young adults aged 16 to 24 years old. A glimpse at the table below mirrors that students sample holds many ranges of age. The participants are mainly young adults whose ages range between 18 to 26 years old. While two other participants are adults aged 31 and 40 years old.

The first set of age encompasses34 students who are between 18 to 19 years old and it is marked by 60% out of the total population. The second set of age includes 15 students whose ages range between 20 -21 years old and theyrepresent26% of the population. The third set entails4 students whose age varies between 22-23, years old and who constitute7% of the entire sample. The fourth set includes 2 (3%) students who are 25 and 26 years old. The last set includes 2 participants who are 31 and 40 years old, and they equally constitute 2% of the entire sample. The findings show the dominant age range is between 19 and 18 years old. The results are also quite compatible with the statement mentioned above, as it shows that students are mature enough to be aware of their psychological side, and the importance it has in their lives.

Age	Number of students	Percentage (%)
18-19	34	60%
20-21	15	26%
22-23	4	7%
25-26	2	3%
31	1	2%
40	1	2%
Total	57	100%

Table 2.2: Age range

Section two: Students' perceptions with regard to mental health problems

Question 1

The first question was designed to find out how students perceive mental health. The obtained results revealed that the majority of students perceive mental health as a serious and an important matter that should be paid attention to just like a physical disease. Some students

on the other hand consider mental health as the ability to function appropriately, and can be defined as a brain condition which consists of a number of psychotic disorders. Whereas, the rest believe that mental health can impact how a person think, feel, and act. It can be understood from these findings that mental health is a substantial component in a human life, for this reason it should not be overlooked.

Question 2

The second question consists of two parts which aim at finding out whether students were diagnosed with a mental disorder before, and by whom were they diagnosed. As shown in the first graph below, 53 % of the students indicated that they were diagnosed with a psychological problem, while 47% noted that they were not diagnosed before. The second graph reveals that 4 students were diagnosed by therapist and they represent 13 % of the entire sample, 8 students used an online screening which constitute 26 %, and the majority which is 19 students reported that they were self-diagnosed, andtheymake61 % of the entire population.
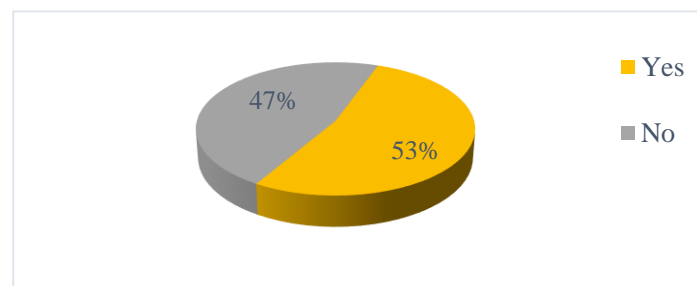
Figure 2.2: Were students diagnosed with a psychological problem before?
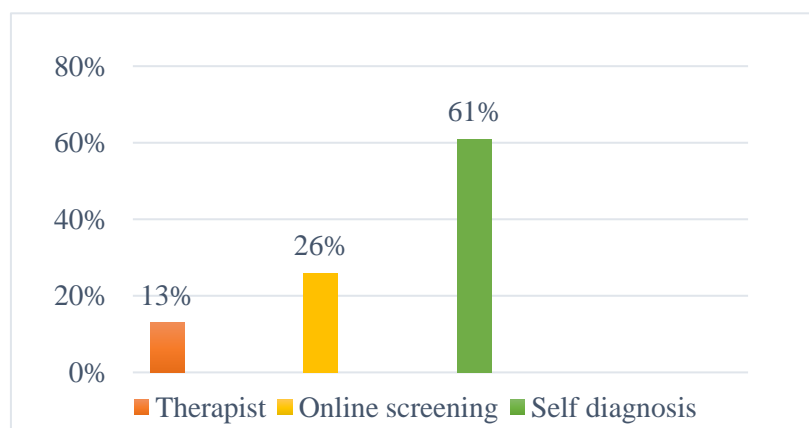
Figure 2.3: Types of diagnosis

35

Question 3

This question was designed to know about the prevalence of psychological problems amidst second year EFL students. The results displayed in the pie chart below indicate that more than half of the participants (51%) reported that depression is the most common mental health problem that they have been subjected to.28 % claimed that anxiety is the most prominent psychological inhibition that they have experienced, while 21 % noted that bipolar disorder is the salient psychotic problem that they have exhibited, and 0% of the participants were subjected to attention deficit.
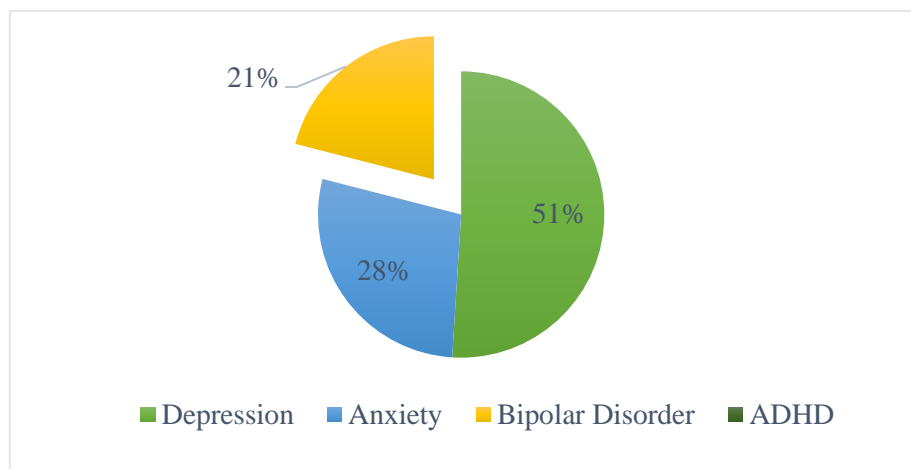
Figure 2.4: The prevalence of students' mental health problems

Question 4

At this level, students were asked if they have ever wondered if they had a mental health problem. The purpose behind such question was to support the 2nd and the 3rd question, which means if students were never diagnosed or subjected to a mental health problem, they probably would wonder if they ever had one. As shown in the pie chart below, 66% of the respondents claimed that they have thought about it, while 34% indicated that it never crossed their mind.
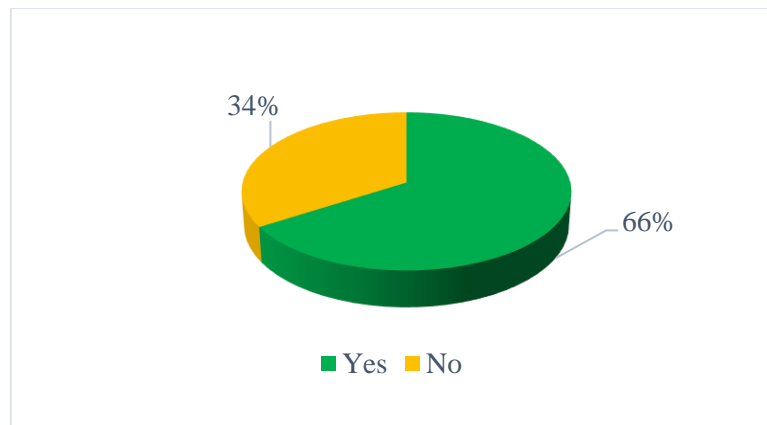
Figure 2.5: Did students ever wonder if they had a mental health problem?

Question 5

The participants were asked if they attempted to know more about their psychological well-being online, and then requested to justify their answer. The results revealed that 54% admitted that they tried to have some information about their mental health online via YouTube, and online tests, while 46% of the respondents claimed that they never tried to know more about it.
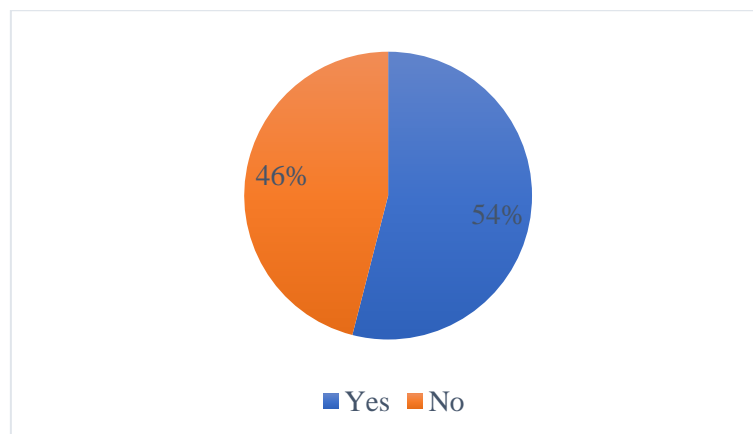
Figure 2.6: Did students try to know more about their mental health online?

Question 6

Students were asked in the sixth question about the frequency of looking after their mental health. The results displayed in the pie chart below mirrors that the majority which represent56% of the entire sample reported that they occasionally check their mental health state. And 19% admitted that they seldom look after their psychological well-being. Along with that 21% of the respondents indicated that they never look after their mental state and merely 4% stated they always check it.
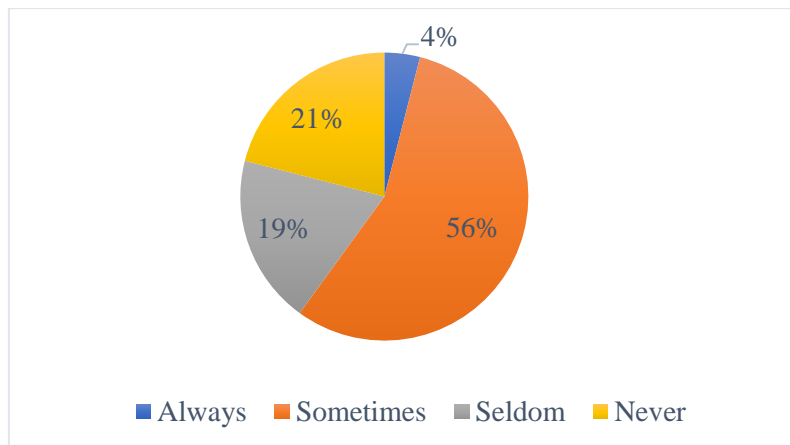
Figure 2.7: How often do students check their mental health?

Question 7

Concerning the 7th question, students were required to rate their mental health state, and to indicate whether they believe that they have positive or poor mental health. From the results obtained, one can state that the majority of students believe that they have an average mental health state, and they make up 37% of the entire population. 21 % claimed that they have a good mental health, while 25% of the respondents admitted that they were not sure about their psychological well-being, and merely 17% reported that they had a poor mental health state.
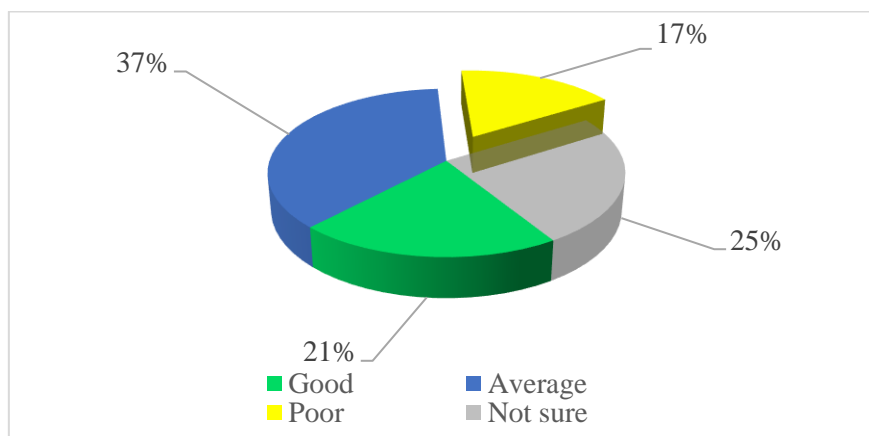
Figure 2.8: The mental health status of students

Question 8

Students were provided with a hypothetical question which tries to find out the type of support students would resort to if they experienced some sort of a psychological distress. As displayed in the pie chart below, the majority reported they would ask their parents for help, and they constitute 44% of the entire sample. 33% indicated that they would resort to their friends for support. In contrast ,12 % indicated that they would have recourse to a therapist for support, while 3% claimed that they would ask a personal tutor for assistance. Moreover, 3%

of the respondent opted for the option of "others" and indicated that they prefer self-reliance, while 2% said that they would leave such matter toa higher power (back to religion).
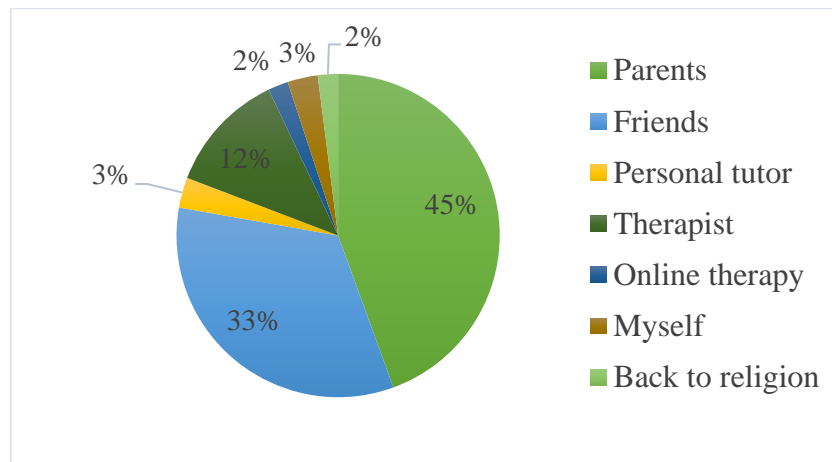
Figure 2.9: Types of support that psychologically disturbed students have recourse to

Question 9

Students were asked to indicate the quality of the supports that they opted for in the previous question (8th). A glimpse at the table below reveals that among the students who have selected parents as a support for psychological problems,12% believe that they can be extremely helpful, 9% claimed that the support provided by their parents can be a little bit helpful, while11% admitted that the support can be helpful. 7% reported that parents can be very helpful while 3% believe that it is neutral. Among the students who chose friends as a support,3% indicated that they can be very helpful,7% claimed that they are helpful, 3% stated that their friends are a little bit helpful,7% noted that the support provided is not helpful and merely2% admitted that friends can be extremely helpful, while10 % reported that it is neutral. Moreover, among the respondents who chose a therapist, 3% believe that the support can be very helpful,3% claimed that it's a little bit helpful while 5% indicated that it can be extremely helpful. Concerning online therapy,2% noted that its helpful, whereas for personal tutor, 3% reported that the support can be very helpful. Additionally, 2% believe that self-reliance can be extremely helpful, and 2% believe likewise as far as religion is concerned.

