

**ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS AND PRACTICE FOR THE PROMOTION OF
MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

Excellent GODFREYGRACE

EDU2009391

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

APRIL 2025

**ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS AND PRACTICE FOR THE PROMOTION OF
MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
(UNIBEN)**

**Excellent GODFREYGRACE
EDU2009391**

**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD
OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION (B.sc. Ed) OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.**

APRIL 2025

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that this research was carried out by Excellent GODFREYGRACE with matriculation number EDU2000391 and it is adequate in scope and quality for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.Ed) Degree in Health Education.

Dr. (MRS) O.O. EGBOCHUKU
(Project Supervisor)

Date

MRS. B.H ENABULELE
(Project Coordinator)

Date

DR.(MRS.).O.H. OBASUYI
AS (Head Of Department)

Date

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to Almighty God for His divine grace and mercies, to the researcher and to his lovely family for their support throughout the course of the study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher wishes to express his gratitude to God Almighty for His endless love, mercies, wisdom, grace and guidance throughout his years of study in the University of Benin.

Sincere Gratitude goes to his supervisor Dr (Mrs) O.O. Egbochuku for her patience and diligence in ensuring that this project is a success, her guidance and useful suggestions played a part in the success of this project.

The researcher also extends his heartfelt gratitude to the Head of Department, Dr. O. H. Obasuyi, for her exceptional leadership and encouragement. Special thanks go to all the lecturers in the Department of Health, Safety, and Environmental Education for their continuous academic guidance and support throughout this journey.

His deepest appreciation goes to his parents Mr Aminugo ufoma Godfrey and Mrs Grace eduviere Aminugo for their sacrifices, love and supports throughout his years of study. Their prayers, guidance, constant check ins, words of encouragements and belief in him meant the world.

To his beloved Siblings, Favour, Anointed and Perfect Godfreygrace, his relatives Uncle Salem Eduviere, uncle Ejowoke Eduviere, uncle Philip Eduviere, and his Cousins Marvelous, Collins, Efe and Edith, for their constant encouragement and support. The researcher appreciate you all.

The researcher's appreciation also goes to the family he found in school. To all the beautiful and amazing people he lived with during his stay in the Hostel, Ekosodin. He appreciates you all for making his stay in school memorable. You all made an hostel feel like home to him. He loves you all, miss you all and wish you all success in the next phase of your lives.

Finally he will like to appreciate his wonderful friends, coursemates and the beautiful souls he met in school Favour, Mac victory, Dominion, Rabanni, miracle, Elohim, Faith, Trinity, Oba, Nutella, Jarvis, Eriki, Alive, Agama and others who he did not mention their names. You all made his stay in school fun and memorable and he his also grateful to Rev Blessed Ige and his beloved wife pastor chisonia Ige for their contribution towards his schooling.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE	i
CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background of the study	1
Statement of the Problem	4
Research Questions	6
Purpose of the study	6
Significance of the Study	7
Scope /Delimitation of the study	8
Limitations of the Study	8
Definition of Terms	9
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Concept of Mental Health	11
Components of Mental Health	12
Factors Influencing Mental Health	13
Mental Health Conditions	13
Promoting Mental Health	14
Importance of Mental Health Promotion	14
Benefits for Individuals	15
Benefits for Communities	15
Benefits for Society	16
Strategies for Mental Health Promotion	16
Current State of Mental Health among University Students	17

The Attitude and Response of University Students towards Mental Health Promotion	18
Common Barriers to Engagement	19
Strategies for Promoting Positive Attitudes and Responses	19
Factors Influencing Mental Health Promotion among University Students	21
Strategies for Mental Health Promotion among University Students	34
Summary of Related Literature Reviewed	37
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	
Design of the study	40
Population of the study	41
Sample and Sampling Technique	42
Research Instrument	42
Validity of the instrument	42
Reliability of the Instrument	43
Administration of the instrument	43
Method of Data collection	43
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
Presentation of Results	45
Discussion of Findings	50
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary	55
Conclusion	56
Recommendations	57
REFERENCE	58
APPENDICES	59

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the awareness and practice of mental health promotion among students of the University of Benin, with a focus on identifying the factors that facilitate or hinder mental health-promoting behaviors.

A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted among 240 randomly selected students from various faculties within the university. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire that assessed participants' awareness of mental health, their attitudes towards mental health promotion, and their engagement in mental health-promoting behaviors. The questionnaire also gathered information on participants' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, and faculty. The results of the study showed that the majority of the participants were aware of the importance of mental health and expressed a willingness to engage in practices that promote mental health. However, despite this awareness and willingness, only a few of the participants reported practicing mental health-promotion. Further analysis revealed that the low engagement in mental health-promoting behaviors among the participants was largely due to the low availability and accessibility of mental health services within the university.

The findings of this study highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance mental health awareness and practice among university students. Specifically, the study recommends that the university increase the availability and accessibility of mental health services, provide education and training on mental health promotion, and promote a culture of mental health awareness and support among students, faculty, and staff.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

According to the WHO definition (2001), mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual makes full use of his or her abilities, successfully copes with stress in daily life, works efficiently and fruitfully, and is capable of making a positive contribution to society. Mental health is an inseparable part of one's general health, reflecting a balance between an individual and the environment. Mental, emotional, social and somatic well-being enable an individual to act effectively in his or her environment, achieve goals and develop his or her personality (WHO, 2005). All these areas are listed as important aspects, worth caring about if one wants to build and improve one's mental health (WHO, 2001). Mental health promotion has a lot in common with the prevention of mental health disorders. Promotion basically concentrates on protective factors (Verhaeghe et al. 2012). The aim of prevention is primarily to prevent behaviour that may be risky or the development of mental disorders by concentrating on risk factors. Following the WHO recommendations, mental health protection and developing one's true potential should be taken as seriously as medical treatment. There are different groups of people who benefit from such programmes, including university students. The reason why this particular group should be given special attention and care is because of the responsibility which lies with educated people and general expectations of their important contribution to

social, intellectual and cultural life and to technological progress. Admittedly, higher education is no longer elitist and the number of university graduates is growing rapidly, but it is still hoped that educated people will live up, at least partly, to these expectations. Promoting and protecting students mental health gives young people the chance to progress and undertake new developmental tasks. At the same time it prevents them from developing mental disorders. Young adults starting university are exposed to a variety of psychological problems. It seems that the major problem facing students is their inability to cope with stress.

Universities are vibrant communities that foster intellectual growth, creativity, and social development. However, the academic environment can also pose significant challenges to students' mental health. The transition to university life, characterized by increased independence, academic pressures, and social expectations, can exacerbate existing mental health concerns or trigger new ones. As a result, mental health issues have become a pressing concern among university students worldwide. The importance of mental health cannot be overstated. Mental well-being is essential for students' academic success, social relationships, and overall quality of life. Moreover, the university years are a critical period for identity formation, self-discovery, and skill development, making it an opportune time for promoting mental health awareness and practice. As university students navigate the challenges of higher education, they face a myriad of pressures that can take a toll on their mental well-being. The transition to university life can be

overwhelming, with academic expectations, social pressures, and personal responsibilities converging to create a perfect storm of stress and anxiety.

Research indicates that university students are increasingly vulnerable to mental health concerns, with 1 in 5 experiencing depression or anxiety (NAMI, 2020). The academic environment, characterized by intense competition, high stakes assessments, and demanding coursework, can exacerbate existing mental health issues or trigger new ones. Students are a high risk group for mental disorders, which include depressive, anxiety, emotional and personality disorders (Stallman, 2010). Feelings of depression (26,4%), general anxiety disorder (21,1%), and anxiety attacks (13,9%) are the problems most often declared by young adults (Moskalewicz and Boguszewska, 2012). Mental health and emotional problems as well as difficulty in coping with stress result in missing classes as well as failing to meet academic requirements such as getting credit for classes or passing exams. Thus, it is essential that we promote mental health and design such programmes that will be in line with students expectations and needs.

