



**EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC PRESSURE  
ON MENTAL HEALTH AMONG CRIMINOLOGY  
STUDENTS OF NORTHEASTERN MINDANAO  
COLLEGES, SURIGAO CITY**

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## CHAPTER 1

### **THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND**

This chapter presents the problem and its background, the framework of the study, the statement of the problem, the hypothesis, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, and the definition of terms.

#### **Introduction**

Academic pressure is a prevalent concern among college students, often linked to the pursuit of high academic achievement, competition, and future career expectations. According to Misra and McKean (2000), students who experience elevated academic stress are more likely to exhibit symptoms of anxiety and depression, which may lead to serious implications on their overall well-being. The field of Criminology, known for its rigorous curriculum and demanding practical requirements, places students under constant pressure to meet high standards of performance. As students strive to succeed academically, the accumulation of tasks, fear of failure, and pressure to meet deadlines often contribute to psychological distress, which, if left unaddressed, may deteriorate their mental health.

At Northeastern Mindanao, Criminology students are exposed to various academic and extra-curricular demands that could influence their psychological state. The nature of their program—ranging from theoretical discussions, field trainings, physical fitness requirements, and research projects—adds to the academic load that many students find difficult to manage. This creates a breeding ground for stress, burnout, and anxiety,



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especially among students who lack coping mechanisms or support systems. While academic excellence remains a primary goal, the mental health of students must not be compromised. Institutions must recognize the growing concern of mental well-being and its relationship with academic life to provide timely and appropriate interventions.

Given this context, the present study aims to examine the impact of academic pressure on the mental health of Criminology students at Northeastern Mindanao Colleges. By identifying specific academic stressors and their psychological effects, this research seeks to provide empirical data that may help academic institutions in developing effective student support programs. Furthermore, the study hopes to contribute to the broader discussion on mental health awareness in higher education, particularly in high-pressure fields like Criminology, where the future roles of students significantly rely on both their academic competence and psychological resilience.