Types of support	Quality of The Support							
	Not helpful at all	Not helpful	A little bit helpful	Neutral	Helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful	Not helpful at all
Parents			9%	4%	11%	7%	12%	
Friends		7%	4%	10%	7%	4%	2%	
PersonalTutor						4%		
Therapist			4%			4%	5%	
Online Therapy					2%			
Self reliance					2%			
Religion					2%			

Table 2.3: The Quality of the Support

Question 10

The participants were provided with a statement which says "Psychological disorders can impede your performance and achievement in the classroom", and were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with this statement. 33% of the participants strongly agreed. 60% agreed that mental health problems can hinder the learning process, and merely 7% disagreed.
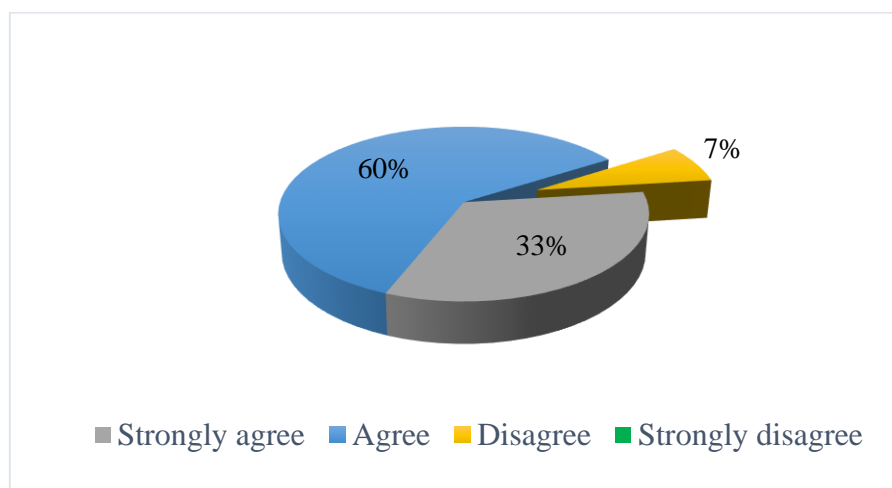
Figure 2.10: The extent to which students agree on the impact of mental health

Question 11

At this level, students were provided with a number of choices to find out the impact of mental health problems on students' academic life. As shown in the pie chartbelow,19% of

the respondents reported that poor mental health can influence their energy level,30% indicated that it can affect their concentration,7% believed that it can influence their attendance, and 5% claimed that it can affect their engagement in the classroom. On the other hand,4% of students reported that poor mental health can have an impact on their academic self-efficacy, and merely 2% claimed that it can influence their academic self-image. Whereas, the majority which constitute 33% of the entire population reported that psychological problems can influence their motivation.
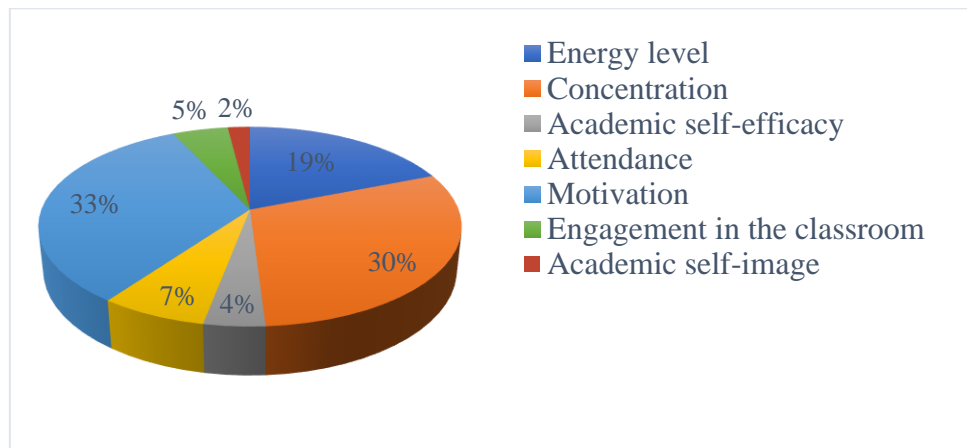
Figure 2.11: The impact of mental health problems on students' learning process

Question 12

This was an open-ended question which provided students with an opportunity to state the causes of mental health problems. The participants mentioned a number of different causes which can be summarised into the following:

- Family problems (Parents' divorce)
- Bullying (cyberbullying)
- Childhood trauma
- Substance use
- Worrying about an uncertain future
- The society and the environment a person lives in
- An inherited sickness
- An overload of academic requirements
- Financial problems

The majority of the respondents stated that family problems are the main reason behind students' psychological problems. Others believed that bullying, substance use, uncertain

future and the society itself are what causes an individual to be psychologically disturbed. Additionally, some of the respondents believe that it can be an inherited sickness, while others stated that an overload of academic work can lead to a psychological problem.

Question 13

This question was designed to find out which pedagogical instruction is more likely to worsen students 'psychological well-being in a classroom setting. The results obtained revealed that the majority of the respondents 63% reported that teachers' negative feedback can exacerbate their psychological well-being. While18% claimed that in-class assignments deadlines are a stress inducive factor, and 19% reported that high stakes examination is what renders students psychologically disturbed.
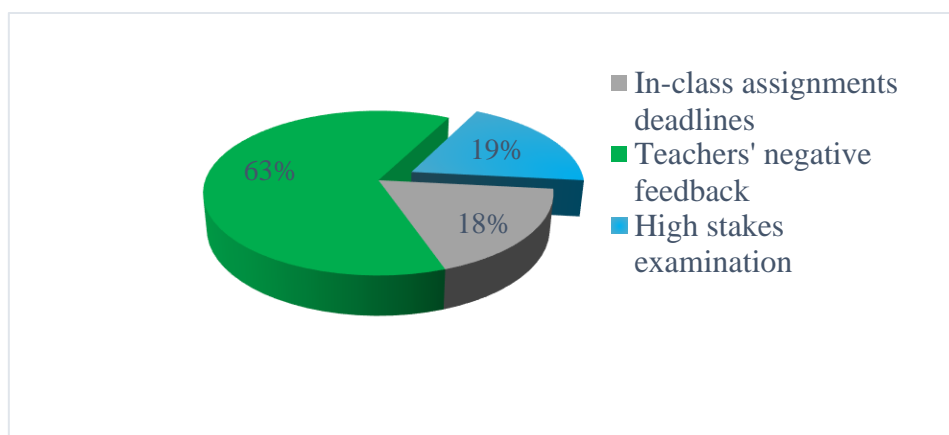
Figure 2.12: The pedagogical instructions that worsen student's psychological well-being

Question 14

Students were provided at the level of this question with a hypothetical situation in which they were asked if they would join a free access to therapy with a professional psychiatrist provided by the institution they are enrolled in, and then were required to justify their response. The results displayed in the pie-chart below indicate that 18% stated that they will not join, since they don't want anybody to know about their personal problems, while others indicated that they prefer to go to another therapist because they fear how others will perceive them, and the rest noted that it depends on how professional the therapist is. Whereas the majority of the respondents reported that they would join for the sake of experience, and they constitute 82% of the entire sample.
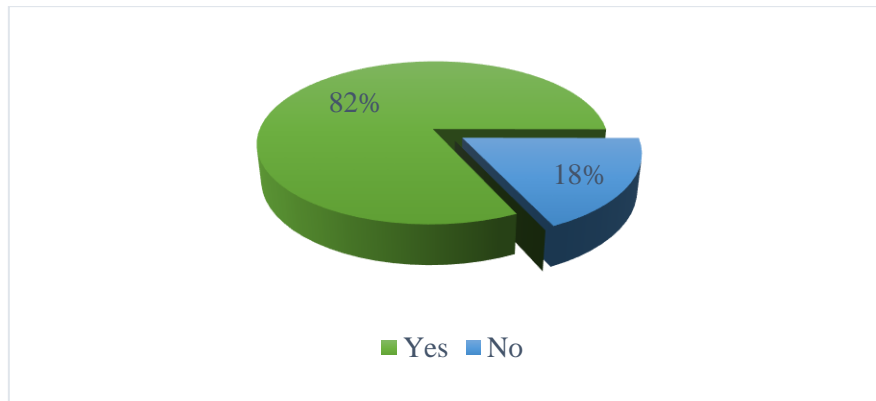
Figure 2.13: Free access to therapy at the university

Question 15

Students were asked whether they feel less comfortable and stigmatized by their surrounding in the university if they resort to a psychiatrist. The results obtained revealed that the majority feel inconvenient if they resort to a therapist, and they make up 60% of the entire sample, while 40% claimed that it would be completely normal if they had recourse to a therapist.
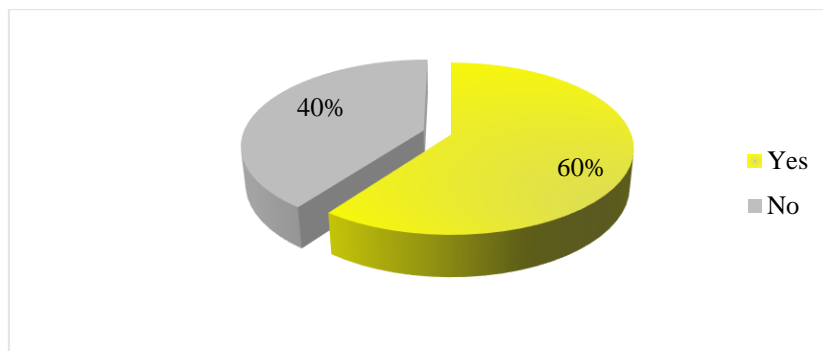
Figure 2.14: Do students feel stigmatized by their surrounding if they have recourse to therapy?

Question 16:

Question sixteen was designed to know if psychologically disturbed students are unable to seek out for help. As shown in the pie chart below, 33% indicated that they find it difficult to seek out for help, 19% noted that they are able to seek out for help if needed, while the majority reported that they occasionally find it difficult to solicit assistance, and they represent 48% of the entire population.

43
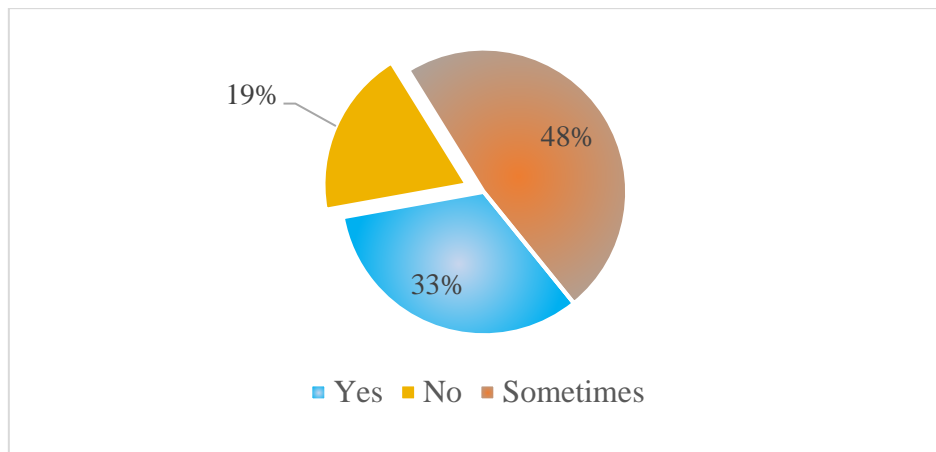
Figure 2.15: Help-seeking tendency among students

Question 17

The respondents were provided with a number of options which aim to find out the types of barriers that preclude them from seeking out for help. The results displayed in the pie-chart below reveal that 31% of the informants reported that fear of how others may perceive them prevents them from asking for assistance, 9% claimed that skepticism about the effectiveness of the support preclude them from soliciting assistance, and 20% believe that preference for self-reliance can function as an obstacle against help-seeking. In contrast, 9% admitted that unawareness of the available resources prevents them from seeking out for assistance, and merely 2% stated anthropophobia as a barrier. Whereas the majority 39% reported lack of time and support as a major reason why they are unable to seek out for help.
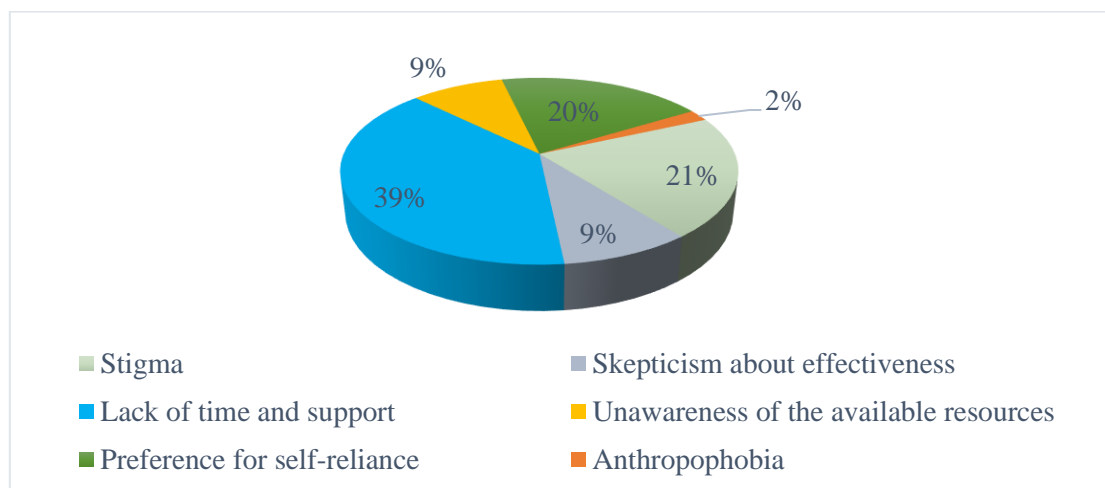
Figure 2.16: Barriers that prevent students from seeking out for help

Question 18

This question aims to find out if students believe that the Algerian society, and teachers being a part of it are empathetic with individuals who suffer from a psychological problem,

and then were asked to justify regardless of their answer. The results obtained reveal that more than half of the respondents (53%) believe that neither the society nor teachers are supportive to people with poor mental health. Students believe that the society considers such individuals to be fools, and others believe that the society itself is what drives a person to be psychologically distressed. Some students on the other hand, stated that their psychological well-being is completely ignored by their teachers, and they don't take it seriously "since it's not visible then it doesn't exist». Moreover, 47% of the informants reported that the Algerian society and educators are empathetic to people with a mental health problem, since they are caring and supportive by nature.
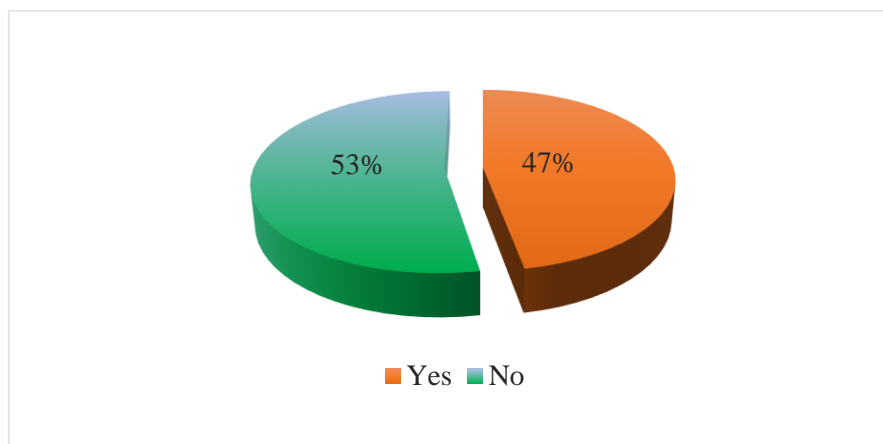
Figure 2.17: Students perceptions about teachers' attitudes towards mental health

Question 19

The informants were asked whether they believe that teachers are cognizant about students' mental health, and were requested to justify their answer. The pie chart below highlights that a high percentage of the respondents (58%) reported that teachers are not aware of their students' mental health. They justified their answer by adding that most educators are more concerned with finishing the course than to care about how students feel. Others stated that it depends on how teachers perceive their profession, whether it's about the income or the outcome, and the rest mentioned that educators do not really care about students' feelings, since they don't have sufficient mental health literacy. On the other hand, 42% claimed that teachers are mindful of students' psychological well-being, since it's a part of the teaching profession.
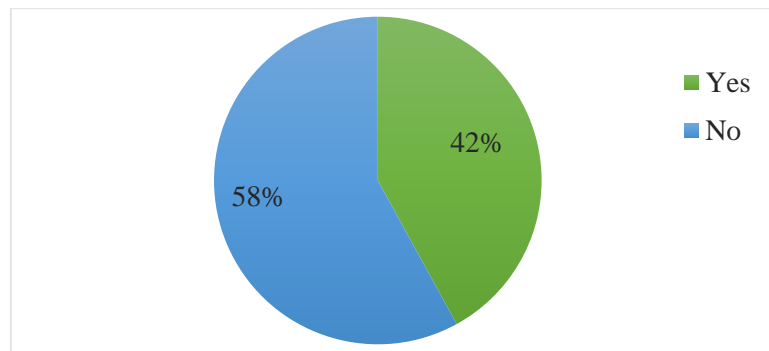
Figure 2.18: Teachers' awareness about student's psychological well-being

Question 20

This question was designed to elicit the informants' personal views with regard to the role of teachers/university staff in helping students with mental health problems. Students were initially asked if educators/university staff can help and then were requested to justify their answer by indicating what sort of help could be provided. The results displayed in the pie chart below mirror that 65% of the respondents believe that both the university staff and teachers can help in attending to students' mental health problems, since they are first in line to detect these issues. The participants mentioned different ways to help students who are psychologically disturbed, and they can be summarized into the following:

➢ The university staff and educators can avoid classroom segregation and treat students equally.