Despite growing recognition of mental health concerns, many university students struggle in silence, afraid to seek help due to stigma, shame, or fear of judgment. The consequences of untreated mental health issues can be severe, leading to decreased academic performance, social withdrawal, substance abuse, and even suicidal thoughts. To address these concerns, universities have a critical role to play in promoting mental health awareness, providing support services, and fostering a culture of well-being.

This project aims to assess the current practices and awareness levels among university students regarding mental health promotion.

Statement of the Problem

Mental health disorder is one of the public health problems that needs more attention and has served as a predominant issue affecting the academic performance of students and as a result, they are subjected to stress in school. Previous research has also reviewed high rate of psychological disease especially depression and anxiety among students of universities all over the world. It is evident that when students are exposed to mental health disorder, it may result in withdrawal from study as students are likely to drop out from school due to stress and depression which could be developed as a result of pressure sustained from studies. It has been observed that strong social stigma is attached to mental health disorder, although many people have mental health disorders. People with mental health problems can experience discrimination in all aspects of their lives. Furthermore, stigma may result in discrimination against people with mental disorders and prevent them from gaining two important opportunities to pursue their life goals: job opportunity and the opportunity to live independently and safely. Mental health disorders experienced by individuals are commonly underestimated because of the stigma involving the community; hence, people with mental disorders are isolated and do not want to seek treatment.

Some influencing factors are academic stress, family problems, financial problems, problems in friendship, traumatic problems, mental disorders that have not been handled, immaturity of oneself, or personal problems. In some course area, mental health is a subject taken by some students in the university and during the course of study it has been observed that some of the students if not majority are not exposed to the various mental health problems that they are experiencing without knowing. As a result of the teachers creating awareness by acting as a facilitator of learning, students are exposed to the knowledge of mental health. Also, majority of the students who are being taught mental health are still not fully able to grasp the concept on mental health compared to some students in the university level who are not to it at all. Where as students are constantly experiencing this mental health disorder most especially anxiety and depression without knowing as a result of short term in learning and at the end of the semester this students are expected to write examination so that they can be assessed. Mental health is a component in health that needs adequate care, if not the health of the individual can be impaired.

Mental health within the academic realm, especially among university students, it is a research area that has not received sufficient attention. Despite numerous studies investigating mental health in a broader contexts, the specific stressor have not been adequately explored. Hence, in order to address the role, perception, practices, attitude and beliefs play on the mental health of students, this research is therefore taken to

investigate and evaluate the awareness of mental health among undergraduate students using University of Benin as a case study.

Research Questions:

1. What are the current levels of mental health awareness among university students?
2. What practices and strategies do university students employ to promote mental well-being?
3. What support services are available on campus, and how accessible are they to students?
4. What are the barriers to seeking mental health support among university students
5. What are students perception towards mental health among undergraduate in the University of Benin?
6. What are the coping skills students adopt in improving their mental health?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to examine the level of awareness and perception of mental health among University of Benin undergraduates. Specifically, the study seeks to;

1. Investigate the degree of awareness to mental health among students.
2. Determine students perception towards mental health.
3. Explore how students lifestyle practice affect their mental health.
4. Ascertain the scoping skills students can adopt in improving their mental health.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be particularly relevant to students, researchers, community member and educational policy.

This findings will serve as a source of sufficient information for the students in the University of Benin and students in general in building positive knowledge to mental health as well develop adequate skills in coping with stress.

The study will also fill a gap in the existing academic literature by focusing on different perception acquired on mental health. It contributes to the broader understanding of mental health among undergraduate students. It will also serve as a reference material and guide for other researchers and research bodies in carrying out their own researches on mental health related topic.

The study will also be beneficial to community members by exposing them to what mental health is really about, this will bring about reduction or total removal of their perception whereby, some believe that mental health is caused by a demon and in most cases, they tend to isolate the patients.

The study will give appropriate data that will serve as a guide to the institution and governing bodies in making decisions and policies that are favourable to the health and well-being of the entire students.

Scope /Delimitation of the study

The scope of the study is the knowledge and perception of mental health among the University of Benin Undergraduates. The study will focus specifically on the University of Benin, located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The targeted population include undergraduate students of the University of Benin across various facilities and department. The research will be delimited to University of Benin and it's environment.

Limitations of the Study

During the course of this study, certain constraints are likely to be encountered:

Cost: Conducting a study requires financial resources for data collection tools (e.g, printing questionnaires, online survey platforms), transportation and possibly incentives for participants. A lack of sufficient funding may limit sample size, restrict the scope of data collection, or reduce the quality of material used, which can affect the study overall reliability and depth.

Time: Research often requires a significant amount of time for planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Given academic deadlines and other commitments, time constraints might limit the number of respondents, leading to a smaller sample size and potentially less representative findings. Additionally, limited time may prevent the researcher from conducting follow up studies or in-depth interviews that could provide deeper insight.

Scarcity of Literature: If there is limited existing research on mental health awareness and practice among university students in Nigeria, it may be challenging to establish a strong theoretical foundation for the study. The lack of previous study may also hinder comparison with similar research, making it difficult to validate findings or identify trends over time. This limitation could result in a reliance on foreign studies, which may not fully capture the local context and cultural difference in mental health perceptions.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined in the study

Mental Health: Mental health include our emotional, psychological and social well-being.

Disorder: Disorder is an abnormal illness that last for a longer time.

Depression: Depression is a mental health disorder that result to loss of interest and sometimes aggression.

Stress: Stress is a feeling of emotional and physical tension.

Trauma: Emotional or psychological damage resulting from a distressing event.

Anxiety Disorder: A condition characterized by excessive and persistent fear, worry, or anxiety that interferes with daily life.

Dissociation: A psychological experience where an individual disconnects from their thoughts, feelings, or surroundings.

Emotional Intelligence: The ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions and empathize with other.

Mindfulness: The practice of being fully present and aware of the current moment, without judgment.

Self-Care: Actions taken to preserve and enhance one's physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Social Anxiety Disorder: Fear or anxiety related to social interactions or being judged.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on mental health promotion among university students. It explores:

- The concept of mental health.
- The importance of mental health promotion.
- The current state of mental health among university students.
- The Attitude and Response of University Students towards Mental Health promotion.
- Factors that influence mental health promotion among university students.
- Strategies that have been employed to promote mental health in this population.
- Summary of related literature reviewed

Concept of Mental Health

Mental health refers to a state of well-being in which an individual realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community (World Health Organisation, 2018).

Mental health is an essential aspect of overall health and well-being, and it is influenced by a range of factors, including biological, psychological, and social factors.

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It encompasses various aspects of life, including thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and

interactions with others. Mental health is essential for overall health and quality of life, as it influences how individuals handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Components of Mental Health

Mental health comprises several key components:

1. Emotional Wellbeing – The ability to manage emotions effectively, cope with stress, and maintain a positive outlook on life. It includes self-awareness, emotional resilience, and the capacity to express emotions appropriately.
2. Psychological Wellbeing – Encompasses cognitive and mental health, including self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, and the ability to think clearly and make sound decisions. It contributes to overall life satisfaction.
3. Social Wellbeing – Refers to the quality of relationships and social interactions, including a sense of belonging, support from others, and the ability to form and maintain meaningful connections. It also involves effective communication and social skills.
4. Behavioural Wellbeing – The ability to engage in healthy behaviors, maintain self-discipline, and make choices that support overall mental and physical health. It includes coping strategies, lifestyle habits, and adaptive responses to challenges.