### **Framework of the Study**

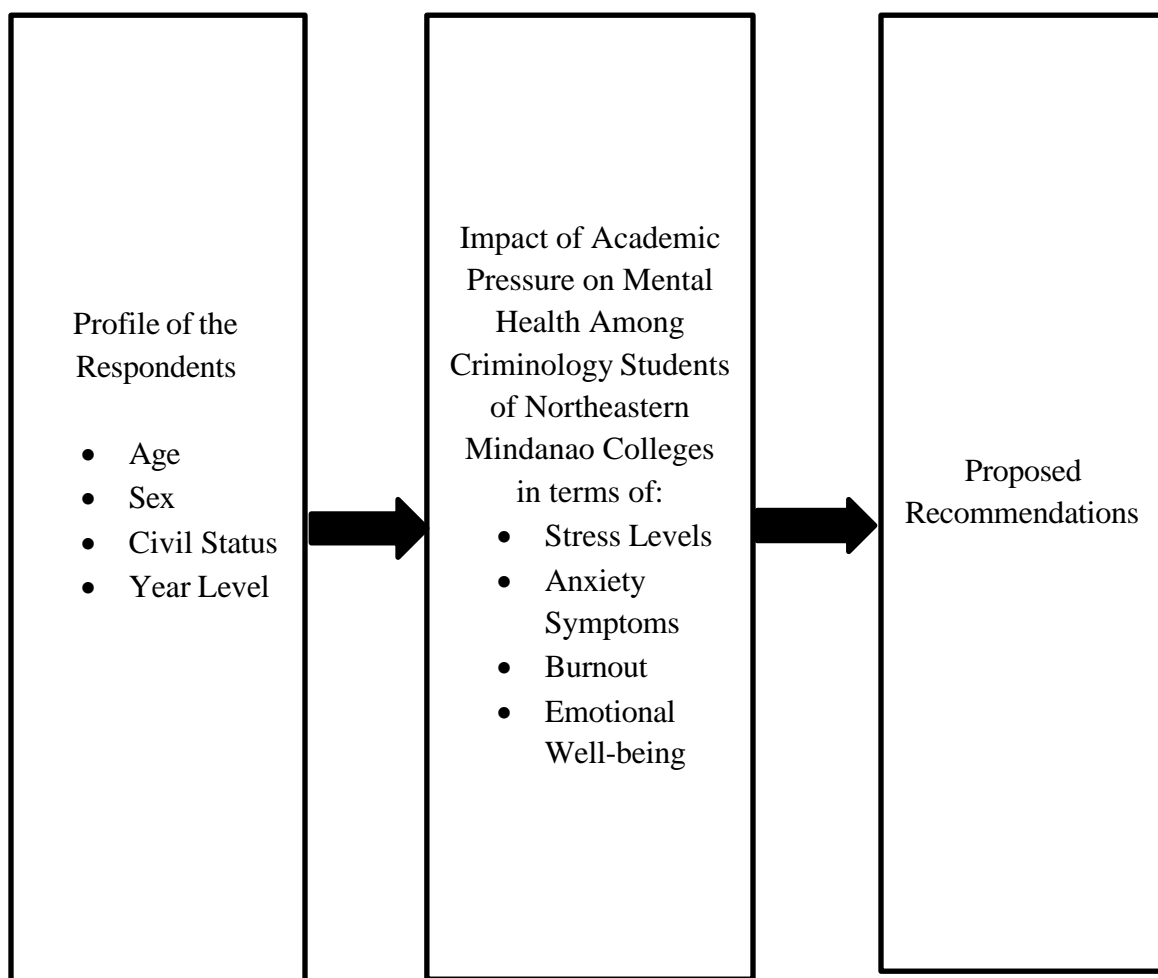
This study is anchored on the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984). This theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals assess and respond to stressors in their environment—such as academic pressure. According to Lazarus and Folkman, stress is not simply a direct response to a stimulus but rather the result of an individual's perception of the stressor and their perceived ability to cope with it. This model highlights two key processes: cognitive appraisal (how a person interprets a situation) and coping (how they manage the demands placed upon them).



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In the context of this study, Criminology students at Northeastern Mindanao Colleges may interpret academic pressure differently based on their personal, social, and academic experiences. Their mental health outcomes—whether positive or negative—are largely influenced by how they perceive academic demands and what coping strategies they employ. Some students may see these pressures as challenges that motivate them to perform better, while others may perceive them as overwhelming threats that exceed their coping resources, thus leading to psychological strain such as anxiety, burnout, or depression. By using the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, this study aims to understand the dynamic relationship between academic demands and students' mental health. The theory serves as a valuable lens to explore how students cognitively appraise academic stressors, what coping mechanisms they use, and how these factors collectively influence their mental well-being. It also supports the development of intervention strategies that focus not only on reducing academic stressors but also on strengthening students' coping capabilities.



**Figure 1.** *Schematic Diagram of the Study*



### **Statement of the Problem**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate and analyze the Impact of Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology students of Northeastern Mindanao Colleges.

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of?

- 1.1 age;
- 1.2 sex;
- 1.3 civil status; and
- 1.4 Year Level?

2. What is the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO in terms of:

- 2.1 Stress Levels;
- 2.2 Anxiety Symptoms;
- 2.3 Burnout; and
- 2.4 Emotional Well-being

3. Is there a significant difference in the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO when grouped according to their profile?

4. Based on the result, what recommendations may be proposed?



### **Hypothesis**

At 0.05 level of significance, the researcher hypothesized that there is no significant difference in the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO when grouped according to their profile variables.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study would contribute and would benefit the following:

**Criminology Students** As the primary respondents of the study, Criminology students will gain a deeper understanding of how academic pressure affects their mental health. The results may raise awareness on the importance of maintaining psychological well-being amidst academic demands and encourage students to adopt healthier coping mechanisms to manage stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion.

**Criminology Instructors and Faculty Members** The findings of the study will help instructors and faculty members recognize the academic stressors that significantly affect students' mental health. With this knowledge, they may consider adjusting teaching strategies, workload distribution, and performance expectations to create a more supportive and balanced academic environment for students.