➢ Establish a friendly environment in which students are provided with an opportunity to open up about their psychological problems.

➢ Give students some pieces of advice to help them overcome their psychological distress (there is no harm in trying)

➢ Reduce academic load

➢ Provide therapeutic sessions at the level of the faculty.

➢ Avoid negative feedback

➢ Foster students' motivation

Moreover 35% of the informants reported that teachers cannot help students with poor mental health. These students justified their answer by adding that the university staff don' really care about them, while others indicated that they are neither experienced nor qualified to address students' psychological problems.
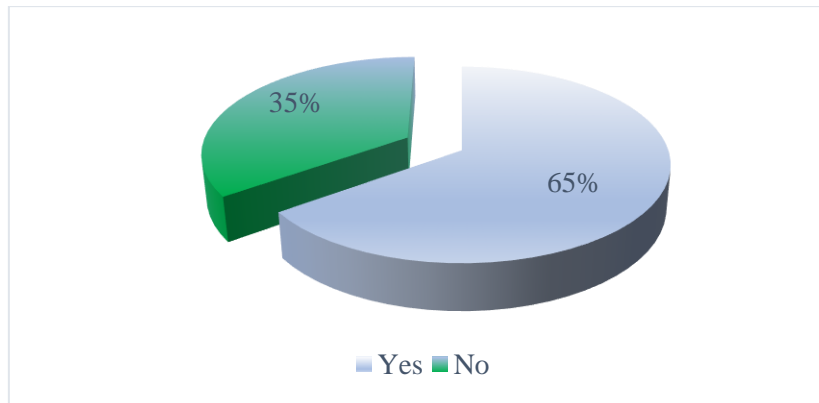
Figure 2.19: The role of educators /university staff in attending to student's mental health

Question 21

This question aims to find out if the COVID 19 outbreak influenced students' psychological well-being, and in what way. The purpose behind this question is to show that external factors can also affect students' mental health, as it can result in poor academic achievement. The results obtained reveal that the majority of the respondents representing 70% of the entire sample reported that they have been influenced by the pandemic. Students stated that it has influenced their motivation, and others noted that it made them feel so lonely and depressed that they were unable to function. In addition to that, they added that they have been affected since some of their relatives died, and they were afraid that they might end up the same way, since they were most of the time ruminating about what might happen. On the other hand,30% of students claimed that they haven't been influenced since they were not really following the strict rules that were set during that period.
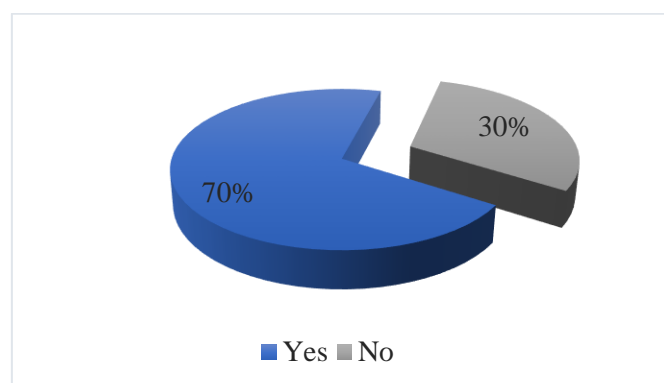
Figure 2.20 The impact of COVID 19 outbreak on students' psychological well-being

Question 22

Students were given an additional open-ended question in which they were provided with an opportunity to suggest, comment, or add anything that might have sprung to their mind

while answering the questionnaire. The majority of students stated that mental health is very serious, yet a neglected topic. While others believe that it is crucial to consider such matter and to help those who are struggling, as they feel that a person's psych is extremely important.

2.5.1.1 Results Interpretation

The results obtained from the questionnaire reveal that the majority of the participants are females representing 74% of the entire study sample, while males made up merely 26%. The reason behind inquiring about students' gender is because it has a strong relationship with mental health. On the other hand, the age range of the study sample has also been investigated and it was found that the participants' age varies between 18 and 41 years old. However, the majority of the informants were between 18 and 19 years old. These findings are consistent with the one in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) as well as the observation made by Patton et al (2009) which demonstrated that mental health problems are more common in young adults aged 16-24 years old. Moreover, there is abundant evidence that considers age as a substantial factor affecting mental health, since the age range at which students are usually enrolled in the university make them vulnerable to different psychological problems.

In the second section of the questionnaire, the researcher tried to find out students' perceptions with regard to mental health problems. As reflected in the result analysis, the majority of students perceive mental health as a very serious, yet a neglected problem, as they have stated that mental health and physical health should be treated equally. Such remarks are more of facts than just a presumption.

Mental health has always been regarded as a taboo, and people were not allowed to talk about such matter, since it wasn't considered as serious as a physical disease. Additionally, students' perceptions with regard to mental health are quite similar to the ones stated by Paige which revealed that "if *your arm is broken you get a cast, but if your brain is broken you get outcast"*. (11:42)

Moreover, the participants were then asked if they were diagnosed before with a mental condition (Q2), and the results obtained revealed that students tend to rely on self-diagnosis alongside with online screening to know about their mental health status. It can be deduced from these findings that students are unaware of the ineffectiveness of unprofessional diagnosis. One can also understand from these results that students' may have felt the

symptoms of an illness, which made them think that they have it, yet they will not really know unless they see a therapist.

After inquiring about the prevalence of mental health problems among second year EFL students (Q3), the results obtained revealed that the majority of the participants exhibit a mental health problem, with depression being the most prominent one (51%) followed by anxiety (28%) and bipolar disorders (21%,). The reason behind the prevalence of depression among college students can be attributed to various factors which are either related to academic stressors or non-academic-stressors. Their inability to cope and accommodate with the changes that the university setting may present can precipitate the first onset of mental health problems.

Moreover, the majority of respondents (66%) reported that they have wondered whether they exhibit poor mental health. Such result displays that although some students were never diagnosed, they still wondered whether they exhibit a poor mental health. On the other hand, the rest of the informants (34%) indicated that they neither were diagnosed nor did they ponder on their mental health status. In the same vein, almost half of the students tried to identify the root of their mental health problem online, whereas the rest of informants indicated that they never tried to know more about it. This minority are knowledgeable about the effect of the internet, as they may feel like it would poison their brain, since relying on mental health web-sites can often result in inaccurate self-diagnosis. Additionally, when students were asked about the frequency of looking after their mental health (Q6), the majority revealed that they occasionally look after it. The latter shows that students are not only aware about their mental health state, but they also consider it as important as their physical health. In the same vein, students were asked to rate their mental health status (Q7), and the majority (37%) indicated that they exhibit an average mental health state, (25%) reported that they were not quite sure about their mental well-being, and17% mentioned that they exhibit a poor mental health. These findings call for the need to take certain measures to promote students' mental health, since not only are students aware about the status of their mental well-being, but they are also struggling with it.

Most of the respondents tend to have recourse to their parents (45%) and friends (33%) for support than any other form of help. One can comprehend that the reason behind such choice might be confidentiality driven, or perhaps they might feel more comfortable addressing such personal matter with loved ones. Nonetheless, it would be even much more helpful to resort to

a mental health professional (therapist) which accounts for merely 12% in this study, since not only will he lend an ear but also knows how to deal with and treat the problem. The rest of the informants on the other hand, indicated that self-help, online therapy, personal tutor, and religion can be a great source for mental health support.

Furthermore, from the analysis above, it can be deduced that most of the participants asserted that psychological problems can have a detrimental effect on their academic achievement, as they believe that it mostly affects their motivation, concentration, and energy level. Such findings emphasise the importance of those three pillars for students' academic success. It is also worth mentioning that lack of motivation, low energy level, and inattention work hand in hand which means that if a student is demotivated, then he might not be able to concentrate, and if a student has a low energy level, he might be demotivated to learn. Students might not always be in their best mood, and teachers can help with that, if only with a smile. Additionally, the participants indicated that poor mental health can also influence their attendance, engagement in the classroom, academic self- efficacy, and academic self-image. Such findings highlight the need for the educators to consider appropriate educational instructions to moderate the effect of poor mental health on students' academic achievement.

The causes of mental health problems are not transparent, but there is a number of factors which can contribute in their development, as they can also lead to their first onset. According to students' responses, family problems and parents' divorce are the main reasons behind students 'psychological struggles. It can be deduced that the family companionship and emotional support count so much for young adults, and a strained relationship with parents can worsen their mental health, as it can trigger the first onset of depression. In addition to that, bullying (cyberbullying), childhood trauma, substance useare also regarded as the roots of mental health problems. These three factors can be closely connected, since bullying in a very young age can often result in childhood trauma, and traumatic childhood events can contribute in increased substance use. Alongside with that, students have also added that social conventions, and financial problems can contribute in worsening their mental health. In the same vein, students believe that academic related factors can also exacerbate their psychological well-being. More than half of the participants (63%) believe that teachers' negative comments can worsen their mental health state. It can be deduced from this result that students give undivided attention to the way teachers perceive and treat them in the classroom, and a negative comment, even if it is unintentional, can make a student feel

unappreciated, less worthy, and demotivated for the rest of the school year. Students have also reported that high-stakes exams can be a stress inducive factor. Whereas the rest of the informants believe that in class assignments deadlines can also exacerbate their mental well-being. It should be noted that students find it quite difficult to deal with the pressures at home and at the university all at once, that's why most of them give up, and drop out of college

(82%) of the participants are willing to join a free access to therapy, which is a good sign of a help-seeking behaviour, as it is the first step to support those who are psychologically distressed. In the same vein, it can also be deduced that students may be willing to join since a free access to therapy is way better than one which is paid for. Nonetheless, although the majority of the informants indicated they are inclined to take part in a free therapy, a minority (18%) feel reluctant to join. The analysis of the results above shows that approximately half of the participants (48%) are occasionally faced with a help-seeking dilemma, which means that they either keep their condition hidden and struggle in silence without specialist support, or incur stigma and discrimination by revealing their mental health condition. 60% of the informants mentioned they would feel less comfortable and stigmatized by their surrounding in the university if they resort to a therapist, while 40% indicated that they wouldn't feel any sort of negativity which is perhaps associated with their personality traits. Moreover, students are not only victims of the stigma attached to mental health, which account for 21% in this study, but they are also faced with other types of barriers that prevent them from seeking out for help.

The majority of the informants indicated that lack of time and support are the main reason why they're unable to seek out for help. Time constraints can be due to the overloaded program that college students are prone to, while lack of support can be on account of the misconception of mental health. It goes without saying that mental health has always been a neglected public health concern in our society, which is the main reason behind lack of support. In addition to that the idea of "It is not visible, it doesn't exist" can only contribute in reducing students' help-seeking behaviour, as it can worsen their psychological problem.

In the same vein, students have indicated that preference for self-reliance can also manifest itself as a barrier against the process of seeking out for help. The reason behind this choice is quite clear, and students cannot be criticized if they decided to deal with the problem on their own, especially if they are living in a society where their mental health problem is perceived as merely an excuse to get attention. However, the main aim of this study is to help them get

appropriate support, and that cannot be done if they keep trying to handle the problem on their own. In the same context, skepticism about the effectiveness of the support provided by a therapist has also been considered as a barrier by students, alongside with unawareness about the available recourses, and fear of people (Anthropophobia) which can also be regarded as a form of stigma.

Mental health is a serious critical issue, but is the society empathetic to those who are struggling with it? Students' responses reveal that mental health is not something that the society would care about, as they believe that social conventions are the main reason behind their psychological problems. In the same vein, the majority of the participants (58%) believe that teachers are not aware about students' mental health, since their main concern is to transmit the cognitive knowledge. However, 42% mentioned that educators are mindful of students' psychological well-being, since it's a part of the teaching profession.

The main purpose of this research paper is not only to raise awareness about students' mental health but to find solutions, or at least orient the process to help students find solutions themselves. Accordingly, students were asked if teachers/university staff have a role in attending to student's mental health, and to indicate what type of help can be provided. As displayed in the analysis of the results above, more than half of the participants (65%) indicated that educators have a significant role to play, while only 35% believed otherwise. The informants believe that there are different strategies to help students who are psychologically disturbed, and creating a friendly classroom atmosphere can be the first step of the helping process. It is quite clear why students choose that as a part of the remedial measures, since a relaxing environment can help them feel more comfortable, and less anxious, as it can also increase a sense of optimism in students, and help them fight back any unsettling feelings or intrusive thoughts. Alongside with that, students have also reported that treating students equally can also help enhance student's motivation and self-esteem, which are at the same conducive to a positive mental health. In the same vein, teachers' positive comments, and pieces of advice can sometimes make wonders. The idea here is to always remind students of their worth, and encourage them to have faith in themselves. Additionally, the participants also believe that having a therapeutic session with a mental health professional can also help promote their mental health. That is probably the best suggestion ever made, since a therapist will not merely detect the roots of the problem, but also help students overcome their psychological handicap.

The conditions that students are currently prone to have also been taken into account. Covid 19 outbreak is not only annihilating individuals' lungs but also their minds. Students were then asked if Corona virus affected their mental health, and the majority (70%) indicated that they were profoundly influenced by the pandemic. It would be impossible not to be affected, especially for those with poor coping mechanism. Being isolated and watching the world falling apart can not only cause panic attacks and depression, but it can also lead to suicide. In the same vein, 30% of the informants indicated that they were not influence by the pandemic, and such minority can be perceived as a rare case, or perhaps they were able to cope with the abrupt change COVID-19 generated.

Although the participants offered only a few suggestions, they still were taken very seriously, as they were greatly appreciated. They reported that the best thing to do is to raise awareness, since the society is negligent of such matter. They also believe that it is crucial to adopt a different mental health landscape in order to help those who are struggling get the appropriate help and treatment.

2.5.2 Teachers' interview analysis:

This section embodies the analysis of the results obtained from teachers' interview. Twelve questions were designed to gather an elaborated data as far as students' mental health is concerned and to fillthe gaps of this research paper. Additionally, the findings were analysed in a descriptive manner as follows:

Q1: Have you ever noticed an abnormal behaviour of a student which indicated signs of a psychological problem? Please elaborate

All the informants reported that they have witnessed some strange demeanoursof students which indicated signs of a mental health problem. The first participant mentioned that he noticed a strange behaviour in oral classes, where some students were mainly sweating, blushing, and avoiding participation. He further explained that such signs made him aware of the presence of a psychological problem. The second participant stated that teachers are able to feel that a student is psychologically disturbed throughout his facial expression, and seating. She also claimed that she observed a student who was always moving, and trembling, and she stated that such behaviour made her aware that her student was suffering from a mental health problem. As she also affirmed that students' behaviour in the classroom can be a good indicator of psychological problems. The third participant on the other hand mentioned

that he had a student who behaved in a very strange way, as he was so aggressive to both his peers, and teachers. The fourth respondent has reported that she also had an aggressive student, whom she later on found out that he had very poor living conditions, and his parents were divorced. She also stated that her student was so depressed that he felt obliged to take drugs to escape from the bitterness of reality. In contrast, the fifth participant stated that one of his students was too skeptical, and he noticed that in her reaction, and interaction with others. While the sixth participant mentioned that teachers are first in line to observe and detect the presence of a psychological problem. He also claimed that he had witnessed a lot of abnormalities in his student's behaviour, which indicated signs of a mental health condition. As for the seventh respondent, she reported that she had an experience with two of her students who behaved in a way that made her detect the presence of a mental health problem. She reported that the first student was unable to manage her time, as she was more concerned with family and work than her studies, and she was always ruminating about failing in her studies, since she could not accommodate to both her work and studies. While the other student was very competitive, and took her grades very seriously to an extent where she started creating problems to both her peers and teachers.