Factors Influencing Mental Health

Various factors can impact mental health, including:

1. **Genetics:** Family history and genetic predisposition can contribute to mental health conditions.
2. **Environment:** Trauma, abuse, neglect, and social determinants (e.g., poverty, education) can affect mental health.
3. **Life Events:** Significant life changes, such as divorce, loss of a loved one, or major life transitions, can impact mental health.
4. **Social Support:** Strong social connection and support networks can positively influence mental health.
5. **Lifestyle Choices:** Healthy habits, such as regular exercise, balanced diet, and adequate sleep, can support mental health.

Mental Health Conditions

Mental health conditions are diagnosable disorders that affect mental health. Common conditions include:

1. **Anxiety Disorders:** Excessive fear, worry, or anxiety that interferes with daily life.
2. **Mood Disorders:** Conditions like depression and bipolar disorder that affect emotional states.
3. **Personality Disorders:** Patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that deviate from cultural norms.

4. Psychotic Disorders: Conditions like schizophrenia that involve distorted perceptions of reality.
5. Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders: Conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that result from traumatic events.

Promoting Mental Health

Individuals can maintain good mental health and improve their quality of life by maintaining the following strategies:

1. Practice Self-Care: Engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation.
2. Build Strong Relationships: Nurture social connections and support networks
3. Stay Physically Active: Regular exercise supports mental health.
4. Get Enough Sleep: Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night.
5. Seek Professional Help: Consult with mental health professionals when needed.

Importance of Mental Health Promotion

Mental health promotion is essential for maintaining good mental health and preventing mental illness. It involves actions that promote mental well-being, prevent mental illness, and enhance the quality of life (World Health Organisation, 2018). Mental health promotion is particularly important among university students, as this population is at high risk of developing mental health problems due to the stress and pressure of academic life. The importance of mental health promotion cannot be overstated, as it has numerous benefits for individuals, communities, and society as a whole

.Benefits for Individuals

1. Improved mental health and well-being: Mental health promotion helps individuals develop coping skills, manage stress, and maintain good mental health.
2. Increased resilience: Mental health promotion enables individuals to better handle adversity, trauma, and stress.
3. Enhanced quality of life: Good mental health is essential for overall well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness.
4. Better physical health: Mental health promotion can also improve physical health, as mental and physical health are closely linked.

Benefits for Communities

1. Stronger social connections: Mental health promotion fosters social connections, community engagement, and social support.
2. Reduced stigma: Mental health promotion helps reduce stigma around mental illness, encouraging individuals to seek help when needed.
3. Improved community cohesion: Mental health promotion brings communities together, promoting a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.
4. Economic benefits: Mental health promotion can also have economic benefits, such as reduced healthcare costs and increased productivity.

Benefits for Society

1. **Reduced healthcare costs:** Mental health promotion can reduce the economic burden of mental illness on healthcare systems.
2. **Increased productivity:** Good mental health is essential for productivity, creativity, and innovation.
3. **Improved social and economic outcomes:** Mental health promotion can improve social and economic outcomes, such as education, employment, and housing.
4. **Reduced crime and violence:** Mental health promotion can also reduce crime and violence, as good mental health is essential for healthy relationships and behaviours.

Strategies for Mental Health Promotion

1. **Education and awareness:** Educate individuals, communities, and society about mental health, mental illness, and mental health promotion.
2. **Community-based initiatives:** Implement community-based initiatives that promote mental health, such as support groups, counseling services, and social activities.
3. **Workplace initiatives:** Implement workplace initiatives that promote mental health, such as employee assistance programs, mental health days, and flexible work arrangements.

4. Policy and legislative changes: Advocate for policy and legislative changes that promote mental health, such as increased funding for mental health services and reduced stigma around mental illness.

Current State of Mental Health among University Students

University students are at high risk of developing mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse (American College Health Association, 2020). The pressure to succeed academically, financially, and socially can take a toll on students' mental health. Additionally, the transition to university life can be challenging, and students may experience homesickness, loneliness, and difficulty adjusting to new academic and social demands.

Students are a high risk group for mental disorders, which include depressive, anxiety, emotional and personality disorders (Stallman, 2010). Feelings of depression (26,4%), general anxiety disorder (21,1%), and anxiety attacks (13,9%) are the problems most often declared by young Polish adults (Moskalewicz and Boguszezewska, 2012). Mental health and emotional problems as well as a difficulty in coping with stress result in missing classes as well as failing to meet academic requirements such as getting credit for classes or passing exams (Storrie et al., 2010).

A survey was also conducted in 2019 among college students in Bandung, which stated that 30.5% of students were depressed, 20% thought of killing themselves, and 6% had tried to struggle alone (Susanti, 2020).

The Attitude and Response of University Students towards Mental Health Promotion

Mental health promotion is an essential aspect of university life, as it enables students to develop the skills and strategies needed to maintain good mental health and well-being. However, the attitude and response of university students towards mental health promotion can vary greatly, and several factors can influence university students' attitudes and responses to mental health promotion, these include:

1. **Stigma and Social Norms:** Students may be hesitant to engage with mental health promotion due to concerns about stigma or social norms. Many students may view mental health issues as a personal weakness or a sign of vulnerability, rather than a common and treatable condition.
2. **Cultural Background:** Students from diverse cultural backgrounds may have different attitudes towards mental health and mental health promotion. For example, some cultures may view mental health issues as a family or community problem, rather than an individual issue.
3. **Personal Experiences:** Students who have experienced mental health issues personally or through a family member or friend may be more likely to engage with mental health promotion.
4. **Academic Pressures:** University students often face significant academic pressures, which can make it difficult for them to prioritize mental health

promotion. Students may feel that they do not have the time or energy to engage with mental health promotion.

Common Barriers to Engagement

Despite the importance of mental health promotion, many university students face barriers to engagement. These include:

1. **Lack of Awareness:** Many students may not be aware of the mental health promotion services and resources available on campus.
2. **Stigma and Shame:** Students may feel ashamed or embarrassed to seek help for mental health issues, due to concerns about stigma or social norms.
3. **Competing Demands:** University students often have multiple demands on their time and energy, including academic responsibilities, work, and social commitments.
4. **Limited Access:** Some students may face barriers to accessing mental health promotion services, such as limited availability of services, long wait times, or lack of cultural sensitivity.

Strategies for Promoting Positive Attitudes and Responses

To promote positive attitudes and responses to mental health promotion, universities can use a range of strategies, including:

1. Increasing Awareness: Universities can increase awareness of mental health promotion services and resources through social media, posters, and other promotional materials.
2. Reducing Stigma: Universities can work to reduce stigma and shame around mental health issues by promoting positive messages and role models.
3. Providing Accessible Services: Universities can provide accessible and culturally sensitive mental health promotion services, including online resources, counseling services, and support groups.
4. Incorporating Mental Health into Academic Curricula: Universities can incorporate mental health into academic curricula, to help students develop the skills and knowledge needed to maintain good mental health and well-being.

In conclusion University students' attitudes and responses to mental health promotion can vary greatly, influenced by factors such as stigma and social norms, cultural background, personal experiences, and academic pressures. To promote positive attitudes and responses, universities can use strategies such as increasing awareness, reducing stigma, providing accessible services, and incorporating mental health into academic curricula. By working together, universities and students can promote positive mental health and well-being, and create a supportive and inclusive campus community.

Factors Influencing Mental Health Promotion among University Students

Several factors influence mental health promotion among university students, including:

Demographic Factors

1. **Age:** University students are in a transitional phase of life, and their age can influence their mental health. The age of university students significantly impacts their mental health needs and experiences. Traditional-age students (i.e students within the age of 18-22) are navigating significant life transitions. They are adjusting to newfound independence, academic responsibilities, and social relationships. These changes can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of overwhelm. As a result, mental health promotion strategies for traditional-age students should focus on supporting their transition to university life. This can include workshops on time management, stress reduction, and building social connections. In contrast, non-traditional-age students, typically 23 years and older, bring distinct life experiences and responsibilities to the university setting. Many have prior work experience, family obligations, or caregiving responsibilities. These additional responsibilities can exacerbate mental health challenges, such as anxiety and depression. Mental health promotion strategies for non-traditional-age students should acknowledge and address these unique challenges. This can include providing flexible counseling services, online support groups, and resources tailored to their specific needs.