**School Administrators and Guidance Counselors** School officials and counselors will benefit from the study by gaining insights into the mental health challenges faced by Criminology students. The data may serve as a foundation for developing and enhancing mental health programs, counseling services, and institutional policies that promote student well-being and academic success.





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**Parents and Guardians** This study may also benefit parents and guardians by helping them understand the nature and intensity of academic pressure experienced by their children. Such awareness may lead to more supportive and open communication at home, contributing to a healthier support system for students.

**Future Researchers** The results of this study can serve as a valuable reference for future researchers who wish to explore related topics such as academic stress, mental health, coping strategies, or interventions. It will contribute to the existing body of literature and may inspire further studies that focus on other academic programs or educational institutions.

### **Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This covers the focus, respondent, time, and place of the study.

**Focus.** This study will focus on identifying and analyzing the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO in terms of Stress Levels, Anxiety Symptoms, Burnout, and Emotional Well-being.

**Respondents.** The participants of the study are the 4<sup>th</sup> year CRIMINOLOGY students of Northeastern Mindanao Colleges. Participants will be purposively chosen. By delving into these aspects, the study seeks to offer valuable insights into the dynamics shaping experiences of these students within the specified timeframe.

**Time and Place.** The study will be conducted during the academic year 2024-2025 in Northeastern Mindanao Colleges, Surigao City, Surigao Del Norte.



### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are operationally defined to guide readers to have clear minds as to its use and purposes.

**Community Perception of Safety**

**Academic Pressure** Refers to the perceived academic demands experienced by Criminology students, including workload, time constraints, performance expectations, and competition. It is measured through the students' responses to survey items related to their academic experiences.

**Anxiety Symptoms** Refers to the presence of emotional and physical indicators such as worry, nervousness, restlessness, and fear of failure that are associated with academic performance. It is determined based on students' self-evaluation using standardized assessment tools in the questionnaire.

**Burnout** Refers to a state of chronic academic fatigue characterized by emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and reduced academic performance. It is assessed through students' reported experiences of fatigue, detachment, and loss of interest in academic tasks.

**Coping Mechanisms** Refers to the specific strategies used by students to manage academic pressure, including both problem-focused (e.g., seeking help, managing time) and emotion-focused (e.g., relaxation, distraction) approaches. These are identified based on students' responses to coping behavior items.



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**Emotional Well-being** Refers to the students' capacity to maintain a positive emotional state amidst academic challenges. It includes feelings of contentment, optimism, and emotional balance, as measured through self-reported indicators in the survey.

**Mental Health** Refers to the overall psychological state of Criminology students in relation to academic stress. In this study, it is assessed in terms of stress levels, anxiety symptoms, burnout, and emotional well-being.

**Stress Levels** Refers to the intensity and frequency of stress responses exhibited by students as a result of academic obligations. It is measured by students' reported feelings of being overwhelmed, tense, or mentally drained in handling academic responsibilities.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This section provides the readings taken from books, magazines, journals, and internet to give substance and support to the study at hand.

#### **Stress Levels**

Stress levels refer to the degree of mental or emotional strain that an individual experiences in response to demanding circumstances. In the academic setting, stress levels are often heightened due to workload, performance expectations, and time constraints. For criminology students, these stressors can become more intense due to the nature of their course content and training requirements. Academic stress can lead to frequent fatigue and lack of motivation. It can also affect students' decision-making and emotional stability. Prolonged exposure to stress can reduce overall productivity and academic satisfaction. It often interferes with the ability to concentrate or retain information. According to Salari et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic significantly raised stress levels among college students, resulting in decreased academic performance. In another study, Lee (2022) emphasized how continuous academic pressure correlates with higher stress responses and mental health issues. This makes stress level a critical indicator when studying students' mental health conditions.