Q2: In your opinion, what are the most common psychological inhibitions that college students exhibit?

The majority of the respondents agreed on depression and anxiety being the most prominent psychological problems that college students exhibit. Nonetheless, one among the 6 participants believes that university students may also be subjected to mania. He also mentioned that he had an experience with a student who showed symptoms of both manic depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Another respondent stated that her student had suicidal ideation, and she reported that when her students were asked to write about something they have experienced before in their lives. That one particular student wrote about a suicide attempt. In contrasts, two participants indicated that students can also be subjected to fear, and they stated that it can persist throughout their lives and result in other mental health problems such as depression. One participant, on the other hand mentioned that students can exhibit anger, which is in itself a sign of a mental health problem.

**Q3: According to you, to what extent do psychological problems influence students'
academic achievement? And in what way?**

All the respondents concurred that mental health problems can have a drastic impact on students' academic achievement. The majority of the respondent mentioned that students with psychological problems will not be able to concentrate, nor will they be able to discuss or participate in the classroom. Two among the six respondents reported that students with psychological problems can find it too difficult to function that they end up dropping out of college. One respondent on the other hand stated that the effect that mental health problems have on learning can determine whether students succeed or not. He further explained that psychologically disturbed students can be less-confident, as they may belittle their abilities, and exhibit a negative academic self-image, and end up underperforming compared to their peers who are psychologically stable. In contrast, one of the six participants mentioned that mental health issues can influence students' self-esteem, and they may avoid taking part in any academic task, which will in its turn prevent them from progressing in their studies. While the rest of the participants believe that problems such as depression can often result in low motivation, hopelessness, and poor academic achievement.

Q4: According to you, what are the factors that exacerbate students' psychological well-being in a university setting?

The results obtained from this question reveal that all of the seven participants believe that external factors such as social problems, economic problems, family problems, childhood trauma, poor nutrition and worrying about an uncertain future can lead to severe mental health issues regardless of the problems that students face in the university setting. The majority also believe that students psychological problems are more economically driven than classroom driven. The first participant mentioned that students may already be facing some very serious problems at home, and then they come to the classroom and encounter other issues such as loaded program, unforgivable deadlines, and teachers 'negative affective behaviour. He further explained that some students may have a strained relationship with their teachers, which in its turn renders students more anxious. The second and the third participant believe that classroom segregation can often lead to psychological problems. They reported that students may feel that their teacher is not treating them equally, and that can make them anxious, less confident, unworthy, depressed and less interested in the subject matter he is teaching. The fourth participant claimed that the evaluation system is also a contributing factor. He added that students put much more importance on the grade than the learning process itself. He also referred to the inappropriate environment that students are obliged to study in and he associated that with a theory labelled as "The Broken Window". He further

explained that students can feel less motivated if they study in an environment where neither the learning equipment nor a proper learning atmosphere are available. The fifth informant shares the same perceptions as the first and the fourth participant. She also believes that classroom environment, teachers' behaviour toward their students, loaded programs, and administrative reasons can worsen students' psychological well-being. In addition to that, she stated that lack of time can also be a stress inducive factor, since the majority of college students tend to take a part-time job to reach their basic needs, and as they strive to undertake adult-like responsibilities, they often fall behind and become unable to accommodate to both academic and non-academic requirements. She has also mentioned that the way a teacher assesses and evaluates his/her students can also contribute in worsening their psychological well-being, since some teachers tend to be strict, and not even-handed when it comes to TD marks, and this can only add insult to injury. The sixth and the seventh participant also believe that the way students are being evaluated can trigger some mental health problems. In addition to that the seventh participant added that substance use, and the effect of technology can also exacerbate student's psychological well-being.

Q5: What is the role of university staff/educators in attending to student's mental health?

All the respondents believe that both the university staff and educators have a significant role to play in attending to students' mental health. Moreover, the majority of the participants are specialized in the field of didactics, therefore they are mindful of the art of teaching, and the importance of students' psychological well-being in the educational field. On the basis of their experience, they provided different instructional plans and potential strategies to help students who are psychologically disturbed and they can be summarized as follows:

- Establish a very relaxing and friendly classroom atmosphere where students feel comfortable enough to share and open up about their psychological problems, and to reach out for help when needed.
- Maintain a good rapport with students (a positive relationship built on trust and respect)
- Lend an ear and listen empathetically and attentively to all students in particular those who are psychologically disturbed
- Educators are invited to present and offer a positive affective model to be imitated, since teachers' behavior and attitudes toward their students can have a profound influence on their psychological well-being and achievement in the classroom.

- Avoid classroom segregation and treat all students equally.

- Teachers and the administration can be flexible in terms of students' attendance.

- Teachers can have conferences with parents to enhance the chances of helping students who exhibit a mental health problem.

- Having a mental health professional or a therapist at the faculty will enable teachers to identify what strategies might best help students who are mentally unstable.

- Organize workshops and study days to raise awareness about students' mental health and reduce the stigma associated with it.

Q6: Do you believe that educators have sufficient mental health literacy?

The results obtained from this question reveal that the majority of the participants are not sure if teachers are equipped with sufficient mental health literacy to help their students. While two informants stated that they can't give a clear-cut answer, since it depends on the teacher himself and the way he perceives such matter. One participant on the other hand reported that it depends on the field the teacher is specialized in. He further explained that teachers who are specialized in the field of didactics are cognizant of different aspects in cognitive psychology and psychopedagogy, as they are also aware of students' affective factors, and the impact of the affective filter on learners' academic achievement. Whereas those who are specialized in the literary field are not really mindful of students' psychological well-being. He also believes that one cannot say that educators are fully aware since it all falls to their discretion, and their personality. Another respondent mentioned that teachers are not really aware of their own mental health, and are therefore unable to be mindful of their students' psychological well-being. Moreover, the findings also revealed that all of the respondents agreed that educators should have some effective training to improve their mental health literacy, and to appropriately respond and help those who are struggling.

Q7: What changes would you make in the classroom to facilitate the learning process for students with a mental illness?

The respondents held different perceptions as far as this question is concerned. The first and the second participants believe that bringing laughter and fun into the classroom can make students feel less anxious and motivated enough to learn. As they have also mentioned that teachers' positive feedback is the key to encourage and motivate students to progress, especially for those who are mentally unstable. The third participant on the other hand asserted that it depends on how the teacher manages his/her classroom. He believes that

arranging students in small groups can offer those who are psychologically disturbed with the opportunity to engage and participate in the classroom. In contrast, the fourth participant stated that it would be preferable to become acquainted with the level and mental health status of students before starting the lecture. She also believes that one must avoid putting a student in a situation where he/she feels less-worthy, especially for those with a mental illness. As she indicated that teachers will better understand their students if they act more as a friend than an authoritarian figure. Whereas the fifth and sixth informants mentioned that educators should not make a distressed student feel ignored, as they believe that a teacher can opt for smart tactics to involve all students in a classroom debate. If the teacher shows his students that he cares about them that will automatically foster their self-esteem, and make them feel appreciated and viewed as simple human beings and not an illness. The seventh informant on the other hand reported that it would be preferable to work with a professional since it is a bit difficult to deal with students with a mental health problem. He also added that a therapist can help educators better understand the type of the problem the student is facing and provide them with strategies to moderate its impact on his/her academic progress.

Q8: Do you believe that metacognitive strategies and self-regulatory skills as potential learning-related supports can act as a buffer against students' mental health problems? Please elaborate

The majority of the informants believe that metacognitive strategies and self-regulatory skills can enable students to overcome their psychological handicap. As it can help them manage disruptive emotions and alter their thinking patterns into positive ones. One among the seven participants believe that as long as we invite students to reflect on their own learning, we are simultaneously helping them to reflect on their own way of seeing things as well. He further added that if students are able to adopt and adhere to these potent strategies, they will then be aware of how to manage their own thinking, thus see the bright side of things. Two participants on the other hand reported that although these strategies are helpful, one must know how to implement them in a classroom setting. They both believe that metacognition and emotional self-regulation can work wonders, however neither the teacher nor the students are equipped with the sufficient knowledge to apply them in an educational field. They mentioned that not all students have the ability to evaluate and manage their emotional state alongside with their thinking patterns. One participant suggested how to work with such strategies, as she asserted that a neurolinguistics module should be added to the curriculum to get students accustomed with such skills and to help teachers implement them

in their classroom setting. While four among the seven respondents claimed that it would be preferable to work with a mental health professional to help teachers integrate such strategies in an academic context. They all believe that most of the barriers that prevent students from learning exist in their brain, therefore, it is imperative for learners to be mindful of the benefits of metacognition and self-regulation to both their academic and non-academic life.

Q9: Did one of your students' exhibiting a mental illness asked for your assistance? How did you respond?

The results obtained from this question reveal that the majority of the informants reported that one of their students requested their help, and they indicated that they tried to be comprehensive and empathetic in their response to the situation. Whereas 3 participants stated that although none of their students requested their assistance, they still feel responsible enough to approach them on their own, and provide them with the help needed, especially if they noticed signs of distress. One informant on the other hand indicated that it wasn't a direct request for assistance, but she felt it throughout her student interaction and behaviour. She further added that students may try to find excuses to get closer to their teacher, and that can represent signs of a help-seeking behaviour.

Q10: According to you what are the barriers that prevent students with a mental health problem from seeking out for help?

The majority of the participants agreed that stigma can manifest itself as major obstacle for students with mental health problems. The first informant reported that social conventions, and the way people perceive such matter (taboo) can also prevent students from seeking out for help. He also added that students can be victims of the stigma associated with mental health, as they are most of the time stereotyped and viewed as sick people rather than normal individuals. The second and the third respondent mentioned that embarrassment, fear of being labelled as crazy, and lack of self-confidence can also preclude students from seeking out for help. They also associated attitudes to help seeking with individual characteristics. They believe that students who exhibit a strong personality can overcome such barriers. The fourth participant indicated that it depends on the rapport that exist between the teacher and his students. He further explained that students may feel afraid to approach some teachers, while some might not feel comfortable enough due to the lack of trust and respect between the two subjects. The fifth and the sixth participant partially agree with the first participant. They both believe that the society exhibits some judgmental attitudes towards people with mental health

problems. As they both reported that students are also afraid of mockery and being viewed as an attention-seeker. The seventh participant on the other hand indicated that the majority of students are afraid of what their friends might think of them, for this reason they avoid disclosing their psychological problem to avoid being viewed differently by them. Based on teachers' responses, it is abundantly clear that the main obstacle that prevent students is from seeking out for help is the stigma attached to mental health.

Q11: What can a teacher/the university staff do about those barriers that you just mentioned?

The first informant indicated that educators can help facilitate the process of help seeking by normalizing mental health conditions, yet not in the sense of ignoring their seriousness. He further explained that interaction and sharing personal experiences can be the first step to help students open up about their psychological problems, as it can help reduce the stigma associated with mental health. He also added that a teacher can transmit a sense of optimism amidst his learners, to help them see the positive side of things. The second informant reported that teachers cannot be *"the jack of all the trades"*. He further explained that educators can work with a mental health professional, to figure out what tactics might best help those vulnerable students to open up, and then implement them in the classroom. The third, the fourth, and the fifth respondents share the same perceptions as those of the first informant. They all believe that talking about mental health can increase help-seeking behaviour in students. While the fourth informant stated that establishing a good rapport with students can also facilitate the process of help-seeking. The sixth respondent asserted that reducing stigma cannot be easily done since the society's cultural perspectives are not built on the idea of "Mental Health Matters". She indicated that cultural beliefs can have an impact on how mental disorders are perceived, as they can influence help-seeking attitudes. As for the seventh respondent, she claimed that it first depends on how the administration and teachers perceive such matter. She believes that they can't change things if they themselves hold negative attitudes towards mental health.

Q12: What would you suggest to promote student's mental health?

The results obtained from this question reveal that teachers had different suggestions with regard to the promotion of students' mental health, and they can be summarized as follows:

- Raise awareness about the importance of students' mental health.

- Teachers are invited to take into consideration both the affective and cognitive side of learners since they are equally important.

- Talk about mental health to facilitate the process of help seeking.

- Enhance students' self-esteem, and self-confidence.

- Students must build healthy eating habits, since their physical and mental health are strongly connected.

- Educators are invited to work with a therapist to improve their mental health literacy, and to identify how to better understand and promote students' psychological well-being in an academic setting.

2.5.2.1 Results interpretation

The results obtained from the teachers' interview function as a second argument which affirms the importance of students' mental health and the significant role that educators have to play in attending to this matter.

As displayed in the above results analysis, it is quite clear that teachers are not merely aware about their students' psychological well-being, but they are also able to detect different mental health symptoms in their students' demeanours. In the same vein, the participants have also indicated that they were able to detect such signs throughout student's facial expression, seating pattern, and interaction with others. It can be deduced from these results that teachers are attentive to the affective side of learners, and that can be regarded as a good sign, especially since most students tend to take solace in the idea that their teachers care about their well-being.

Moreover, the informants indicated that there are different psychological problems that college students can be prone to, such as mania, obsessive compulsive disorder, fear, and anger. Nonetheless, the most prominent mental health problems that students struggle with in a university setting are mainly depression, and anxiety. Such results are quite similar to the ones found in students' questionnaire. Depression is there but we just can't see it. The pain it causes is also there but we just can't feel it. Students might have a lot of unsettling feelings which can be attributed to either academic or non-academic stressors. Yet, the idea here is not only to find out the roots behind the problem, but to observe, understand, and adopt some instructions to ameliorate students' coping skills, and moderate the impact poor mental health has on students' educational attainment.

All the participants believe that poor mental health can create a learning impediment, as it can result in demotivation, lack of concentration, and low self-esteem. Alongside with that, teachers also believe that students who are psychological disturbed can sometimes exhibit a negative academic self-image, as they can belittle themselves and their abilities in achieving a given task. These findings infer the importance of motivation, concentration, self-esteem, and maintaining a positive academic self-image, since they represent substantial factors for students to succeed. Motivation in itself is the will to achieve a particular goal, and students with mood disorders such as depression are most of the time unable to function, as they may feel less interested in doing all what was once enjoyable for them. The core of the matter is that when a student loses interest in what he is learning, he will no longer concentrate, and eventually end up failing in his studies which might lead him to drop out college. It is also worth mentioning that lack of concentration may be a result of the impact poor mental health has on students cognitive functioning.

Teachers' responses regarding the factors that exacerbate student's psychological well-being were mainly related to external factors such as social problems, economic problems, worrying about an uncertain future, family problems, childhood trauma, and poor nutrition. It can be understood from these findings that students' mental health problems are economically and socially driven than classroom driven. It is in plain sight that the environment an individual grows up in can lead to poor mental health, and the solutions here are not and cannot be done by the teacher, but by the society and government itself.