Age also influences how university students engage with mental health promotion strategies. Traditional-age students are more likely to participate in campus-based activities, such as workshops and support groups. In contrast, non-traditional-age students may prefer online resources, counseling services, and support groups that accommodate their busy schedules.

2. **Sex/Gender:** While mental health affects students of all genders, research suggests that gender plays a significant role in shaping mental health experiences and responses to promotion strategies. One of the primary ways in which gender influences mental health promotion is through differing help-seeking behaviors. Research has consistently shown that female students are more likely to seek help for mental health concerns than their male counterparts (Addis & Mahalik, 2003). Female students tend to be more open about their emotions and more willing to engage in counseling services. In contrast, male students often adhere to traditional masculine norms, which emphasize self-reliance and emotional stoicism (Courtenay, 2000). As a result, male students may be less likely to seek help for mental health concerns, making it essential to develop targeted promotion strategies that address these gender differences. Gender also affects the types of mental health concerns that university students experience. Female students are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, and eating disorders (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). In contrast, male students are more likely to experience substance abuse and antisocial behaviour (Courtenay, 2000). These differences highlight the need for gender-specific

mental health promotion strategies that address the unique concerns and experiences of each gender. Furthermore, gender influences the social and cultural context in which university students experience mental health concerns. Female students often face unique challenges related to body image, relationships, and academic pressures (Hesse-Biber, 2013). Male students, on the other hand, may experience pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms, which can exacerbate mental health concerns (Courtenay, 2000). By acknowledging and addressing these gender-specific challenges, universities can develop more effective mental health promotion strategies.

3. Socioeconomic status: While mental health affects students from all socio-economic backgrounds, research suggests that socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping mental health experiences and responses to promotion strategies. One of the primary ways in which socio-economic factors influence mental health promotion is through access to resources. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds often face significant financial barriers, including limited access to healthcare, counseling services, and other mental health resources. In contrast, students from higher socio-economic backgrounds may have greater access to these resources, as well as more opportunities for social mobility and networking. Socio-economic factors also affect the types of mental health concerns that university students experience. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and depression related to financial insecurity, academic pressures, and family obligations. In contrast,

students from higher socio-economic backgrounds may experience mental health concerns related to substance abuse, eating disorders, and body image. Socio-economic factors also influence the social and cultural context in which university students experience mental health concerns. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face unique challenges related to social isolation, limited social support, and cultural stigma surrounding mental health. In contrast, students from higher socio-economic backgrounds may experience pressure to conform to certain social norms or expectations, which can exacerbate mental health concerns.

Academic Factors

1. **Academic pressure:** academic pressure can manifest in various forms, including the pressure to achieve high grades, complete assignments on time, and balance academic responsibilities with other aspects of life.

Firstly, academic pressure can lead to increased stress levels, which can negatively impact mental health. University students often experience high levels of stress due to the demands of academic work, including exams, assignments, and projects. Chronic stress can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems, making it challenging for students to maintain good mental health and well-being.

Secondly, academic pressure can lead to a lack of self-care and poor time management. University students often prioritize academic responsibilities over self-care activities, such as exercise, meditation, and spending time with friends and family. Poor time

management can also lead to procrastination, which can exacerbate stress and anxiety levels. By neglecting self-care and poor time management, students can compromise their mental health and well-being.

Thirdly, academic pressure can lead to a fear of failure and perfectionism. University students often feel pressure to achieve high grades and avoid failure, which can lead to perfectionism and an excessive fear of failure. This fear can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems, making it challenging for students to maintain good mental health and well-being. Academic pressure can lead to a lack of help-seeking behavior. University students often feel reluctant to seek help for mental health problems due to the stigma associated with mental illness. Academic pressure can exacerbate this reluctance, as students may feel that seeking help will compromise their academic performance or reputation. By neglecting to seek help, students can compromise their mental health and well-being.

2. Academic workload: University students face numerous challenges that can impact their mental health and well-being. One of the most significant factors affecting mental health promotion among university students is academic workload. Academic workload refers to the amount of academic work, including assignments, exams, and projects, that students are expected to complete within a given timeframe. Various ways in which academic workload affects the promotion of mental health among university students are:

Firstly, excessive academic workload can lead to increased stress levels, which can negatively impact mental health. University students often experience high levels of stress due to the demands of academic work, including tight deadlines, heavy workload, and high expectations. Chronic stress can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems, making it challenging for students to maintain good mental health and well-being. Also academic workload can lead to a lack of self-care and poor time management. University students often prioritize academic responsibilities over self-care activities, such as exercise, meditation, and spending time with friends and family. Poor time management can also lead to procrastination, which can exacerbate stress and anxiety levels. By neglecting self-care and poor time management, students can compromise their mental health and well-being.

Academic workload can lead to a sense of burnout and exhaustion. University students often experience burnout due to the demands of academic work, including long hours of studying, lack of sleep, and poor nutrition (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Burnout can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced performance, making it challenging for students to maintain good mental health and well-being.

Finally, academic workload can lead to a lack of help-seeking behavior. University students often feel reluctant to seek help for mental health problems due to the stigma associated with mental illness.

3. Academic support: Academic support refers to the resources and services provided by universities to help students succeed academically, including academic advising, tutoring, and mentoring. Academic support can help reduce stress and anxiety levels among university students. Students who receive academic support tend to feel more confident and prepared to handle academic challenges, which can lead to reduced stress and anxiety levels (Ross et al., 2017). Academic support can also help students develop better time management and organizational skills, which can further reduce stress and anxiety levels. Also academic support can promote a sense of belonging and connection among university students. Students who receive academic support tend to feel more connected to their university community, which can lead to increased feelings of belonging and social support. Academic support can also provide students with opportunities to interact with peers and faculty members, which can help build social connections and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. Academic support helps university students develop coping skills and resilience. Students who receive academic support tend to develop better coping skills and resilience, which can help them navigate academic challenges and setbacks. Academic support can also provide students with opportunities to learn from failures and setbacks, which can help build resilience and perseverance. Academic support can help university students access mental health resources and services. Academic support staff, such as academic advisors and counselors, can provide students with referrals to mental health resources and services, such as counseling and therapy

(Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004). Academic support staff can also provide students with support and guidance as they navigate mental health challenges and seek help.

Social Factors

1. **Social support:** Social support refers to the emotional, informational, and practical support provided by family, friends, and community members. Social support plays a crucial role in reducing stress and anxiety levels among university students. Students who have a strong support network tend to feel more confident and better equipped to handle academic challenges, which can lead to reduced stress and anxiety levels. Moreover, social support provides students with a sense of belonging and connection, which can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation. When students feel connected to their peers and community, they are more likely to develop positive relationships and engage in activities that promote mental well-being. The presence of social support also promotes positive mental health behaviors among university students. Students who have a supportive network tend to engage in healthier behaviors, such as regular exercise, healthy eating, and adequate sleep. Furthermore, social support encourages students to seek help when needed, which can help prevent mental health problems from escalating. By having a supportive network, students feel more comfortable seeking help and are more likely to receive the support they need to manage their mental health. In addition to reducing stress and promoting positive behaviors, social support provides university students with a sense of purpose and meaning. Students who have a strong support

network tend to feel more connected to their community and more motivated to achieve their goals. Social support also provides students with a sense of identity and belonging, which can help them navigate the challenges of university life. When students feel connected to their community, they are more likely to develop a sense of purpose and meaning, which can promote positive mental health outcomes. Moreover, social support helps university students develop coping skills and resilience. Students who have a supportive network tend to develop better coping skills and resilience, which can help them navigate academic challenges and setbacks (Wang et al., 2015). Social support provides students with a safe space to discuss their feelings and concerns, which can help them process and manage stress. By having a supportive network, students can develop the skills and strategies needed to manage their mental health and well-being.