Stress levels are commonly triggered by deadlines, exams, and performance expectations. These factors can lead to anxiety, sleep disturbance, and social withdrawal



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among students. The criminology curriculum is demanding, which can increase the mental burden students face. High stress levels often reduce students' self-confidence in handling academic challenges. Constant worrying and overthinking may lead to mental exhaustion. Stress can also influence students' social lives, as they tend to isolate themselves to cope. Maintaining balance becomes difficult when academic stress is overwhelming. According to Ortega et al. (2023), students who experience persistent stress tend to have lower engagement in academic and extracurricular activities. They also reported a link between high stress levels and increased substance use. Alharthy et al. (2021) also found that students with elevated stress scores were more prone to depression and burnout.

Stress level is a mental response to external demands perceived as overwhelming or threatening. It can be categorized into acute and chronic stress depending on how long it lasts. Acute stress is short-term, while chronic stress may last for weeks or months and have lasting effects. High stress levels often lead to difficulty in processing information. Some students may even develop physical symptoms such as headaches or stomach problems. The effect is not limited to the mind; it affects physical health too. Criminology students may find it challenging to maintain their focus and discipline during high-stress situations. These challenges can pile up when academic deadlines coincide with personal or financial issues. According to a study by Zhang and Jia (2021), academic pressure is one of the leading causes of chronic stress among college students. Their research highlighted that constant stress diminishes mental health resilience. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2022) emphasized the need for stress management strategies in higher education.



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Stress levels serve as a signal of how well a student is coping with academic and personal responsibilities. When stress levels rise, it often reflects the student's struggle to meet expectations. This struggle can manifest in both academic decline and emotional breakdown. Difficulty focusing, losing interest in studies, or being irritable are common signs. Too much pressure might even lead to absenteeism or dropping out. Maintaining a healthy balance is key, but often difficult for criminology students who have rigorous schedules. Without proper coping mechanisms, students may experience a decline in overall wellbeing. A recent study by Davis et al. (2023) pointed out that more than 60% of students report elevated stress levels during peak academic seasons. They also emphasized that institutional support is necessary to help students manage stress. Ng et al. (2022) added that structured peer support programs are effective in reducing academic-related stress.

Stress levels vary depending on individual coping mechanisms and the support system available. Not all students react the same way to academic pressure. Some may handle it well, while others may become emotionally or mentally drained. A student's background, personality, and life experiences influence their stress tolerance. When stress goes unmanaged, it becomes harmful rather than helpful. Criminology students, who are often trained for high-pressure environments, may still suffer silently. The stigma surrounding mental health may stop them from seeking help. Strong emotional support from friends, family, and mentors plays a key role in reducing stress. Based on the findings of Yusof et al. (2021), students with strong social support report lower stress levels. According to Rivera and Angeles (2022), mental health awareness in college settings can



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improve stress management among students. They stress the importance of providing regular mental health check-ins and stress-relief activities.

Stress levels can also increase due to personal factors such as financial issues, family problems, or lack of sleep. These personal stressors often add up to the academic pressure already experienced by students. Criminology students may have part-time jobs or household responsibilities, adding to their daily stress. When stress builds up without release, it may lead to emotional breakdowns or depression. Even when academic work is manageable, external factors can still affect mental stability. Being aware of these factors is important in understanding how stress works. Time management and self-care are essential but often neglected under pressure. According to Chua and Li (2023), students who practice regular time management routines report significantly lower stress. Additionally, Ramos et al. (2021) found that financial stress is directly related to emotional instability and poor academic performance. These studies highlight how external and internal pressures combine to affect students' mental health.

Stress levels can be monitored and managed through awareness and preventive strategies. Recognizing early signs of stress can help students avoid burnout. Coping strategies such as meditation, exercise, and breaks can be very helpful. Criminology students must learn how to handle stress early since their future careers also involve high-stress situations. Emotional resilience can be built through supportive classroom environments. Encouragement from professors and peers helps build confidence and reduces anxiety. Consistent motivation plays a big role in how students view their



challenges. Effective interventions at the school level can significantly reduce student stress. In a study by Singh and Reddy (2022), stress-reducing programs improved academic performance and emotional wellbeing. According to Lim and Chen (2023), students who engaged in weekly wellness sessions showed increased academic focus. These studies suggest the importance of proactive approaches in stress management.