However, teachers have also indicated that there are some academic related factors that can contribute in worsening students' psychological well-being such as loaded program, unforgivable deadlines, classroom segregation, and the evaluation system. Alongside with that, they also believe that teachers' negative affective behaviour, and classroom environment can also add fuel to fire. These results infer the drastic impact academic stressors can have on student's mental health and learning outcomes. Additionally, the results also show the necessity for teachers to adopt a flexible approach in the classroom to minimize academic pressures.

The main aim of this study is to bring about some solutions, or at least suggestions to help students with mental health problems. The teachers provided different ways to assist those who are psychologically struggling. The informants believe that the first step to help their students is through establishing a friendly relaxing atmosphere in the classroom, where a good

rapport is maintained, and students' unequal treatment is avoided. These results invoke the influence that the school environment and teachers' behaviour have on students' emotional state. And that is quite congruent with Arnold (1999) statement which indicates that a strained relationship with teachers can sometimes lead to anxiety. In the same light, it can be said that students are attentive to the different attitudes and demeanours that teachers may display in the classroom, and if they sense any sort of negativity, such as favouring one student over another, it can generate some psychological problems, as it can worsen the ones that they were already prone to. Moreover, the participants have also indicated that both the university staff and teachers can be flexible in terms of student's attendance. This implies that some students may feel psychologically worn out to attend any lectures, but they are still obliged to given the strict system that their institution adopts with regard to the mandatory attendance. Additionally, given a psychological reason for not attending is not as serious as a physical one, although they are both medical conditions, yet a psychological issue is considered as an excuse than an illness. In the same framework, working with parents and mental health professionals can also contribute in the identification, intervention, and prevention of mental health problems. In addition to that, organizing workshops to discuss student's mental health can also contribute in reducing the stigma attached to it and provide students with the opportunity to open up about their problems so as to get the appropriate help needed.

Educators are quite cognizant about their role in attending to their students' mental health, yet, they are still unequipped with sufficient mental health literacy to provide those who are psychologically distressed with the appropriate help needed. The results obtained highlight the need for improving teachers' mental health literacy, as they require to have effective training to expand their knowledge in terms of the symptoms and causes of their students' psychological issues, as well as the different barriers and facilitators of help-seeking behaviour.

Instructors are quite aware that their students spend a significant amount of time in the classroom, and it can be tiresome especially for those with psychological problems, since they may find it arduous to concentrate, or take part in any given academic task due to the influence poor mental health has on their cognitive functioning. For this reason, teachers believe that bringing laughter and fun in the classroom can be very helpful, since it helps in alleviating stress and increasing a sense of positivity (Endorphins) in students. Additionally, inviting students to work in groups can alleviate stress and help them engage more in the

academic task. In the same light, teachers can act more as a friend than an authoritarian figure and provide a positive feedback and equally treat students to foster their self-esteem, and self-worth. It is in plain sight that students tend to be less anxious and more motivated to learn when they feel appreciated and acknowledged.

Metacognitive strategies and self-regulatory skills are also classified as helpful tools for students with a psychological problem given the positive correlation that exists between those potent strategies and mental health. In addition to that, both metacognition and self-regulation can help in the betterment of students coping mechanism, as they can also boost their self-esteem and enable them to manage any unsettling emotions or intrusive thoughts. Nonetheless, the informants believe that these strategies can be appropriately integrated only through the help of a professional.

As shown in the above results analysis, the majority of the participants experienced a help-seeking behaviour on the part of their students. It can be deduced that teacher's orientation and the way they treat and respond to their students' concerns can either preclude students from approaching their teachers for help or it can encourage them to open up about what's troubling them. For this reason, instructors are invited to be more flexible than authoritarian, since not all students are reluctant to seek out for help.

Seeking help is regarded as a crucial step towards getting the appropriate mental health support and ameliorating the quality of life. Nonetheless, there are some obstacles that prevent those who are psychologically struggling from approaching others for help. According to the informants' responses, the stigma attached to mental health is the main barrier to help-seeking, and that is quite evident, since such critical issue has always been regarded as a taboo in the eyes of the society. Mental health misconceptions will merely generate fear, self-doubt, and embarrassment in those who are prone to it, as they can also worsen their condition. However, to cope with such negativity depends on students' personality traits. If he/she exhibit a strong character, he/she may not be easily affected by others' negative comments. Additionally, a negative rapport can also manifest itself as a barrier, since the way teachers approach their students can influence both their academic progress and psychological well-being.

Normalizing mental health can enhance help-seeking behaviour in some students but it can also create a cycle of avoidance for others. Some students may not take their condition

seriously, and they may avoid requesting for support, since they perceive their psychological problem as merely a transient phase. Therefore, it would be preferable to normalize talking about mental health and raise students' awareness about its gravity simultaneously.

Moreover, sharing personal experiences can be an effective tactic to encourage students to open up about their emotional struggles, since the more mental health problems are discussed, the more the level of literacy is improved, and the more stigma is reduced. In the same vein, maintaining a positive relationship based on trust and respect with students can also increase help-seeking behaviour. Students may feel at ease to disclose their problems, if the teacher establishes the ground for that.

Teachers may not be the jack of all the trades, but they are still quite aware of their students' well-being in the classroom, as they also know that teaching is not merely about the cognitive side but the affective side as well. Nonetheless, although teachers may try their best to help their students, they can't change the negative attitudes that the society holds towards mental health, but they can still guide students to get appropriate mental health support and overcome their psychological handicap.

The crux of this research paper is to promote students' mental health and help them get the appropriate help needed. According to the participants' responses, discussing and raising awareness about the problem can help produce a conducive space for positive mental health. In addition to that, the affective side of learners must be taken into account before engaging in the cognitive one, since students may not be always in the mood to study, especially after the exams results. Teachers can also help enhance students' self-esteem and self 'confidence since they can both act as buffer against mental health problems. The more students realise their self-worth, the more they are able to manage their distress.

Last but not least consulting a mental health professional can be beneficial for both teachers and students, since the expert knows more about the problem, and they can recommend what strategies may best help the students. They can also invite students to regulate their eating habits for the betterment of their mental status.

2.6 The general findings of the study

A mixed- method design was carried out to undertake this exploratory study with the aim of gathering relevant data that may help answering the two research questions, that were formulated at the beginning of this work, and to check the validity of their corresponding

hypothesis. The two research instruments that were employed are a semi-structured questionnaire for second year EFL learners and a semi-structured interview for teachers.

The students' questionnaire and teachers' interview both helped in eliciting insightful information with regard to the investigated topic. The participants of this study are mindful of the significance of mental health in an individual's life, and its' impact on students' academic progress.

In the same vein, the results obtained from students' questionnaire revealed that half of the participants are prone to depression while the rest are subjected to anxiety and bipolar disorder. The teachers interview results revealed that depression and anxiety are the most prominent mental health problems that college students are prone to. In addition to that, the interview findings also revealed that some students are also subjected to manic depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, suicide ideation, fear, and anger. These results partially confirm the first hypothesis which denotes that depression, chronic anxiety, bipolar disorder, attention deficit, and psychotic disorders are one of the major problems that second year EFL students are subjected to. It is also worth noting that although none of the students were subjected to attention deficit, it was reported that they exhibit other psychological problems which are as serious and debilitating as ADHD.

The findings also lend credence to the observation of Elliot & Smith (2010), Pedrelli et al (2014) and Davies et al (2016) which indicated that depression and anxiety are the most commonly experienced mental health problems among college students.

The second hypothesis, on the other hand, stipulates that establishing a relaxing atmosphere where metacognition and self-regulatory skills, as potential learning related support, are implemented could benefit students with mental health concerns in both academic and non-academic settings. Students' literacy about mental health is quite insufficient, that is why asking them about such strategies wouldn't bring fruitful results. Therefore, they were invited to suggest the strategies that they think would best help them overcome or at least alleviate their psychological handicap. Students' responses revealed that setting up a relaxing and friendly classroom atmosphere can help in diminishing stress, as it can help in fostering their motivation. In addition to that they indicated that avoiding classroom segregation and providing positive feedback can help enhance their self-esteem and engagement in the classroom. In the same vein, they have also reported that reducing study

load and providing therapeutic sessions can also help them better in managing their psychological distress. These results are quite congruent with that of (Baik et al, 2017; Chaudary,2016; Torres 2017), as they are also in parallel with that of teachers.

The findings of teachers' interview, on the other hand, displayed that the use of metacognition and self-regulatory skills with the help of a professional can really work wonders. The latter confirm the 2nd hypothesis, as it parallels that of (Chamanabad, Mirdoragh, &Pakmeh, 2011; Salehi &Ifaei, 2014; Vanderlind ,2017; Weight2017). Nonetheless, although the implementation of these strategies seemed a bit out of hand for some teachers, they still remain one among the different tools that can help those who are psychologically distressed.

Furthermore, the role of teachers is not merely limited to what they can do but also what they know. That is why the impact of mental health, its causes, and barriers to help seeking have been investigated. The results obtained from both the teachers' interview and students' questionnaire revealed that poor mental health can result in lack of concentration, de-motivation, and low energy level. These findings were mainly highlighted in the study of Son et al (2020) as well as that of Sharkin (2012).

As displayed in the results above, poor mental health can be attributed to different factors which are mainly, according to teachers and students, socioeconomically driven than classroom driven. However, the factors can be related to family problems, as they are also related to the strained relationship between teachers and their students.

As far as the barriers are concerned, both teachers and students believe that the stigma attached to mental health is the main contributor in preventing students from seeking out for help. These findings lend credence to that of lally et al (2013), Kosyluk et al (2016), Milin et al (2016), Panj et al (2017) and Vidourek et al (2014). Alongside with that, students also believe that lack of time and support can also manifest itself as a barrier to help seeking.

As a conclusion, it can be declared that the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview helped in answering the research questions, and provided an in-depth clarification to all what was first ambiguous in this investigation. Additionally, different remedial measures were elicited to help finding solutions to the research problem.

2.7 Conclusion

The present chapter was divided into two main sections. The first section was devoted to a detailed description of the methodology used in this exploratory study. Whereas the second section aimed to analyse and interpret the data gathered from the two different research instruments, as it also attempted to confirm the validity of the hypotheses that were formulated at the beginning of this work.

The information that was elicited from both the questionnaire and the interview helped in better understanding the research problem, and displayed that second year EFL students are prone to different mental health problems, which are mainly depression, and anxiety. Additionally, the results also revealed that although metacognition and self-regulatory skills can help students manage their negative emotions, there are still other steps to be followed before reaching the implementation of those strategies. Such steps can be represented in the establishment of an appropriate relaxing learning environment and the maintenance of a good rapport with students. The teachers also think that the implication of metacognition and self-regulation in relation to mental health can be appropriately done by a therapist than a teacher. On the basis of the entire findings, the two research questions have been answered and their corresponding hypotheses have been tested and confirmed by the researcher.

On the light of what has been said, some suggestions and recommendations will be outlined in the following chapter to help promote students' mental health and to guarantee full authenticity and validity of this research paper.

<p style="text-align:center;">Chapter Three:</p>

<p style="text-align:center;">Promoting Students' Mental Health - Suggestions and Recommendations</p>

Chapter Three: Promoting Students' Mental Health - Suggestions and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, second year EFL students are prone to a range of serious mental health problems that are both pedagogically and economically driven. These psychological problems are believed to have a detrimental impact on students' learning outcomes and the teaching staff are believed to have a significant role to play with regard to this critical issue. Therefore, in the light of the findings of this research work, the present chapter will be devoted to some suggestions and recommendations for both instructors and EFL learners to appropriately manage and moderate mental health problems in the university context.

3.2 Establishing a Friendly Classroom Atmosphere

Students' may come to the classroom with already existing internal problems that can influence the learning process and yield to poor academic performance. Therefore, it is recommended for teachers to establish supportive and safe environment for students to moderate the aggravation of their psychological handicap and guarantee optimum learning outcomes. Additionally, teachers can ensure a positive classroom atmosphere by implementing effective teaching strategies that are tailored to learners needs, and that involve boosting their self-esteem, and motivation. Additionally, since teachers are in helm of the classroom, they are invited not only to adjust the classroom environment to students' preferences, but to also render it a "home away from home" through making it more comfortable and functional for learning to take place.

Students might have a troubled home life, and the least teachers can do is to have the patience and compassion to make one of their daily environments supportive to whatever chaos they may be going through. In the same line of thoughts, a study conducted by Bird (2020) revealed the importance of creating a safe environment for learners, as she reported that maintaining a sense of safety in the classroom is closely linked to positive mental health. That is quite evident because if students feel unsafe at school, they may find it quite arduous to regulate their emotions and behaviour, as they may be less engaged in learning. She further added that theuse of an educational framework that involves a trauma-and-violence-informed-care (TVIC)may help schools provide safe places for all students including those exposed to

trauma, structural violence and experiencing mental health concerns. Moreover, initial teacher education can also offer a natural opportunity to prepare future educators with the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy needed to create learning environments that are safe, equitable and meet the needs of all students, including those with mental health concerns.

In the light of the findings of this study, it seems that both teachers and students encourage the establishment of a friendly classroom climate. In most cases, all what students need is a good, supportive classroom atmosphere that ignites their psychological motives towards hard work, maximum achievement and progress in their education.

Furthermore, one significant theory labelled as "*The broken window*" was mentioned by one of the interviewees while collecting DATA, and it really attracted the researcher's attention since it demonstrates the impact that a classroom climate can have on students' psychological well-being and academic achievement. This theory was first introduced by George Kelling and James Wislon in1982 to display the reasons behind high rates of crime in a given neighbourhood. These two authors indicated that *"one unrepaired broken window is a signal that no one cares and so breaking more windows costs nothing"* (Kelling & Wilson, 1982, para.11). In the same vein, this theory was considered to have a significant correlation with an academic setting. Simply put, if the educational context presents signs of chaotic and insecure climate it is more likely that students will react accordingly, as they might also feel overwhelmed, and end up failing to appropriately engage in a given academic task. It is also worth mentioning that a given unusual behaviour on the part of learners may not happen in vacuum. There is a reason for everything. Students may display apathetic attitudes towards a given pedagogical instruction, as they may feel less comfortable and frustrated about the disorganized classroom environment, they are involved in. That is quite evident especially if the one place that is believed to contribute to their personal growth is in itself a stress inductive factor. This shows that students' demeanour is not merely limited to what they already feel inside but also to the environment they are obliged to attend to for a considerable amount of time. For this reason, it is essential for teachers to manage the classroom in a way that is conducive for both students' learning and their affective well-being.

Maintaining a positive classroom environment can start by developing relationships with individual students. As it can take place by adopting a universal design for learning (UDL) or differentiated instruction (DI) which include strategies that help in engaging all students in the classroom. Simultaneously, teachers can permit the learners to attend group

activities without requiring active participation. Along the same line, educators can also avoid classroom segregation and treat all students equally to ensure a sense of belonging and optimism among students.

3.3 Maintaining a Positive Rapport with Students

Teachers spend a considerable time with their students; thus, they are the first in line to detect any abnormalities in their student's behaviour that may indicate signs of a psychological problem. Moreover, although instructors might not be able to undertake the role of psychiatrist, they can still undertake a pastoral care or a gatekeepers' role, and help in the identification, intervention, and prevention of mental health issues. By doing this, educators will not only alleviate the severity of these psychological inhibitions but also reduce their persistence throughout the life course. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that teachers' role is not merely limited to what they know or what they can do, but also to how they react, interact and treat their students in the classroom. In particular, the interpersonal relationship between educators and their students is regarded as substantial component for students' academic success and social development.

Hence it is imperative to ensure a positive relationship to guarantee optimum learning results. According to Harmer (2007), an enjoyable respectful relationship between teachers and students is considered as a positive rapport. In the same vein, Faranda& Clarke (2004:274) defined the notion of Rapport as "the ability to maintain harmonious relationships based on affinity"

The type of relationship that students have with their teachers can make the learning process enjoyable and fun, as it can make it dull and frustrating. This implies that student's success is not merely limited to the syllabus content, teaching approaches, and the materials used in the classroom but it also relies on the teachers' behaviour towards their students and the kind of relationship that the two hold.