2. **Social connections:** This refers to the relationships and interactions students have with their peers, family, and community members. Social connections play a crucial role in reducing stress and anxiety levels among university students. Students who have strong social connections tend to feel more supported and less isolated, which can lead to reduced stress and anxiety levels. Moreover, social connections provide students with a sense of belonging and identity, which can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and disconnection. When students feel connected to their peers and community, they are more likely to develop positive relationships and engage in activities that promote mental well-being. Social connections also promote positive mental health behaviors among

university students. Students who have strong social connections tend to engage in healthier behaviors, such as regular exercise, healthy eating, and adequate sleep. Furthermore, social connections encourage students to seek help when needed, which can help prevent mental health problems from escalating. By having strong social connections, students feel more comfortable seeking help and are more likely to receive the support they need to manage their mental health. Also, social connections provide university students with a sense of purpose and meaning. Students who have strong social connections tend to feel more connected to their community and more motivated to achieve their goals. Social connections also provide students with a sense of identity and belonging, which can help them navigate the challenges of university life. When students feel connected to their community, they are more likely to develop a sense of purpose and meaning, which can promote positive mental health outcomes. Social connections also help university students develop coping skills and resilience. Students who have strong social connections tend to develop better coping skills and resilience, which can help them navigate academic challenges and setbacks. Social connections provide students with a safe space to discuss their feelings and concerns, which can help them process and manage stress. By having strong social connections, students can develop the skills and strategies needed to manage their mental health and well-being. Also social connections can provide university students with access to mental health resources and services. Students who have strong social connections tend to be more aware of the mental health

resources and services available on campus, and are more likely to seek help when needed. Social connections can also provide students with emotional support and encouragement, which can help them navigate the mental health system and access the resources they need.

3. Campus culture: The Impact of Campus Culture on the Promotion of Mental Health Among University Students, University campuses are complex environments that shape the experiences and well-being of students. One of the significant factors that influence the mental health of university students is campus culture. Campus culture refers to the values, norms, and attitudes that prevail within a university community. This essay will explore how campus culture affects the promotion of mental health among university students.

Campus culture plays a crucial role in promoting mental health among university students by fostering a sense of community and belonging. When students feel connected to their peers and university community, they are more likely to develop positive relationships and engage in activities that promote mental well-being. A supportive campus culture encourages students to seek help when needed, provides emotional support, and promotes a sense of identity and belonging (Hartley, 2011). Conversely, a campus culture that emphasizes competition, individualism, and perfectionism can exacerbate stress, anxiety, and depression among students.

The campus culture also influences the stigma associated with mental health issues. When universities prioritize mental health and well-being, students are more likely to feel comfortable seeking help and discussing their mental health concerns openly. A campus culture that promotes mental health awareness, education, and support can reduce stigma and encourage students to seek help without fear of judgment or rejection (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004).

Furthermore, campus culture affects the availability and accessibility of mental health resources and services. Universities that prioritize mental health and well-being are more likely to provide adequate resources and services, such as counseling, therapy, and support groups. A campus culture that values mental health promotes the development of these resources and services, making it easier for students to access the help they need (Wangcampus culture influences the academic environment and expectations. A campus culture that emphasizes academic achievement and perfectionism can lead to increased stress and anxiety among students. Conversely, a campus culture that promotes academic support, flexibility, and understanding can help reduce stress and promote mental well-being (Ross et al., 2017).

Environmental Factors

1. **Campus safety:** A secure campus environment is crucial for students' mental health. Exposure to crime, harassment, or violence can lead to anxiety, stress, and difficulty

concentrating on studies. Conversely, a safe campus fosters a sense of security, allowing students to focus on academics and social life without fear.

2. Living Situation: The quality of a student's living conditions, such as dormitories, shared apartments, or commuting arrangements, can significantly impact mental well-being. Overcrowding, lack of privacy, conflicts with roommates, or financial stress related to housing can contribute to anxiety and depression. A stable and comfortable living environment promotes emotional stability and academic success.

3. Campus Resources: Access to mental health services, counseling, academic support, and recreational facilities plays a crucial role in students' well-being. Limited or inaccessible resources may leave students feeling unsupported, increasing stress and burnout. Universities that provide strong support systems, including mental health programs, student groups, and academic assistance, help students manage stress and maintain overall well-being.

Psychological Factors

1. Personality traits: Certain personality traits, such as perfectionism and low self-esteem, can increase the risk of mental health issues.

2. Coping mechanisms: Healthy coping mechanisms, such as exercise and mindfulness, can help manage stress and promote mental health.

3. Mental health literacy: Understanding mental health issues and how to seek help is essential for promoting mental health.

Technological Factors

1. **Social media:** Excessive social media use can negatively impact mental health.
2. **Online resources:** Access to online mental health resources, such as crisis hotlines and support groups, can promote mental health.

Strategies for Mental Health Promotion among University Students

Promoting mental health among university students requires a comprehensive approach that addresses emotional, psychological, social, and behavioral well-being. Below are various strategies for mental health promotion:

1. Enhancing Awareness and Education

- a. **Mental Health Literacy:** Organizing workshops, seminars, and campaigns to educate students about mental health, common disorders, and coping mechanisms. Providing information on recognizing signs of distress and where to seek help.
- b. **Reducing Stigma:** Encouraging open conversations about mental health through student-led initiatives, peer support groups, and testimonials. Using social media and campus platforms to normalize discussions about mental health challenges.

2. Providing Accessible Mental Health Services

- a. **On-Campus Counseling Services:** Ensuring that universities have well-equipped counseling centers with trained professionals, and also offering free or affordable counseling sessions, both in-person and online.

b. Crisis Intervention Programs: Establishing 24/7 helplines or crisis response teams for students experiencing acute distress and training staff and students in Mental Health First Aid to provide immediate support.

c. Peer Support Programs: Creating peer mentorship programs where trained students can offer emotional support and guidance and also Encouraging student-led mental health clubs to foster a supportive community.

3. Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle

a. Encouraging Physical Activity: E.g providing access to gyms, sports facilities, and recreational activities. Organizing yoga, meditation, and wellness programs to help manage stress.

b. Promoting Healthy Eating: Ensuring that campus cafeterias offer nutritious meals and dietary options and educating students on the link between diet and mental health.

c. Prioritizing Sleep Hygiene: Raising awareness about the importance of sleep for cognitive function and mental well-being and providing relaxation spaces or nap pods for students.

4. Fostering a Supportive Social Environment

a. Strengthening Social Connections: Encouraging participation in clubs, student organizations, and extracurricular activities and creating inclusive spaces where students feel a sense of belonging.

b. Addressing Loneliness and Isolation: Promoting social events that facilitate friendships and networking.

5. Reducing Academic and Financial Stress

a. Academic Support Services: Providing tutoring, study groups, and time management workshops and implementing flexible academic policies for students facing mental health challenges.

b. Financial Assistance and Budgeting Guidance: Offering scholarships, emergency funds, and financial literacy programs. And also providing part-time job opportunities and career counseling.

6. Ensuring a Safe and Inclusive Campus Environment

Strengthening security measures to prevent harassment, bullying, and violence creating an Inclusive and Diverse Community ensuring that university policies support students of all backgrounds, including those with disabilities, different cultural identities.