Stress levels impact both short-term academic outcomes and long-term mental health. If not addressed properly, stress can accumulate and lead to mental disorders such as anxiety and depression. It's important for criminology students to understand and acknowledge their stress. Avoiding the problem can worsen the situation. Self-awareness and communication are essential steps toward recovery. Criminology students should be encouraged to talk about what stresses them. Institutions should offer safe spaces where students can open up. According to Morales et al. (2023), open discussions on mental health significantly decrease stigma and promote help-seeking behaviors. Furthermore, Martinez and Luna (2021) emphasized the role of school counselors in identifying students under severe stress. Their findings recommend regular student wellness evaluations to track stress patterns.

### **Anxiety Symptoms**

Anxiety symptoms refer to physical, emotional, and behavioral changes that occur when a person is under stress or feels threatened. These symptoms may include restlessness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances. It is the body's natural response to stress, but when it becomes constant and overwhelming, it





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can interfere with daily functioning. Anxiety symptoms affect students' ability to focus in class, complete academic tasks, and perform well in school. These feelings of nervousness and fear often lead students to lose confidence in their abilities. Many students suffer silently because they are afraid to ask for help or feel embarrassed about their condition. Others try to hide their anxiety by pretending to be fine, which only adds to their emotional burden. A recent study by Huang et al. (2021) found that anxiety levels have increased among college students due to rising academic demands. According to the research, untreated anxiety can severely affect students' mental health and lead to long-term issues. Thus, understanding anxiety symptoms is important for early support and intervention.

Anxiety is a psychological state that often comes with negative thoughts, worry, and fear about the future. It can affect how students think, behave, and interact with others. When anxiety is related to school work, it can cause students to feel overwhelmed even by simple tasks. High expectations from school and family often pressure students to succeed, but not all of them are emotionally prepared. Some students may feel that failing a test means disappointing others, which adds to their stress. Constant fear of failure leads to negative self-talk and overthinking, which then triggers anxiety. It is important to recognize that anxiety symptoms are not a sign of weakness but a sign that a student may need support. Studies by Fawaz and Samaha (2021) reveal that anxiety has become more common in educational environments, especially during periods of academic pressure. Their study emphasizes the need for schools to provide emotional support services.



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Creating a safe space for students to share their worries can lessen the negative impact of anxiety.

Anxiety symptoms can show up in different ways such as sweating, fast heartbeat, trembling, and stomach discomfort. Some students may even experience panic attacks during stressful times like exams or deadlines. These symptoms can cause students to avoid schoolwork or skip classes to escape uncomfortable feelings. Pressure from school performance often leaves students feeling stuck and unable to cope. Others may develop unhealthy coping habits like procrastination or staying up late, which only increases anxiety. When anxiety becomes constant, it drains mental energy and leads to burnout. It is important to teach students healthy coping skills to manage anxiety. Research by Mahmud et al. (2022) confirms that anxiety negatively affects students' academic performance and well-being. The study suggests that early detection and mental health awareness programs can make a difference. Schools that recognize anxiety symptoms early are better equipped to help students succeed.

Anxiety symptoms can also affect relationships and social interactions among students. Fear of judgment or failure may stop them from participating in group activities or discussions. They may isolate themselves or feel that others do not understand their struggles. Social withdrawal can worsen feelings of loneliness and make academic pressure even harder to manage. Students with anxiety may find it difficult to ask questions in class or seek help from teachers. It is important for school staff to notice changes in student behavior and offer support. Friendly and open communication can help students feel more



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comfortable expressing their feelings. According to a study by Lee and Jeong (2023), social anxiety and academic stress often go hand in hand. They found that students who had strong social support were better at managing anxiety symptoms. Encouraging group support among peers can reduce the emotional burden of school pressure.