Maintaing a positive rapport is specifically based on trust and mutual respect. These two elements are perceived to be essential for building an encouraging and comfortable classroom atmosphere, which in turn results in minimizing students' unsettling emotions and optimizing academic achievement. In the same line of thoughts, brookfield (1990) noted that the affective glue that binds educational relationship together is the trust that exists between teachers and theirstudents. Hence, not trusting teachers can have numerous implications on students.

Learners may feel reluctant to submit themselves to the precarious uncertainties of new knowledge, and eventually end up avoiding taking risks. Additionally, such distrust can also contribute to students' unwillingness to disclose about their most deeply felt concerns, and yield them to alter their perception with regard to their teachers' instructions and exhortations to a more cynical reserve.

Teacher-student rapport has been an area of interest for many researchers given the positive impact it has on learners' academic progress, and their psychological well-being. As reported by Halladay et al (2020), given that educators are the first to notice early indicators of mental health problems in students, the quality of their interaction and connection with students, alongside with their response to revealed emotions might constitute crucial social processes that encourage students' behavioural development. Positive teacher-student relations, for instance, may contribute to student behaviour, encouraging trustworthy relationships that help reduce perceived stigma, fear, humiliation and timidity (Halladay et al.,2020).

Developing a positive rapport can also contribute to improving numerous classroom dimensions, notably interpersonal communication, motivation, feedback, and engagement in the classroom. Furthermore, Frisby and Martin (2010) indicated that sustaining this key facet of teaching can help in reducing anxiety, increasing students' participation, social interaction, and self-worth.

There are multiple ways to establish a good rapport with students. First teachers can start by getting to know their students, and calling them by their names. According to Duffy and Jones (1995), calling learners by their names can be an effective and an easy way to build trust. Second, involving students in different realms of instructions can also show that their teachers actually care about their presence and engagement in the classroom. Third, teachers can also show an interest in students' lives outside of the classroom. They can ask them about their day or how did they pass their weekend before starting the lecture. In the same vein, teachers are invited to be more of companions than authoritative figures. Students should not be treated as subordinate who "listen and obey" instead they should be regarded as fellow human beings who deserve their teachers' patience and respect. In addition, instructors can also display a positive and enthusiastic attitude to make students feel at ease, they can be humorous, and be open to discuss different topics that may be relevant to the learned material. All these practices can help

in maintaining a good rapport with students that is based on trust, respect, and most importantly friendship.

3.4 Providing a Positive Affective Model

University students are susceptible to a number of academic stressors that can trigger the first onset of mental illnesses, or worsen already existing ones. As thrilling as it might seem, attending college is still a very challenging experience in students' life. They may find it quite difficult to cope with all the different academic requirements and steer the stress generated from their transition to such unfamiliar environment. In addition, it is quite evident that an abrupt change in a human's life can contribute to the development of serious psychotic crises, and students' inability to appropriately adjust to such change can merely worsen the matter for them. Educational attainment is not merely limited to cognitive content, but also to affective one. Hence, it is vital for educators to have the skill and knowledge to deal with all different psychological dimensions from both a pedagogical and affective side. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that teachers may not always be in their best mood, hence they may present a negative affective model to students, and end up discouraging them from proceeding with a given academic task.

According to Arnold (1999) such affective model is defined as a behaviour to be imitated. It is also regarded as a significant teaching strategy since it pays more attention to the effectiveness of achievement within the psychological sphere, as it is conducive to learning since it facilitates the process for both instructors and learners.

Students notice everything said and done by the teacher. Which means that if their teacher enters the classroom with low or no motivation, and in a very bad mood, they are going to notice, understand, analyze, and then immediately absorb that behaviour. While for those learners who are struggling with a psychological problem, they may develop a sense of pessimism and helplessness, and might even consider dropping out of college, since they already believe that there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

Teachers can change that by simply offering a positive affective state to be imitated. According to Arnold (1999) if teachers maintained a sense of optimism, positivism and improvement about themselves in the classroom, they can in turn develop these positive aspects among learners. This implies that little things can also make a difference. Teachers' smile and optimism are also remedies for students' emotional problems. And this also elucidates the necessity of presenting and offering a positive affective model because students

notice the affective status of their teachers long before they grasp the cognitive content offered to them. Similarly, Maslow (1954) reported that students need "affection, love, and belongingness" before understanding, knowledge, and learning. He believes that in order for the latter to be achieved, then the former conditions must be offered.

Students are always in need of their teachers' affective support since it helps in developing a sense of belongingness, and acceptance. Along the same line, teachers' affect is also believed to be a strong indicator of positive academic achievement, increased motivation, and self-efficacy.

3.5 Encouraging the Use of Pormordo Technique

Teachers may not hold the key to each and every conundrum, and not all solutions can be found in an educational setting. When students are susceptible to a psychological labyrinth, instructors may act as a guide or a facilitator as they can even undertake a pastoral care role to ensure emotional and physical welfare. Nevertheless, it is still regarded that students are the ones who hold the power over their emotional disturbances. They can even implement and practice different remedies outside classroom walls to manage their feelings and ameliorate their psychological well-being.

As it has been already mentioned in chapter 1, poor mental health can influence different arrays of students' life, as it can yield to physical chronic conditions. In the same vein, students who are prone to psychological problems such as depression, are believed to have executive deficits and poor cognitive abilities. Such executive disfunctioning encompasses disorganization, a debilitated memory mechanism, inability to control emotions, and impulses, poor time management skills, and most importantly concentration difficulties.

The results obtained and discussed in the second chapter revealed that students' psychological distress can notably influence their concentration and motivation. For this reason, pormodoro technique is recommended to help them better concentrate, boost their motivation and improve their time management skills.

Many students consider time as an enemy rather than an ally, and their inability to manage it effectively without any distractions can result in poor academic productivity. Additionally, the anxiety triggered by the ticking clock can also yield to a tendency to procrastinate, notably when deadlines and high stakes exams are involved. And although creativity in a university setting is a key element for students' academic progress, the pressure

and demands posed by infinite workloads and lack of time can render it a root cause of anxiety rather than a mitigating factor.

Pomodoro Technique is a time management method that was first pioneered by Francesco Cirillo in the late 1987. He labelled it Pomodoro owing to a humble tomato-shaped kitchen timer that he used as a student to manage his concentration problems. This technique was developed with the objective of utilizing time as a valuable ally to achieve certain requirements, and to sustain continuous progress. The Pomodoro technique can be used through following certain rules. Deciding upon a given task and break it up into bite-sized intervals is the first step in this process. Later on, the student should set the timer to 25 minutes – the Pomodoro interval-, and begin working on the task. Once the timer rings, the learners can take a short break of 3 to 5 minutes, and start working again. After four 25-minute Pomodoros, they can take a longer break of 25 to 30 minutes, and then restart again. This process can be useful for learners, as it helps enhance their concentration level, consciousness, and improves their time-management skills.

A survey conducted in the University of Sussex revealed that constantly attempting to multitask can yield to impairment in the brain. Additionally, multitask can also decrease the level of productivity and increase stress and anxiety. For this reason, the Pomodoro technique is suggested for learners to help them learn better and in a less wearying way.

Appropriately using the Pomodoro technique can help in alleviating anxiety, increasing awareness of one's decisions, foster motivation, and strengthen students' determination to keep engaging themselves in different tasks no matter how complex they are. In the same framework, the Pomodoro technique is believed to be founded on three key elements which entail a better use of the mind, the employment of easy-to-use inconspicuous instruments, and a different way of seeing time (Cirillo, 2009). Furthermore, encouraging the use of the Pomodoro technique will not only improve productivity and enhance focus by minimising distractions, but it can also play a significant role in boosting students' motivation.

According to Cirillo (2009), using the Pomodoro technique can help in completing several complicated or simple tasks a day, as it directly impacts personal improvement. Once students are able to monitor the learning process and sustain their concentration level, they will easily reach and achieve their objectives.

3.6 Implementing the Music Model Strategies for Academic Motivation

Motivation is regarded as a substantial predictor of academic success. Students who are motivated tend to have an intrinsic interest, higher quality effort. Mental health problems are regarded as "invisible disabilities" since they cannot be easily detected, nor can they be easily treated. Some of these psychological problems such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression tend to appear "out of the blue", with an abrupt change in behaviour and personality development. Nevertheless, although some educators may find it quite difficult to identify these symptoms, they can still discern small changes or a feeling that "something is not quite right" about their students' emotions, demeanour, or thinking patterns, and lack of motivation can manifest itself as one of these signs.

Depression in particular (the most common psychological problem among the study population) is believed to have a vicious cycle which encompasses lack of energy, hopelessness, fatigue, avoidance, sleep-deprivation, isolation, self-criticism, perfectionism, and most importantly lack of motivation. In the same line of thoughts, the findings of this research study have also revealed a negative correlation between motivation and students' mental health. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to consider the integration of potent strategies that can help in boosting students' motivation and engagement in the classroom. In the same framework, Jones (2021) believe that a significant range of principles and motivation theories were identified by researchers worldwide. Nevertheless, the one thing that seems to be missing was an updated motivation model that encompasses concrete strategies, and that could yield to positive outcomes.

The music model has met this inadequacy by incorporating the most essential research tenets to come up with a multidimensional model that aims to facilitate the process of designing instructions and engaging students. In the same line of thoughts, Aldridge and Harvatt (2014) indicated that:

> While academic motivation theories and practices abound, we believe the MUSIC model is especially useful… It is not only inclusive, evidence-based and research-validated, it is also versatile and applied─which makes it relatively straightforward, and therefore, easier to implement, either on campus or online. (p.54)

The music model of academic motivation was first designed by Dr. Brett jones (2009,2018) as a research-based model that helps better understand the associations amidst

factors that influence individuals' motivation in engaging in a given academic task. This model is comprised of five key principles that educators should consider when designing a course.

3.6.1 Empowerment

If students are provided with an opportunity to make decisions about different aspects of their learning, they are more likely to feel empowered, and thus more interested to learn. This implies that there is a kind of cooperation between teachers and students.

3.6.2 Usefulness

Learners need to comprehend the usefulness behind a given content for their long or short-term objectives

3.6.3 Success

Students must believe that they can succussed and achieve optimum results if they put forth the effort.

3.6.4 Interest

For this model to be successful, instructors are invited to ensure that learners are interested in the content and instructional goals offered to them.

3.6.5: Caring

Teachers are invited to show their students that they care about them as a person, and about their learning progress.

Figure 3.1: The Five Components of The Music Model (adapted from jones,2021: internet page).

According to jones (2014), the implications based on self-regulation are believed to be associated with one of the components of the music model which is empowerment. He noted that students need to feel empowered to make their own decisions so that they have the opportunity to engage in self-regulation. By empowering students, instructors give students the chance to regulate different aspects of their environment such as their goals, strategies, where to seek help, and how they want to manage their time.

Along the same line, instructors may also employ the MUSIC model to better design instructions, diagnose the issues that inhibit students' motivation by identifying their strength and weakness, and implement strategies that help in boosting their motivation.

3.7 Encouraging Students to Self-Regulate Their Emotions

Emotions are perceived by Ochsner and Gross (2005) as valanced responses to internal mental representations and/or external stimuli that entail changes across multiple response systems such as peripheral, physiological, experiential, and behavioural ones. Additionally, these emotions are believed to be distinct from moods, in the sense that they often have identifiable objects or triggers (Gazzaniga, Ivry, and Mangun, 2015). In the same line of thoughts, Gross (2014) indicated that an individuals' emotions play an immense role in organizing and coordinating multi-system responses, optimizing sensory intake, facilitating social interaction, aligning decision making, directing attention to substantial aspects of a given situation, and enhancing episodic memory. Hence, it is quite evident that these

emotions are not only restricted to how an individual feel but also to how they act to attain their goals. For instance, when confronted with traumatic life events, individuals do not passively experience stress and the associated emotions, they instead act upon them in a vigorous way to alter the particular emotional experience involved (Gross and Thompson, 2007). For this reason, it is substantial for students to regulate their emotions to better adapt and sustain homeostasis.

College students' academic achievement, personality growth, and wellbeing are all influenced by their emotions. According to Desautles (2016) "*We are neurobiologically wired, and to learn anything, our minds must be focused and our emotions need to "feel" in balance*" (Internet Page). Students may experience a range of emotional states that are not merely related to test anxiety. These emotions can either be positive or negative, as they can be intense and frequent. Likewise, while some teachers try to focus only on the effect of anxiety it is worth mentioning that students' emotions and psychological distress is not solely confined to anxiety and stress, since there is more than meets the eye. By virtue of that, Schultz and Pekrun (2007) raised a very significant inquiry demonstrating that:

> …what about student emotions other than test anxiety? And what about teachers 'emotions? What do we know about students' and teachers' unpleasant emotions, other than anxiety, such as anger, hopelessness, shame, or boredom; and what do we know about pleasant emotions, such as enjoyment, hope, or pride in educational settings? Until recently, the answer to this question had to be 'next to nothing. (p. 3)

Such inquiry highlights the need to consider more than just stress about academic related issues. Students are not only concerned about how well they did in a given assignment, some worry about whether or not they are worth living, others are trying to escape the clutches of depression, and the rest may be struggling with a childhood trauma that precluded them from socializing with others. Hence, it is essential to consider potent strategies that can assist learners in monitoring their feelings and preventing them from interfering with their learning progress.

Emotions and students' learning progress are believed to be interrelated, as they have always been a prime focus in many research papers. According to Zull (2006) "emotion is the foundation of learning" (p.3). Thus, it would be impossible for teachers to instruct and assess unless they cater for student's emotional state. As stated by King and Chen (2019), emotions can have an impact on what is learnt and what is retained since they stimulate students'

attention and trigger the learning process. Moreover, a myriad of psychological research reported that students' emotional states can interfere with a range of distinct cognitive processes that encompassattention, learning, memory, perception, reasoning, and problem solving (Kremer et al,2019; Tyng et al, 2017).

In the same framework, Tyng et al (2017) noted that different emotions can contribute to the efficient encoding and retrieval of information. And even though the impact of emotions on memory and learning is not necessarily univalent, it can still promote or enfeeble learning and long-term memory (LTM) retention, depending on a variety of factors. Negative emotions, for instance, can reduce working memory, which is the memory system used to hold and manipulate information while performing various mental tasks (Linnenbrink&Pintrich, 2000). As they can reduce the likelihood of students' employing cognitive techniques for more in-depth, complex information processing (Linnenbrink&Pintrich, 2000). Positive emotions on the other hand have been shown to extend thought-action repertoires (Fredrickson, 2001), revealing that students and teachers who experience more positive emotions are more likely to produce new ideas and techniques.

Furthermore, emotions are also believed to influence several cognitive, regulatory, and thinking mechanisms (Pekrun, 1992). As they can also influence the way a person categorizes, thinks, and solves problems (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). While positive emotions have been found to increase levels of intrinsic motivation, negative emotions have been found to decrease attentional resources available for engaging in cognitive processes (Linnenbrink&Pintrich, 2000).

As it has already been mentioned in Chapter one and two, self-regulatory skills are essential for students to appropriately manage any unsettling feelings that may inhibit their academic progress, and educational outcomes. As stated by Arndt and Fujiwara (2014), the ability to change and monitor the expressed and experienced emotions is a key factor in mental health, while the inefficiency in managing and regulating certain emotions is regarded as cardinal of many psychological problems. Likewise, Berking and Wupperman (2012) noted that deficit in emotional regulation seems to have a substantial role in the development, maintenance, and treatment of different forms of psychopathologies. In the same vein, growing evidence revealed that maladaptive regulation or the inability to adaptively cope with challenging emotions can be a cause and a consequence of a wide range of mental health

problems including depression, borderline personality disorder, somatoform disorders, and eating disorders.