7. Implementing Digital and Technological Support

a. Online Mental Health Platforms: Offering virtual therapy sessions and self-help resources and providing mental health apps that help with stress management, mindfulness, and mood tracking.

b. Leveraging AI and Chatbots: Using AI-driven chatbots to offer immediate mental health advice and direct students to relevant resources and developing university-based mental health portals with easy access to professional help.

8. Encouraging Work-Life Balance

- a. **Managing Academic Pressure:** Encouraging professors to adopt a balanced approach to deadlines and workload and promoting flexible learning options, such as online lectures or recorded sessions.
- b. **Encouraging Leisure Activities:** Providing entertainment, art, and cultural programs as outlets for creative expression and also encouraging students to take breaks and engage in hobbies.

Summary of related literature

The chapter begins by discussing the concept of mental health, emphasizing that it is more than just the absence of mental disorders. It involves emotional, psychological, and social well-being, which contribute to an individual's ability to cope with stress, maintain relationships, and make decisions. Mental health is dynamic, fluctuating in response to life experiences, and requires ongoing attention and care. Understanding mental health in this context is essential, as it forms the basis for effective promotion strategies aimed at enhancing students' well-being. The importance of mental health promotion is another critical aspect examined in the chapter. Mental health promotion involves proactive measures to improve psychological well-being and prevent mental health disorders. For university students, such efforts are vital in fostering resilience, reducing stress, and improving academic performance. Universities have a significant role in promoting mental health by providing supportive environments, access to counseling services, and

educational initiatives that encourage students to prioritize their mental well-being. Effective mental health promotion not only benefits individual students but also contributes to a healthier, more productive academic community. Despite the growing recognition of mental health issues, the current state of mental health among university students remains a concern. Research indicates a rising prevalence of mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, and stress among students. Academic pressures, financial constraints, social isolation, and the transition to university life contribute to these issues. Unfortunately, many students do not seek professional help due to stigma, lack of awareness, or limited access to mental health services. This highlights the need for stronger mental health promotion efforts that encourage students to seek support and adopt coping strategies.

The chapter also examines the attitudes and responses of university students toward mental health promotion. While awareness of mental health issues has increased in recent years, stigma and misconceptions still exist. Some students perceive mental health struggles as a sign of weakness, leading to reluctance in seeking help. However, targeted awareness campaigns, peer support programs, and educational initiatives have played a role in changing perceptions. Encouraging open discussions about mental health and normalizing help-seeking behaviors are essential steps toward creating a more supportive campus environment. Several factors influence mental health promotion among university students. Individual factors such as personality, resilience, and coping skills

play a role in determining how students manage stress and seek help. Institutional factors, including the availability of mental health services, campus policies, and academic workloads, also impact students' well-being. Social and cultural factors, such as societal attitudes toward mental health and the level of support from family and peers, further shape students' mental health experiences. Recognizing and addressing these factors can enhance the effectiveness of mental health promotion efforts. To improve mental health awareness and practices among university students, various strategies have been employed. Universities have implemented counseling services, stress management workshops, peer support programs, and mental health awareness campaigns. Digital tools, such as mental health apps and online counseling services, have also emerged as accessible options for students seeking support. Creating an inclusive and supportive university culture, integrating mental health education into academic curricula, and reducing stigma are essential strategies for fostering a healthier student population.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights the importance of mental health awareness and promotion among university students. While mental health challenges remain prevalent in this demographic, effective strategies can help improve students' psychological well-being and overall success in university life. By addressing the barriers to mental health promotion and implementing proactive interventions, universities can create a more supportive environment that enables students to thrive academically and personally.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used in the study under the following sub-headings:

- Design of the study
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Administration of the instrument
- Method of Data Analysis

Design of the study

This study was carried out to assess the awareness of mental health and practice for promotion of mental health among the students of the University of Benin (UNIBEN). A descriptive survey research design was adopted because it was appropriate in eliciting personal information from the respondents. The study collects both qualitative and quantitative information from the respondent in order to obtain the required data needed in examining the issues of the awareness and practice for promotion of mental health

among students of UNIBEN, and how the university of Benin students academic can be influenced by their mental health.

Population of the study

Population of Study Downloading recent changes... The population of the study comprises of the 16 faculties in the University of Benin. The population comprises full time undergraduates of the various faculties during the 2022/2023 academic session. The present population of the University of Benin undergraduates is 43,884 students (22,109 female students and 21,775 male students). The faculties are shown in the table below:

Table 1; Each faculty and student population

S/N	Faculty	Population of the study
1	Agriculture	1635
2	Art	5347
3	Basic medical sciences	3748
4	Dentistry	112
5	Education	6819
6	Engineering	6177
7	Environmental sciences	1052
8	Law	1064
9	Life sciences	4816
10	Management sciences	3479
11	Medicine	927
12	Pharmacy	1295
13	Physical sciences	3660
14	Social sciences	3409
15	Veterinary medicine	151
16	Other services	193
	TOTAL	43,884

SOURCE; Academic Planning Unit, Student affairs division, University of Benin, Ugbowo campus.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study is 240. Three sampling technique were used to obtain the sample size. The first one was to class the people by various faculties, secondly the classification of people by sex and thirdly the classification of people base on their inhabitant either in school campus or off campus and a simple random technique was used to select 16 people each from all 15 faculty of the university of Benin 8 males and 8 females, 4 from school campus and 4 from off campus for both the male and female, making it a total of 240 respondents.

Research Instrument

The instrument that was employed by this study in the collection of data is a questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire is divided into three sections. Section A which covers the demographic background of the respondents and Section B which assesses the respondent's level of knowledge and awareness on the research topic, and section C which covers the level at which the researcher puts to practice the research topic.

Validity of the instrument

The content validity of the instrument was established after an intensive screening by the supervisor and two other experts from the department of health, safety and environmental

education in the University of Benin (UNIBEN). Their input corrections in terms of clarity and appropriateness of language were used to develop the final draft for administration.

Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument for the questionnaire, the test re-test method of estimating the reliability of the instrument was used. Consequently, the constructed instrument was administered on a group of twenty (20) students of the university of Benin who were not part of the study within an interval of two weeks. The correlation of the response was determined using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, and a coefficient of 0.85 was obtained indicating high reliability.

Administration of the instrument

The researcher personally administered the instrument to the respondents. The completed questionnaires by the respondents were retrieved personally by the researcher immediately after being filled so as to ensure high return rate.

Method of Data collection

The qualitative data collection from the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

The descriptive statistics used to analyze the qualitative data collection from the survey include:

Frequency distribution: This was used to summarize the data and show the number of respondents who selected each response option.

Percentage: This was used to show the proportion of respondents who selected each response option.

The inferential statistics used to analyze the qualitative data collection from the survey include:

Pearson's product moment correlation: This was used to determine the reliability of the instrument, with a coefficient of $r = 0.85$ obtained.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis, interpretation of data and discussion of findings on the awareness and practice for promotion of mental health among students of the University of Benin. To guide the study two sets of 10-item questionnaire were carefully constructed to collect data on the level of awareness/knowledge and practice for mental health promotion among the students of the university of Benin. The questionnaires were administered to 260 respondents who are students of the university of Benin. Their responses were carefully analyzed and presented in the following tables.

SECTION A : Bio-Data of the Respondent

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	106	(44%)
Female	134	(56)

This table shows that of a total of 240 sample 106 (44%) are male while 134 (56) are female.

Year of study	Frequency	Percentage
100 level	47	(20%)
200 level	64	(27%)
300 level	51	((21%)
400 level	61	(25%)
500 level	17	(7%)
600 level	0	(0%)

This table shows the various year of study of the respondents, of 240 respondents 47 (20%) are 100 level students, 64 (27%) are 200 level, 51 (21%) are 300 level, 61 (25%) are 400 level and 17 (7%) are 500 level.