Anxiety symptoms may begin with small worries but can grow stronger when not managed properly. What starts as nervousness about exams can become a constant state of fear and worry. These feelings can make students feel helpless and lose motivation. It is easy to overlook mild anxiety symptoms, but over time they can lead to serious mental health issues. Students should be encouraged to talk about their feelings without fear of being judged. Open conversations can help reduce the stigma around anxiety and mental health. Teachers and school counselors play a key role in guiding students through stressful times. A study by Zhang et al. (2021) explains that recognizing anxiety early can improve students' chances of recovery. They also mention that supportive environments help students bounce back faster from academic setbacks. Preventing severe anxiety begins with understanding the early signs.

Anxiety symptoms are not always obvious and may go unnoticed by others. Some students may appear calm but feel nervous and scared inside. They may smile on the outside while struggling internally. This kind of hidden anxiety can be especially harmful because it delays the help they need. Academic pressure can make them feel like they are not good enough. Over time, they may lose interest in school and experience low self-esteem. Encouragement and regular check-ins can help students open up about how they



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really feel. According to Ramirez and Ching (2023), students who received regular emotional check-ins reported lower anxiety levels. They also noted better academic results and stronger classroom participation. Schools must create systems that support both academic and emotional growth.

Anxiety symptoms can also be triggered by lack of sleep, poor nutrition, and too much screen time. Students who are under academic pressure often sacrifice their health to keep up with schoolwork. Skipping meals, staying up all night, and long hours on devices can make anxiety worse. A healthy lifestyle can greatly reduce anxiety symptoms and improve focus. Students should be encouraged to balance school and self-care. Teachers can promote better habits by sharing simple wellness tips. Mental health awareness should be included in school activities and classroom lessons. A study by Patel and Gomez (2022) found that students who maintained a healthy routine experienced fewer anxiety symptoms. Their research also shows that physical activity and rest help improve concentration and emotional control. Promoting healthy habits can be part of the solution in managing academic stress.

Anxiety symptoms may lead to long-term issues if not addressed early. Constant worry and stress can affect memory, decision-making, and overall learning. Students may struggle not because they lack ability but because anxiety gets in the way. This can make them feel frustrated and discouraged. Schools must not only focus on grades but also on emotional well-being. Mental health programs and open discussions can help reduce the impact of academic pressure. Providing resources like counseling, workshops, or mental



health days can make a real difference. Research by Chen and Lim (2024) shows that students who had access to mental health services showed improved mental resilience. They also had better academic results and reported higher levels of satisfaction in school. Supporting students' mental health is essential for their overall success.

### **Burnout**

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by too much stress for a long time. It usually happens when someone feels overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands. This condition can make a person feel tired all the time, lose interest in studies, and feel hopeless about their goals. Burnout weakens the motivation and focus of criminology students who are trying to keep up with academic expectations. It can lead to poor study habits, lack of sleep, and missing deadlines. Students often hide their stress, which only makes the situation worse. Burnout builds up slowly and becomes harder to deal with over time. According to Wang et al. (2021), burnout among students is linked to emotional exhaustion, reduced performance, and increased anxiety. It is important to recognize its signs early so that students can get the help they need. The study also found that burnout is more common among students in demanding courses like criminology.

Burnout happens when academic tasks become too much to handle and students feel they are no longer in control. It is usually caused by constant deadlines, heavy workload, and lack of rest or recreation. Over time, students may feel disconnected and stop enjoying their school life. It is hard to concentrate and this affects memory,



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performance, and mood. Many criminology students push themselves beyond their limits because they want to succeed. They end up sacrificing their mental health just to meet high expectations. This can lead to serious mental problems like depression or anxiety. According to Reeve and Lee (2022), burnout is a major issue in academic settings, especially for students facing high stress levels. They emphasized the need for schools to develop mental health programs to reduce the risk. Their research shows that burnout can be reduced with supportive learning environments and proper time management.