In neuro imaging studies, such emotional regulatory skills are related to the deployment of a set of prefrontal brain regions involved in the executive functioning and cognitive control that evolve late in development (Martin & Ochsner, 2017). The limbic system or the emotional brain in particular is made up of four main parts namely the amygdala, the thalamus, the hypothalamus, and the hippocampus. According to Khoo (2020) these parts are deemed to play a significant role in emotional regulation, as they are believed to be responsible for the regulation of endocrine and autonomic functions in response to a given emotional stimulus. Similarly, Gazzaniga, Ivry, and Mangun (2015) noted that orbito-frontal area of the pre-frontal cortex, Corpus callosum, and Cingulate gyrus are also involved in the emotional brain.
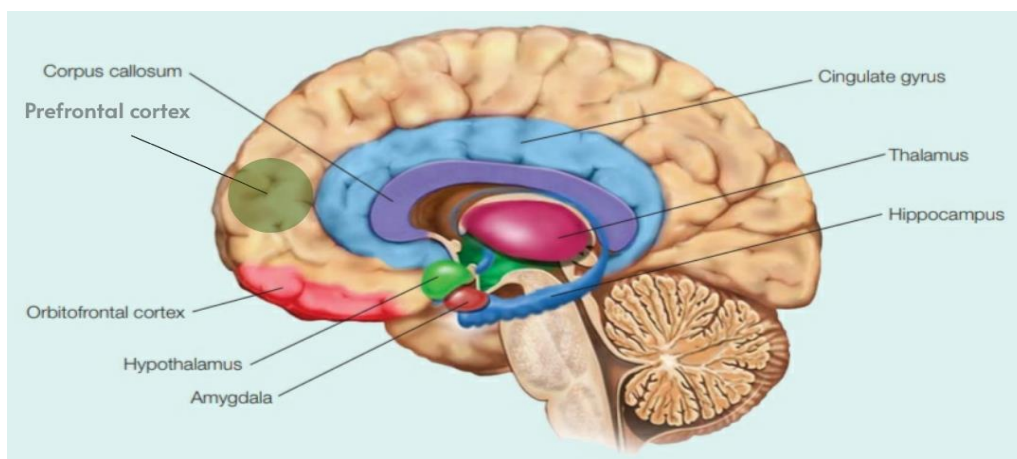
Figure 3.3: The Limbic System – Anatomy of emotions (Gazzaniga, Ivry, and Mangun ,2015:428).
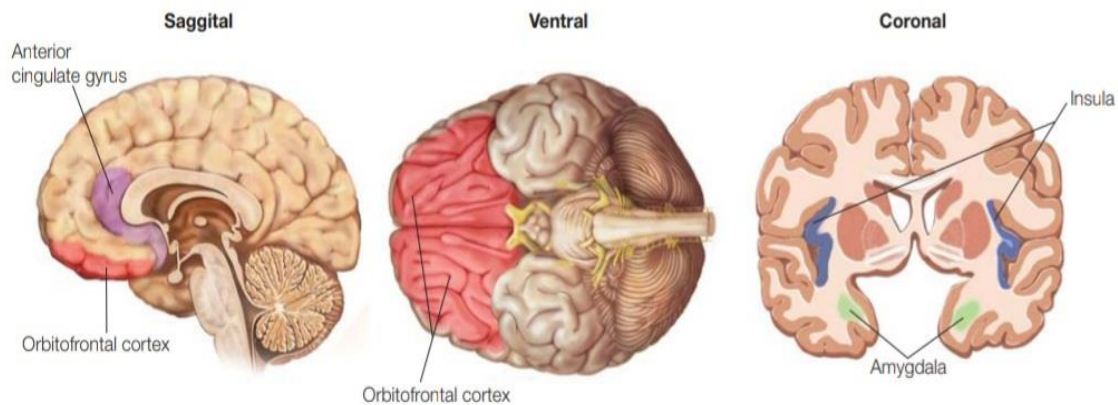
Figure 3.4: The four brain regions of specific emotions (Gazzaniga, Ivry, and Mangun ,2015:429).

As stated by Gazzaniga, Ivry, and Mangun (2015) "*The rust-coloured orbitofrontal cortex is associated with anger, the anterior cingulate gyrus in purple with sadness, the blue insula with disgust, and the green amygdala with fear*" (p.429)

According toLiu et al (2020), the amygdala and **the** medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) are believed to be extensively interrelated, as they work together in harmony to regulate and tune the expression of negative emotions such as anxiety and anger. Similarly, Macklem (2010) reported that the prefrontal cortex can monitor an individuals' emotional recovery time, as it can counteract the amygdala's reaction to a threat, and grants student the power and control over inappropriate behavioural responses. In the same line of thoughts, Lipsett (2011) noted that when the prefrontal cortex is able to override the amygdala' s initial response, an emotional reaction can be reversed with training and practice. This implies that individuals who would normally react fearfully or aggressively to stimuli can utilize the prefrontal cortex to respond calmly and efficiently. A dysregulated prefrontal control over amygdala on the other hand may be involved in the pathogenesis of psychological illnesses including anxietyand depression disorders (Liu et al.,2020).

Liu et al (2020) further clarrified the signifcant role of defective mPFC-to-amygdala interdependence for the pathogenesis of stress-related neuropsychiatric disease. As he believes that the mPFC can exert tyrannical top–down control over amygdala activity, in the sense that it limits its' output and thus precluding unseemly emotional responses.

Nonetheless, in the matter of detrimental conditions such as protracted exposure to ineluctable stress that precipitates the onset of many psychiatric conditions including depression and anxiety disorders, "the prefrontal control becomes defective, resulting in aberrant amygdala activation and deficits in emotion and behavior" (Liu et al.,2020:2). Nevertheless, it is believed that when a persons' prefrontal cortex is stimulated during a stressful circumstance, it is more likely that he/she will recover promptly from negative emotions and stress.

Tyng et al (2017) on the other hand noted that in recent neuro imaging findings, the prefrontal cortex and amygdala are believed to work together with the medial temporal lobe in an inclusive way to permit the prefrontal cortex to mediate memory encoding and formation: the amygdala to modulate memory consolidation, and the hippocampus to facilitate learning and LTM retention.

According to Kauffman (2005) educators have the power to establish a positive classroom environment that permits for emotional and social skills to be taught alongside academic skills. For this reason, it is crucial for them to better understand their role in helping students attain control over their emotional regulation, and to begin making steps in their classroom to help them succeed. Lipsett (2011) revealed that educators can help in the development of emotional regulation in students by simply labelling these emotions, talking about them, discussing and modelling strategies for an efficient management of emotions. It is believed that when teachers encourage students to notice and label their emotions, they will in turn help theminvestigate and identify what makes them upset, and utilize some emotional strategies that will enable them to respond to a particular emotional or environmental stimulus with their prefrontal cortex instead of their amygdala. This response will give students the capacity to override the automatic fearful responses generated by the amygdala, yielding to a reduced reaction time. In the same vein, Macklem (2010) noted that "people watching" can also be used to facilitate discussion about emotions. He indicated that students can learn to distinguish different emotions and emotional reactions by observing others from distance or by watching sitcoms, and labelling people's moods.

Discussing why individuals react in a certain way and determining whether or not their reactions are negative or positive will grease the wheels of conversing about how one can identify and regulate certain emotions.

Furthermore, educators are also recommended to offer children the vocabulary they need to take control over their emotions. They can teach them terms related to feelings and encourage students to utilize them on a regular basis. This on the other hand will allow the prefrontal cortex to override the amygdala resulting in students' self-awareness and a capacity to list what triggers certain feelings such as anger or happiness.

Emotions are not to be neglected in an educational setting as they are not merely limited to test anxiety. For this reason, teachers can and should play a significant role in coaching and teaching students to regulate and reduce the 'downward of different emotional spirals 'given the influence that they have on both of the executive functioning and learners' academic achievement.

3.8 Promoting Teachers' Mental Health Literacy "Training"

Educators are believed to play a key role in the identification and intervention of mental health problems; thus, it is substantial for them to be equipped with the literacy needed to engender effective practices with regard to mental health concerns. Nevertheless, many research papers have reported that teachers lack the sufficient knowledge and skill to support the mental health needs of their students, and prevent the persistence of the symptoms associated with their psychological problems. In the same framework, a survey carried out byWalter, Gouze, and Lim (2006) in the United States lends credence to what was previously mentioned in chapter one and two. The study included a needs-assessment survey of 119 elementary school teachers, and it notably revealed that teachers' ability to support those who are psychologically struggling was inhibited by their lack of knowledge and training with regard to mental health. These teachers were mainly unable to detect the symptoms related to depression, attention deficit, and the nature of oppositional defiance disorder.

Mental health literacy is deemed to be a process that is based on the foundations of self-awareness, advocacy, capacity building, and reflective practice. In this process, educators are not required to undertake the role of mental health professional so as to engage in mental health literacy, instead teachers use their classroom knowledge and expertise to recognize when a student is having a hard time, to promote mental health and resilience through daily classroom tasks and to engage students in discussions that revolve around mental health concerns and their impact on a persons' well-being.

There are plenty of ways to promote teacher's mental health literacy, and one way to do so is simply by reading about it. While searching and reading about the symptoms of a particular psychological problem, and figuring out the factors that trigger its onset, instructors can then manage to interfere and help their students get the support needed to improve the trajectory of their mental illness. In the same line of thoughts, Langeveld et al (2011) noted that adequate mental health literacy training can also help teachers in identifying students with mental health challenges. Adequate training in mental health related problems can equip educators with techniques to reach out to learners who may be developing substance abuse or a particular psychological problem, as it renders it possible to offer appropriate support to those who are struggling.

Mental health training can also help in deepening teachers' understanding of why early intervention is essential, as it provides instructors with an initial step to address and respond to disturbed learners' needs. In the same vein, it is believed that those who received adequate training can learn more about substantial mental health resources and boost the confidence needed to assist their students. Moreover, different studies have also shown that receiving training by mental health professionals can generate many benefits for teachers. It can also help in enhancing classroom effectiveness, minimizing peer marginalisation, improving the trajectory of students' mental illness, and establishing a close relationship between students and teachers.

On the other hand, the integration of a mental health coaching program in the school curriculum can also be of a great help for instructors. Such programs will not merely raise mental health awareness but they can also decrease the stigma associated with it. Once teachers are engaged in these programs, they will be able to contribute to an increase in students' help-seeking behaviour, and direct them to appropriate mental health support services.

3.9 Teachers' and therapist's Cooperation

If a student is anxious, teachers can help through the use of positive reinforcement and some relaxation procedures, as they can even use anecdotes to establish a friendly atmosphere for students. Yet, what and how can teachers manage if one of their students has suicidal ideation? How can they respond to self-harm? The answer may be little to nothing.

As it was already mentioned in the first chapter, 8 mental health problems exist on a continuum; and while teachers can help with moderate to mild symptoms, they cannot do much when the mental illness is alarmingly severe. And if these severe symptoms are left untreated, they may persist yielding to long term negative backfiring sequels including risk of disruption to education and school absence, poorer educational attainment, and an increased risk of substance use. For this reason, the presence of mental health professional or a psychologist in the university setting can help with this problem and prevent it from escalating.

Teachers may not be the jack of all the trades as it was mentioned by one of the interviewees, they do not know much about therapy. Although they are first to notice abnormalities in their students' demeanours, they can still work with a professional to better respond when a student is consumed by his own thoughts and negative feelings. Psychologists or therapists in particular are perceived to be advocates for students providing direct support, guidance and compassion to ensure that students' psychological and emotional problems are addressed appropriately. They can even work together with teachers and the administration staff to improve support strategies, and to resolve both long-term chronic problems and short-term issues that students may be prone to. They can also collaborate with community providers to align and organize needed services.

Therapists are believed to be highly skilled and trained to ensure that all students, no matter how diverse they are, thrive in school, at home, and in life as a whole. They can apply their psychological and mental health expertise to assist students in achieving better academically, socially, behaviourally, emotionally, and socially. Teachers and students' parents or family members can also work hand in hand with these professional psychologists to establish safe, healthy and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home and the university setting.

Furthermore, therapists can undertake a variety of roles in the educational setting including facilitators, crisis counsellors and mediators. These therapists are believed to serve as problems-solvers, as they are better acquainted with primary principles of employing and communicating psychological intervention. For this reason, it is recommended for teachers to regularly consult a therapist to better promote students' mental health from different prospects. Their collaboration may entail promoting students' motivation and engagement, improving their communication skills, reinforcing positive coping mechanism and resilience,

and preventing improper referrals. As they can also work together to create a safe environment that support social-emotional learning and prevent bullying and other forms of violence.

Encouraging the use of self-regulatory skills, and metacognition may not be an easy task, as it does not only revolve around how students monitor their learning, but also how to manage different emotions as well. Given that these skills are related to therapeutic procedures, the contribution of a professional is highly recommended to show both teachers and students how these potent strategies are used. Therapists can help in understanding how emotional intelligence and self-awareness contribute to self-regulation. They can invite students to focus on the importance of identifying and understanding different emotions, as they can elucidate how adaptability works when life-crisis arises. Additionally, therapists can invite teachers to use terminologies that help in constructing students' self-awareness. This implies the use of a significant scientific approach labelled as "neurolinguistic programming" that can also be used to develop a positive mindset and help in appropriately regulating different behaviour and actions (Beabout, 2021).

3.10 Supporting Parental Engagement

It was mentioned once in an African proverb that "it takes a village to raise a child" and there is truth to this, even for youngsters. Addressing students' mental health concerns is not a one person's job especially when the problems are obstreperous. Teachers may try their best to reach out to those who are struggling and so may school psychologists, but parents still remain experts in the sense that they may know more than both parties do. Since one hand can't clap, parental involvement is highly recommended to ensure students' academic achievement and their overall well-being. In the same framework, a survey conducted by Ciampa (2016) investigating strategies used to support students' mental health revealed that family involvement can be an essential component to assist students with psychological problems. She believes that parents should team up with teachers to find solutions to the different social and emotional issues that students may be facing. Additionally, she stated that "*educators and parents are the stakeholders for ensuring a child's overall mental wellbeing*" (Ciampa, 2016:24). Similarly, another study carried out by Masters (2015) reported that parental engagement can contribute to students' mental health treatment. She indicated that their understanding and awareness can be a strong predictor of help-seeking behaviour.

Along the same line, it can also contribute to boosting students' self-regulatory skills, and positive behaviour enhancing their motivation and achievement, and improving their emotional development and social skills (Masters,2015). Nonetheless, parental involvement can sometimes be distressing for instructors notably when parents are less comprehensive and in denial of what their son or daughter may be going through. Some parents may be supportive to whatever their child is going through, while others might be in complete negation as they may be the ones causing the problem. In this case, teachers' support may be in vain especially if it is not extended outside the classroom walls.

According to Masters (2015) parents' cooperation may be inhibited by different barriers, including, social conventions, the impact of stigma, and structural constraints. Parents' attitudes and perceptions with regard to mental health can play an immense role in reducing dropout rates, increasing help-seeking behaviour and encouraging the early psychological interventions alongside with preventing calamities such as suicide. Nevertheless, if parents hold some stigmatising attitudes towards their child mental illness, they may render it even more arduous for him/ her to reach out for help.

Teachers-parents conferences are also perceived to be essential to keep parents updated about their children's academic progress alongside with their social and emotional well-being in the classroom. These meetings are held in three different phases and each one entails certain rules to be followed. For some teachers, meeting students' parents may not be as easy as it might seem, but the fact that they tried and reached out for the sake of their students' safety and well-being show that they care, and that is more than enough.