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
17 years - 25 years	169	(70%)
25 years -, 40 years	66	(28%)
40 years and above	5	(2%)

The above table shows the age range of respondents, of a total of 240, 169 (70%) are within the age group of 17 years – 25 years, 66 (28%) are within the age group of 25 years – 40 years, while 5 (2%) are within the age group of 40 years and above.

Address	Frequency	Percentage
School campus	127	(53%)
Off campus	113	(47%)

The above table show the location of the respondents, of a total of 240 respondents 127 (53%) stays at school campus while 113 (47%) stay off school campus.

SECTION B : Information on knowledge on Mental health among undergraduate of the university of Benin.

SN	Research questions	Yes	No	Not sure
1	Have you ever heard of the term "mental health	195 (81%)	37 (15%)	8 (4%)
2	Do you think mental health is as important as physical health?	207 (86%)	11 (5%)	22 (9%)
3	Do you believe that mental health issues can affect academic performance?	227 (94%)	4 (2%)	9 (4%)
4	Do you feel mental health issues are more related with old people?	175 (73%)	63 (26%)	2 (1%)
5	Do you believe mental health issues are a sign of weakness?	79 (33%)	147 (61%)	14 (6%)
6	Are you aware of any mental health services available for students at the University of Benin?	28 (12%)	212 (88%)	0 (0%)
7	Have you or someone you know ever sought help for a mental health issue?	13 (6%)	227 (94%)	0 (0%)
8	Do you agree that stress affects my mental health.	233 (97%)	1 (1%)	6 (2%)
9	Do you think mental health issues are common among students at the University of Benin?	209 (87%)	6 (3%)	25 (10%)
10	Do you think mental health issues are associated with spiritual entities?	54 (23%)	175 (73%)	11 (4%)

Table 1 show knowledge/awareness of mental health among students of the university of Benin, the table above shows that 196 (81%)of the sample have heard of the term mental health and 37 (15%) of the sample haven't heard of the term mental health while 8 (4%) of the sample remain unsure about having heard the term mental health, the table also shows that of the 240 sample 207 (86%) believe mental health is as important as ones

physical health and 11 (5%) disagrees that mental health is as important as physical health while 22 (9%) remains unsure, the table further shows that 227 (94%) of the sample believes that one's mental health can affect their academic performance and 4 (2%) opposes while 9 (4%) remains unsure, the table also shows 175 (73%) from the sample believes that mental health issues are more related with older people and 63 (26%) of the sample disagrees while 2 (1%) remains unsure, the table shows that of the 240 sample 79 (33%) believes mental health issues are sign of weakness and 147 (61%) disagrees while 14 (6%) are unsure, the table further show that 28 (12%) of the sample are aware of mental health services available for students in the university of Benin while 212 (88%) are not aware, the table shows that 13 (6%) of the sample have sought help regarding mental health while 227 (94%) of the sample have not, the table also shows that 233 (97%) agrees that stress affects their mental health and 1 (1%) disagrees while 6 (2%) remains unsure, the table further shows that 209 (87%) of the sample agrees that mental health issues are common among the students of the university of Benin and 6 (3%) disagrees while 25 (10%) remains unsure, the table also shows that of the 240 sample 54 (23%) believes that mental health issues are related/associated with spiritual entities and 175 (73%) disagree while 11 (4%) remains unsure.

Section C : Information on practice of mental health promotion among undergraduate of the university of Benin.

S/N	Research questions	AGREED(%)	DISAGREED (%)
	Mental health services should be made available for students	240 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Mental health promotion should be a priority for all students.	240 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Discussing mental health openly can help reduce stigma among students.	164 (68%)	76 (33)
	Seeking help for mental health issues is a sign of strength, not weakness.	197 (82)	43 (18)
	Engaging in mental health promotion activities can improve academic performance.	227 (95)	13 (5%)
	More mental health promotion workshops and events should be organized for students.	240 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Faculties should provides enough information on mental health promotion.	240 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Students should learn to avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms such as excessive alcohol, drug use, or social withdraw.	216 (90%)	24 (10%)
	There are enough student-friendly mental health programs and activities at the university.	3 (1%)	237 (99%)
	I would use mental health services if they were more accessible on campus.	185 (77%)	55 (23)

Table two shows information on the Information on practice of mental health promotion among undergraduate of the university of Benin. The table shows that the total sample population agrees that mental health services should be made available for students and that mental health should be made a priority for all students, the table also shows that 164

(68%) of the sample agrees that discussing mental health publicly can help reduce stigma among students while 76 (33%) of the sample disagrees, the table shows that 197 (82%) agrees that seeking help for mental issues is a sign of strength and not weakness while 43 (18%) of the samples disagrees, the table also shows that 227 (95%) of the sample agrees that engaging in mental health promotion activities can improve academic performance while 13 (5%) disagrees, the table also shows that the whole sample population agrees that more mental health promotion workshops and events should be organized for students and also agrees that Faculties should provides enough information on mental health promotion, the table further shows that 216 (90%) of the sample agrees that students should learn to avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms such as excessive alcohol, drug use, or social withdraw while 24 (10%) disagrees with this, the table also shows 3 (1%) of the sample agrees that there are enough student-friendly mental health programs and activities at the university while 237 (99%) disagrees, the table shows that of the total sample population 185 (77%) of the sample agrees to use mental health services if they were more accessible on campus while 55 (23%) do not agree.

Discussion of Findings

The study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices for promotion of mental health among the students of the university of Benin. From the study it can be inferred that the students of the University of Benin are somewhat knowledgeable of the term mental health, the findings of these study indicates that majority of the respondents are

aware of their mental health and believe that mental health is as important as one's physical health, furthermore majority of the respondent also reported being aware of the impact of mental health on their academic performance. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have reported a high level of awareness about mental health among university students (Kapur, 2013; Eisenberg et al., 2013). For example, a study by Kapur (2013) found that 75.0% of students were aware of the importance of mental health for overall well-being. Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that students are aware of the impact of mental health on their academic performance. This is consistent with previous studies that have reported a significant relationship between mental health and academic performance (Hysenbegasi et al., 2011; Andrews & Wilding, 2004). For example, a study by Hysenbegasi et al. (2011) found that students who experienced mental health problems were more likely to experience academic difficulties. The awareness of the impact of mental health on academic performance among students is a positive finding, as it suggests that students are motivated to prioritize their mental health in order to achieve academic success. This is consistent with previous studies that have reported that students who prioritize their mental health are more likely to experience academic success (Pritchard et al., 2007).

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of young respondents believe that mental health is related to older people and that mental health problems are more common among older adults. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have reported

that young people often associate mental health problem with older adults (Golberstein et al., 2015; Mojtabai, 2011). For example, a study by golberstein et al. (2015) found that young adults were more likely to believe that mental health problems were a normal part of aging, and that there were more common among older adults. Similarly a study by Mojtabai (2011) found that young people were more likely to associate mental health problems with older adults, and that they were less likely to seek help for mental health problems because they did not think they were relevant to their age group. These findings suggest that there may be a disconnect between the perceived relevance of mental health issues to young people's lives and the actual prevalence of mental health problems among this age group. This is concerning, as mental health problems can affect any one regardless of age and young people maybe be more vulnerable to mental health problems due to the challenges and stressors associated with adolescence and young adulthood (Kessler et al., 2005).

The findings of this study indicate that a minority of respondents believes that discussing mental health problem is a sign of weakness. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported that many people, particularly young adults view mental health problem as personal weakness rather than a legitimate health issue (Golberstein et al., 2015; Mojtabai, 2011). For example a study by Golberstein et al. (2015) found that 25% percent of college students believe that seeking help for mental health problem was a sign of weakness. Similarly, a study by Mojtabai (2011) found that 30% of young adults

believe that people with mental health were crazy or weak. These findings suggest that there is still a significant stigma surrounding mental health problems, particularly among young adults. This stigma can prevent individuals from seeking help for mental problems, which can exacerbate the problem and lead to poor outcomes (Kessler et al., 2005). However, it is worth noting that the majority of respondents in this study did not believe that discussing mental health problems was a sign of weakness. This suggests that there is a growing awareness and acceptance of mental health issues among young adults, which is consistent with previous research (Wang et al., 2017).