Burnout is not just about being tired, it is also about feeling mentally blocked or stuck. It may come with a loss of motivation and feelings of failure or hopelessness. Students with burnout often isolate themselves and lose interest in things they used to enjoy. In criminology, students face extra stress from trying to understand complex laws and theories. They are expected to perform well in both theory and practice, which doubles the pressure. Long study hours and high academic demands leave very little time for self-care. The lack of balance between school and personal life worsens burnout. In the study of Johnson et al. (2023), students who had poor sleep and high workload experienced severe burnout symptoms. The authors suggested that schools should promote healthy coping strategies. These include regular breaks, peer support, and access to counseling services.

Burnout can be seen in three main areas: emotional exhaustion, feeling disconnected, and poor academic performance. When students experience burnout, they often feel tired even after sleeping or resting. Their ability to focus or finish schoolwork



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goes down. Burnout becomes more dangerous when students ignore it and think it is normal. It is important to take breaks and set realistic goals. Many criminology students are determined to finish their course but often forget to take care of themselves. They believe that resting means being lazy, which is not true. According to Navarro et al. (2021), burnout is linked to how students see academic success. Their study explained that when students feel like they are failing, they tend to overwork themselves, making burnout worse. They also found that support from teachers and classmates helps reduce burnout.

Students often deal with burnout silently because they fear being judged as weak or lazy. They may think it is better to suffer quietly than to ask for help. Burnout also affects physical health, causing headaches, stomach issues, or even chest pain. Criminology students might feel pressure to always appear strong because of the nature of their field. This mindset stops them from admitting they are struggling. Students should know that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Talking to trusted people can help lighten the load and give new perspectives. According to Torres and Lim (2022), early signs of burnout should not be ignored because they can lead to serious mental health problems. Their study found that regular check-ins with advisors or counselors help students manage stress. They also recommended mental health seminars to spread awareness.

Burnout may cause students to doubt their abilities or question their career choices. They might feel that they are not good enough or that they chose the wrong course. This self-doubt is damaging to their confidence and future plans. Criminology students



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sometimes compare themselves to others, which increases their stress. Instead of being motivated, they feel more pressure and frustration. Everyone has different strengths, and learning at one's own pace should be accepted. Recognizing one's limits is important for long-term success. As reported by Ahmed and Morales (2023), burnout affects how students see their own potential and future. Their study emphasized the importance of self-compassion in preventing burnout. It showed that students who were kind to themselves experienced less academic pressure and emotional exhaustion.

Burnout reduces a student's ability to enjoy learning, which affects their academic engagement. They may start skipping classes, missing deadlines, or even thinking about dropping out. This can be heartbreaking for those who worked hard to get into their program. For criminology students, giving up is especially painful because their field is seen as tough and honorable. They might feel like they are letting others down if they take a break. But continuing without rest will only make things worse. Taking short breaks can help the mind reset and refresh. In the research of Santos and Rivera (2021), students who practiced time management and self-care were more successful and happier. Their findings showed that even small changes in routine can reduce burnout levels. They advised students to plan their days with breaks and avoid overloading themselves.

Burnout should be treated seriously because it affects not only mental health but also future careers. Students who experience burnout may carry the effects even after they graduate. It can lower their confidence and affect job performance later on. Criminology students need strength and focus for their future roles in law enforcement or justice. If they





are already burned out in college, it can impact their readiness and mental wellness later. Preventing burnout early will help them prepare better for the responsibilities ahead. It is important to build strong mental health habits during college years. According to Gonzales and Tan (2022), burnout has long-term effects if left untreated. Their research found that career satisfaction is lower among those who had high burnout during college. They recommend creating a positive and balanced academic culture to support students.

### **Emotional Well-being**

Emotional well-being refers to the ability of a person to manage emotions, cope with stress, and maintain a positive outlook in life. It includes how individuals handle both positive and negative feelings and how they relate to others. Emotional well-being is an important part of mental health and overall life satisfaction. A balanced emotional state helps students face academic challenges without feeling overwhelmed. It allows them to focus on their goals and manage pressure in a healthier way. Emotional stability is important in keeping motivation and productivity high during stressful times. When emotional well-being is poor, students may feel sad, anxious, or even hopeless. According to Taylor (2021), students with better emotional well-being have stronger coping skills and are more resilient in stressful academic settings. Emotional well-being can also protect students from burnout and depression. Research by Liu et al. (2022) supports that students who prioritize emotional wellness are more likely to succeed academically and socially.