3.11 Allowing Discussions about Mental Health in the Classroom

As it was already mentioned in the first chapter (page 17), students are faced with an unenviable dilemma, as to whether keep their condition hidden, and struggle in silence, or incur stigma and discrimination by revealing their mental health condition. Even when it is a heavy cross to bear, students pretend to be alright. They simply say "I'm fine" and go by their day with heavy loads on their minds. Such self-deception can be attributed to the fear of being stigmatized and prejudiced by others. And those who are psychologically disturbed are most of the time perceived as attention seekers, or in other words "hypochondriacs". The findings of this research paper have also revealed that a high percentage of students avoid asking for help or having recourse to a therapist for the very sake of avoiding stigma and discrimination.

For this particular reason, it is essential for teachers to consider ways to reduce these negative perceptions and help students reach out for help when needed.

Instructors are believed to have a unique opportunity to shape students' perspectives and understanding of mental health concerns. By discussing mental health problems in the classroom, and assisting students in finding and using reliable, in-depth information on the topic, teachers can help in minimizing the stigma associated with mental health disorders (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

The more teachers discuss the importance of mental health, the more students feel at ease to speak up and disclose their own problems. Indicating that "it is okey not to be okey" is one way to show students that their emotions are valid no matter what they are. In the same vein, teachers can also make mental health familiar to students. They can elucidate that everyone goes through peaks and valleys in their lives, thus denoting that they are not alone in this.

Describing different emotions can also be a significant way to raise awareness about the importance of students' psychological well-being. Teachers can talk about the different symptoms that some mental health problems may present, and encourage acceptance through denoting that the question that should be asked is not "What's wrong with me?" but instead "What has happened to me?" and "What triggered this particular feeling?". In addition, they can describe different emotions to raise awareness about the importance of students' psychological well-being. All these conversations can help in establishing a non-judgmental, supportive, facilitative learning atmosphere that encourages self-care and mutual support.

3.12 Little Things can Make a Difference

Teachers may not be therapists, but they can be counsellors, facilitators, partners, participants, caregivers, and in some cases friends. They can help with a smile, or a funny joke, as they can help with narrating personal experiences. Sometimes, all what students need is a break, and teachers can provide that, they can be flexible in terms of study requirements, they can organize study days and workshops about different interesting topics, as they can encourage the use of games that enhance critical thinking. These little things make students feel less anxious, and motivated to attend classes where the teacher cares enough to let things pass by. On the other hand, students can also try to manage their emotions on their own, and practice activities that can take their minds off the things that may generate negativity. They

can start by eating healthy, getting enough sleep, being active, and maintaining positive thinking.

Recovery does not happen in a blink of an eye, and it is not easy to fight everyday hoping that tomorrow it will be over that is for sure, but not doing anything about it can only make it worst. For this reason, students are recommended to be positive, hopeful and to develop resilience to manage life's ups and downs in a positive way since handling those challenges can only empower them to manage future stressors.

Conclusion

There is no magic potion that would prevent mental health problems from happening, or make the symptoms disappear overnight, however trying to help those struggling and doing something about it, no matter how small it might be, can still make a difference. In light of the findings of this research work, the present chapter was devoted for suggestions and recommendations that were mainly addressed to teachers and the administration staff to help promote students' mental health. Among these different recommendations is the establishment of a friendly atmosphere, maintaining a positive rapport with students and engaging parents and psychologists to guarantee adequate support. It also provided some practical frameworks that serve to motivate students, sustain their concentration level, and help them engage in self-regulation. By the end, life has never been easy; however, a glimmer of hope can still ignite from a smile, a kind word, and even apraise.

General Conclusion

Mental health problems are believed to be increasingly ubiquitous among college students. This may be due to the fact that attending college corresponds to a challenging and an overwhelming time in young persons' life, as it generates a number of stress inducive factors that are notably attributed to academic work load, increased responsibilities, financial constraints, and sleep deprivation. It goes without saying that student's wellbeing is foundational to academic success, and given that any sort of psychological distress may be detrimental to a persons' daily functioning, it is then substantial for instructors to help curb the increase of these problems, and prevent them from escalating.

The present study plays a contributory role in illuminating the role of educators in moderating and promoting student's mental health. It also aims to unveil the most prominent psychological problems that students are prone to, the impact of poor mental health on students' school functioning, and the different barriers that prevent help-seeking behaviors. Investigating those different dimensions was for the very sake of helping teachers tobetter comprehend how to address those problems, and provideappropriate support. In this regard, two researchquestions were formulated to reveal the most pervasive mental health problems that students may be subjected to, and to enlighten educators about two potent strategies that can help moderatethe escalation of students' psychological problems.

In the light of the results obtained from the respondents (EFL students, and English language teachers), it can be stated that second year license students are prone to a number of psychological problems that are namely depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, suicide ideation and obsessive-compulsive disorder. These results seem to align with the first hypothesis that was suggested at the beginning of this work, as it stipulates that depression, chronic anxiety, bipolar disorder, attention deficit, and other psychotic disorders are among the major problems that second year EFL students are subjected to. Additionally, the findings would have been quite different if the current study had been done with a larger population, and with the cooperation of a therapist. Nonetheless, due to the time constraints and the unwillingness of students to disclose about their personal problems it was implausible for the researcher to delve in depth in this survey. However, the main idea was that both teachers and students are made aware of the importance of mental health in the educational sphere and in society as a whole.

The second hypothesis which states that educators can have recourse to metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory skills as potential learning-related supports that could benefit students with mental health concerns in both academic and a non-academic setting was also compatible with the results obtained from this study. Nonetheless one extraneous variable seemed to emerge given that the implementation of those strategies in relation to mental health seemed a bit out of hand for some teachers. Emotions may come in shades of colors, the color purple may describe fear, green for disgust, and blue for sadness, but for depression 'the most common psychological problem among second year license students' 'vibgyor' which stands for a mixture of colors can describe It impeccably. One may be happy and depressed simultaneously, overwhelmedby different emotions, a mixture of colors, which makes it quite difficult to detect if this person is just sad, stressed out, or merely in a very bad mood. For this particular reasonthe involvement of a therapist or a mental health professional seemed quite compulsory in this study, as he/she knows more about the illnessand the type of the treatment needed to overcome it.

The key findings of this exploratory study pertain to different facets of mental health. Initially, the participants involved in this surveyseemed quite mindful of the significance of mental health, as they believe that it should be equally treated as physical health. In addition, the results obtained have also shown that poor mental health can drastically influence students' cognitive functioning, as it can trigger students' concentrationand motivation in particular. Investigating this aspect was for the very sake of raising awareness about the damage mental health problems canyield to, and to help teachers decide upon some practical frameworks to address those learning handicaps, booststudents' progress, and prevent college drop-out.

The causes of mental health problems are not easily detected, but there is a number of factors which can contribute in their development and lead to their first onset. According to students' and teachers' responses, family problems are the main reason behind students 'psychological struggles. Students find solace in their parents 'emotional support and companionship. For this reason, family involvement was highly recommended in this study. Alongside with that, it seems that the roots of mental health concerns are more economically driven than classroom driven. However, teachers' attitudes, and the learning environment students are exposed to can also contribute to their well-being. The results obtained from both the questionnaire and the interview revealed that academic related factors such as teachers'

negative feedback, and classroom segregation in particular can exacerbate students' psychological well-being, and decrease their motivation. Students give undivided attention to the way teachersperceive and treat them in the classroom, for this reason, it is substantial for teachers to be flexible with all their students to gain their trust, andkeep them engaged in the learning process.

The main aim of this study is to enlighten educators about different techniques that would help promote student's mental health, nevertheless, many students prefer to keep their psychological problems hidden, and struggle in silence to avoid any sort of discrimination or negative comments. Students are most of the time reluctant to reach out for help which makes it quite difficult for teachers to intervene. In the light of the findings, it can be noted that lack of time and support, alongside with the stigma attached to mental health are the mainreasons why students do not ask for help. In the same vein, those barriers are also the reason why most of illnesses persist especially when the treatment needed is not provided. Unveiling barriers to help-seeking behaviorin this study can make teachers aware enough to encourage students to reach out, and to ensure the validity of their emotions no matter how complex they might be.

Throughout the current research study, there were several limitations encountered, and recognized at the outset, most of which were related to its research designs. Yet there were also some other limitations which were revealed late in the research process. The first obstacle is notably pertaining to time constraints. The measurement of mental health issues could have been primarily done through aPerceived Stress Scale of Cohen and WHO-5 well-being index, alongside with a Modified Beck Depression Inventory. Thesescreeningresourcesare deemed to be efficient, and with the cooperation of therapist authentic and valid findings would have been attained. Nevertheless, students' reluctance to disclose about personal problems, and given that this study was merely a preliminary endeavor, the researcher decided not to complicate the matter. In addition, sample size was also one of the setbacks for this research paper. Investigating the prevalence of mental health problems with merely second year license students is not enough, yet this target population was chosen for the very sake of highlighting how college environment can be difficult to cope with in the very first years. On the other hand, teachers were also quite busy to conduct an interview especially with the limited time they had with the pressures that COVID-19 generated. Ten interviews would have been done, but due to time

constraints and the unavailability of teachers, only seven were conducted. In the same framework, the validity of the tools employed is substantially dependent on context and since this topic is more of a taboo in our society, all measures of mental health issues may seem imperfect and prone to multiple cultural influences. Moreover, the lack of resources and researches that were already done in Algeria, alongside with the absence of actual statistics about this topic werealso shortcomings for this study.

The present research paper has fundamental implications for educational reform. In broad strokes, this study serves as a reminder to curriculum planners, and policy makers of the existence of psychiatric problems starting as early as kindergarten level. In the same vein, the results of this study can also come in handy for educational researchers in determining what components they would consider entailing into their investigations. In addition, continuous scrutiny of the impact of mental health oppression on students' academic progress, and on their engagement in mental healing behavior can still be thoroughly done in future research.

Promoting student's mental health, and enlightening educators about the different ways to do so was the primary aim of this study. In this regard a set of recommendations, and suggestions were provided to help in that process. Establishing a friendly atmosphere, and maintaining a positive rapport are essential to moderate the aggravation of students' psychological handicap and guarantee optimum learning outcomes. In the same line of thoughts, the involvement of a mental health professional in this study was also recommended, since he/she serves as an excellent resource in assisting instructors in dealing with psychologically distressed students. It is -evident that therapists are not equipped with magic wands to make an illness disappear overnight but they are knowledgeable, and trained to address those problems outside the realm of the classroom teacher. Moreover, parental involvement was also highly recommended in this study given that they know their children more than anyone does, as they can extend the support provided by the teacher at home. Some practical frameworks were also suggested in this survey which serve to motivate students, sustain their concentration level, and help them engage in self-regulation.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students:

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire which is an endeavor to gather information needed for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. We direct this questionnaire to investigate The Role of Educators in Moderating the Impact of Mental Health on Students' Academic Achievement. We would really appreciate it if you respond honestly and adequately to these questions. Tick (x) for your answer (s) in the corresponding box (es), and make a full statement whenever necessary. Be sure that the answers you provide will certainly remain confidential, and will only be used for research purposes.

Thank you very much for your collaboration.

Section One: Personal information

1. Are you

a. Male ☐

b. Female ☐

2. How old are you?

……..

Section Two: Students' perspectives with regard to mental health problems

1) What does mental health mean to you?

_____

2) Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental disorder before?

Yes ☐   No☐

By which of the following were you diagnosed

a. Therapist☐

b. Online screening for mental health☐

    c.   Self-diagnosis☐

3) Which of the following psychological inhibitions have you been subjected to?

    a.   Depression☐

    b.   Anxiety☐

    c.   Bipolar Disorder (manic depression/extreme mood swings)☐

    d.   Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)☐

    e.   Other (please specify)

    ----

4) have you ever wondered whether you have a mental health problem?

    Yes☐   No☐

5) Have you ever tried to know more about your mental health online?

    Yes☐   No☐

    If yes, elaborate

6) How often do you check your mental health state

    a. always ☐

    b. sometimes ☐

    c. seldom ☐

    d. never☐

7) Overall, how would you rate your mental health state?

    Good   ☐

    Average ☐

    Poor ☐

    Not sure   ☐

8) If you have a mental health problem, which of the following supports would you have

    recourse to?

Parents☐

Friends☐

Personal Tutor☐

Therapist☐

Online therapy ☐

Other (please specify)

----

9) On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you rate the quality of the support

      1   2   3   4   5   6   7

10) "Psychological disorders can impede your performance and achievement in the classroom"

    a. Strongly agree ☐

    b. Agree ☐

    c. Disagree ☐

    d. Strongly disagree ☐

11) Psychological problems can influence students '

    a. Energy level☐

    b. Concentration ☐

    c. Academic self-efficacy☐

    d. Attendance☐

    e. Motivation ☐

    f. Engagement in the classroom ☐

    g. Academic self-image (perceived competence) ☐

    h. Others ……...

12) According to you, what are the causes of students' mental health problems?

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

13) Which of the following pedagogical tasks exacerbate or worsen your psychological

distress?

     a.   In-class assignments deadlines☐

     b.   Teachers' negative feedback   ☐

     c.   High stakes examination   ☐

     d.   Others (please specify)

     -

14) If the university offered a free access to therapy with a professional psychiatrist,

would you join?

    Yes☐   No☐

    If No, Please Justify

    ……………………………………………………………………………………………

    ….

15) Do you feel insecure and stigmatized by your surrounding in the university if you

resort to a psychiatrist?

    Yes ☐   No ☐   Sometimes☐

16) Do you find it difficult to seek out for help?

    Yes ☐   No ☐   Sometimes☐

17) Which of the following prevents you from seeking out for help?

    a. Stigma (negative views of others)

    b. Skeptisicm about effectiveness

    c. Lack of time and support

    d. Unawareness of the available resources

e. Preference for self-reliance

h. Others...

18) Do you think that the Algerian society and teachers being part of them are empathetic to people with mental health issues?

Yes☐   No☐

Please explain why regardless of your answer:

----

19) Would you say that teachers are more aware of the affective side of students?

Yes☐   No☐

Please Justify:

----

20) Do you think that university staff/teachers can provide help to students with mental disorders?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Please Justify:

----

21) Do you think that the COVID-19 outbreak affected your psychological state?

Yes☐   No☐

In what way?

----

22) If you have any suggestions, comments, or anything to add, feel free to write it:

Appendix B: Teachers' Interview

Dear teacher

Thank you for devoting this time to meet with me today

    My name is ABDELKRIM Amina. I'm a master two student. The present interview aims to gather information about the role of educators in moderating the impact of mental health on students' academic achievement, the case of 2nd year EFL students at Saida University. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions to help in collecting data about my research work. Your contribution is kept anonymous and used only for research purposes. This interview will take less than an hour. I will also be using a tape recorder to ensure a complete and faithful account of this interview, and to make sure that I won't miss any of the information you'll provide me with.

Thank you again for cooperation, your input is greatly appreciated

The Questions:

Q1: Have you ever noticed an abnormal behaviour of a student which indicates signs of a psychological problem? Please elaborate

Q2: In your opinion, what are the most common psychological inhibitions (mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder) that college students exhibit?

Q3: According to you, to what extent do psychological problems influence students' academic achievement? And in what way?

Q4: According to you, what are the factors that exacerbate students' psychological well-being in a university setting?

Q5: What is the role of university staff/educators in attending to student's mental health?

Q6: Do you believe that educators have sufficient mental health literacy?

Q7: What changes would you make in the classroom to facilitate the learning process for students with a mental illness?

Q8: Do you believe that metacognitive strategies and self-regulatory skills as potential learning-related supports can act as a buffer against students' mental health problems? Please elaborate

Q9: Did one of your students' exhibiting a mental illness asked for your assistance? How did you respond?

Q10: According to you what are the barriers (such as stigma) that prevent students with a mental health problem from seeking out for help?

Q11: What can a teacher/the university staff do about those barriers that you just mentioned?

Q12: What would you suggest to promote student's mental health?