In terms of practice for the promotion of mental health among the students of the University of Benin, the study shows that only a low proportion of respondents reported seeking help from mental health professionals when needed. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have reported a low level of help-seeking behaviour among university students (Eisenberg et al. 2013; Hunt and Eisenberg, 2010). For example, a study by Eisenberg et al. (2013) found that only 23.4% of students who experienced mental health problems sought help from a mental health professional.

The study also revealed that many respondents face limitations in accessing mental health services. Majorly due to low availability and accessibility of mental health services on campus or due to low awareness of mental health services available on campus. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have reported barriers to accessing mental health services among university students, including lack of availability,

awareness and affordability (Hunt and Eisenberg, 2010; Kisch et al., 2005) for example a study by Hunt and Eisenberg (2010) found that the most common barriers to seeking help for mental health problems among students were lack of awareness about available services and concerns about cost.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study ascertained the knowledge and practice for the promotion of mental health among the students of the University of Benin, Benin City. To guide the study two sets of questionnaire were constructed to gather information each on the awareness/knowledge and practice for the promotion of mental health among the students of the University of Benin. Relevant literatures related to the study were reviewed with maximum attention to their relationships with the subject of interest. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design with a sample population of two hundred and forty respondents (240) which was carefully selected using convenience sampling technique.

A self-constructed questionnaire whose reliability was determined using a split half method was validated by experts and used to collect relevant data necessary for the study. The data were further analyzed using simple percentage, frequency counts, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) and Chi-square statistical methods. The results were presented, interpreted by the researcher and findings were drawn.

Findings

1. Majority of the respondents (students of the university of Benin) have high knowledge of mental health.

2. Majority of the respondents (students of the university of Benin) have positive attitudes toward mental health promotion.
3. Majority of the respondents (students of the university of Benin) are aware of the impact of their mental health on their academic performance.
4. Respondents are willing to make use of mental health services if made available.
5. Majority of respondents (students of the university of Benin) do not discuss their mental health problems.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study, it was discovered that majority of the students of the university of Benin are aware of their mental health and its impact on the academics, the study also shows students willingness to engage in mental health promotion practices. However, it was shown that there is a significant low engagement in or use of mental health service due to low availability and accessibility of mental health services around school campus. To this end, knowledge alone cannot guarantee promotion of mental health among the students of university of Benin. Thus, should be complemented with mental health policies, programs and services accessible by the students of the university of Benin for a heightened level of mental health promotion.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned findings, the recommendations below were made:

1. The university of Benin should ensure that more mental health promotion workshop and mental health services should be put in place and made available and easily accessible for students as to enhance the practice for promotion of the mental health of its students.
2. Universities should carry out and engage its student in mental health promotion activities and programs
3. Universities should provide students of the University of Benin with more accurate information concerning their mental health and how to manage their mental well being as this information will further enhance the awareness and practice for the promotion of mental health among the students of the university of Benin.
4. The University of Benin should make as one of its priority the mental health of its student there by taking this into consideration during planning of school activities and academic workload as to improve academic performance by promoting the mental health of its students.

REFERENCE

- Abiola, T., & Udofia, O. (2018). Mental health awareness and help-seeking behavior among university students in Nigeria. *Journal of Mental Health, 27(3), 251-256.*
- Abiola, T., & Udofia, O. (2018). Mental health awareness and help-seeking behavior among university students in Nigeria. Proceedings of the 2018 International Conference on Mental Health, 7-12.
- Adewuya, A. O., & Makanjuola, R. O. (2018). Mental health services in Nigeria: A systematic review. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems, 12(1), 1-11.*
- Afolabi, O. (2017). Mental health promotion in Nigerian universities: Challenges and prospects. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
- Agbir, T. M., & Audu, M. D. (2017). Mental health literacy among university students in Nigeria. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science, 5(1), 1-8.*
- Aina, O. F., & Ola, B. A. (2018). Mental health promotion in Nigerian universities: A call to action. *Journal of Education and Human Development, 7(1), 1-6.*
- Aina, O.F., & Ola, B.A. (2018). Mental health promotion in Nigerian universities: A call to action. Proceedings of the 2018 International Conference on Mental Health, 1-6.
- Akintunde, A. A., & Adegun, A. O. (2019). Mental health stigma among university students in Nigeria. *Journal of Mental Health, 28(2), 157-162.*
- Eisenberg, D., Hunt, J., & Speer, N. (2013). Help seeking for mental health on college campuses: Review of evidence and next steps for research and practice. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 21(4), 222-232.*
- Jenkins, R., & Ustun, B. (2017). Preventing mental health disorders: A review of the evidence. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems, 11(1), 1-11.*
- National Institute of Mental Health. (2019). Mental illness.
- Oyedeji, A. (2015). Mental health awareness and attitudes among university students in Nigeria. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Patel, V., & Prince, M. (2010). Global mental health: A new global health field comes of age. *JAMA, 303(19), 1976-1977.*
- World Health Organization. (2013). Mental health action plan 2013-2020
- World Health Organization. (2019). Mental health.

APPENDICES
QUESTIONNAIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY, ESO STATE NIGERIA
QUESTIONNAIRE ON AWARENESS AND PRACTICE FOR PROMOTION OF
MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
(UNIBEN)

Dear Respondents,

I am a final year student of the department of health, safety and environmental education in the University of Benin, this questionnaire is designed to elicit information from you on the topic above, the information gathered from this exercise would be used purely for academic purposes, please respond sincerely to the items listed below, as all information will be treated with confidentiality. Thanks for your cooperation.

SECTION A: Bio-Data of the Respondent

Instruction: Please tick (✓) where appropriate

Faculty: _____

Year of study: 100level () 200level () 300level () 400level () 500level ()
600level ()

Age Range: 17 - 25 () 25 – 40 () 40 and above ()

Address: School campus () off campus ()

SECTION B: Information on knowledge on Mental health among undergraduate of the university of Benin.

Instruction: please tick (✓) where appropriate

- 1) Have you ever heard of the term "mental health"? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 2) Do you think mental health is as important as physical health? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 3) Do you believe that mental health issues can affect academic performance? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 4) Do you feel mental health issues are more related with old people? (a) Yes (B) No (c) Not sure
- 5) Do you believe mental health issues are a sign of weakness? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 6) Are you aware of any mental health services available for students at the University of Benin? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 7) Have you or someone you know ever sought help for a mental health issue? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure
- 8) Do you agree that stress affects my mental health. (a) Yes (B) No (c) Not sure
- 9) Do you think mental health issues are common among students at the University of Benin? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure

10) Do you think mental health issues are associated with spiritual entities? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure

Section C: Information on practice of mental health promotion among undergraduate of the university of Benin.

Key: SA –STRONGLY AGREE, A – AGREE, D – DISAGREE, SD – STRONGLY DISAGREE

S/N	Research question	SA	A	D	SD
1	Mental health services should be made available for students				
2	Mental health promotion should be a priority for all students.				
3	Discussing mental health openly can help reduce stigma among students.				
4	Seeking help for mental health issues is a sign of strength, not weakness.				
5	Engaging in mental health promotion activities can improve academic performance.				
6	More mental health promotion workshops and events should be organized for students.				
7	Faculties should provides enough information on mental health promotion.				
8	Students should learn to avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms such as excessive alcohol, drug use, or social withdraw.				
9	There are enough student-friendly mental health programs and activities at the university.				
10	I would use mental health services if they were more accessible on campus.				