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Emotional well-being involves the presence of positive emotions like happiness, contentment, and peace of mind. It also means being aware of one's emotions and having the skills to express and manage them properly. People with good emotional well-being are better at facing challenges and building strong relationships. Feeling emotionally stable improves a student's confidence in handling school demands. It helps reduce feelings of helplessness, especially when academic expectations are high. Emotional strength allows students to find comfort in social support from friends, family, or counselors. Those who can manage emotions well are more likely to avoid unhealthy coping strategies. Studies show that improving emotional well-being can reduce anxiety and enhance learning outcomes. A recent study by Reyes and Santos (2023) found that students with high emotional well-being have better academic engagement and lower stress levels. They also reported that emotional wellness programs in schools helped students improve their mental health significantly.

Emotional well-being also means having a sense of purpose and direction in life. It includes self-acceptance, autonomy, and the ability to grow through experiences. People who are emotionally well tend to be more optimistic and confident. This sense of direction gives students the motivation to overcome difficulties. It encourages them to stay committed even when academic demands become heavy. Staying emotionally healthy helps in managing pressure and recovering from failure. It provides students the courage to face academic competition without losing self-worth. Research by Kim et al. (2022) confirms that emotional well-being acts as a buffer against academic burnout and mental



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distress. Their study emphasized the importance of promoting emotional awareness and coping strategies among college students. Findings showed that emotional support leads to better mental health and school performance.

Emotional well-being is not just about avoiding negative emotions, but also about building a positive mental state. This includes being hopeful, grateful, and having emotional control. Emotional well-being helps individuals become more mentally prepared to handle stress. In stressful academic environments, it is easy for students to feel discouraged or overwhelmed. Maintaining emotional health helps them stay calm and focused. It allows them to see challenges as opportunities to grow. Students who take care of their emotional well-being can bounce back quicker from academic failure. As stated by Johnson and Rivera (2021), emotional well-being strengthens resilience and reduces emotional exhaustion among college students. They highlighted that emotionally balanced students have higher levels of psychological functioning and self-esteem.

Developing emotional well-being requires consistent effort and support. It may involve self-care practices, talking to someone, or taking breaks when needed. When students are emotionally well, they are more likely to succeed both academically and personally. Managing academic pressure becomes easier when emotional needs are met. Emotional well-being helps them make better decisions under stress. It improves their relationships and keeps them mentally healthy. Criminology students, who may face additional pressure due to the nature of their course, greatly benefit from emotional stability. A study by Morales and Lee (2023) concluded that emotional well-being has a



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direct impact on reducing academic stress and increasing academic satisfaction. Their research recommends schools to include emotional health support systems as part of student services. These systems can include counseling, peer support, and wellness activities.

Emotional well-being also affects how students interact with others. When students are emotionally balanced, they communicate better and handle conflict more positively. It improves teamwork, especially in group activities or fieldwork common in criminology courses. Healthy emotional states lead to more supportive and understanding relationships. This builds a safe and encouraging learning environment. Students who feel supported emotionally tend to perform better in both academic and practical settings. Maintaining emotional well-being also decreases feelings of isolation and loneliness. According to Park and Mendoza (2024), students who feel emotionally supported by peers and mentors are less likely to experience mental health issues. Their findings show that emotional well-being is linked to social connectedness and academic perseverance. Programs that promote empathy and peer understanding enhance student well-being.

One of the important parts of emotional well-being is the ability to seek help when needed. Students must know that it is okay to ask for support, especially when they feel emotionally drained. Seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Accepting emotions without judgment helps students stay in control. It prevents small emotional struggles from turning into bigger mental health problems. Criminology students may be hesitant to show vulnerability due to expectations of strength and discipline. But recognizing emotional



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needs is essential to avoid burnout. Research by Santos and Villanueva (2022) stressed that early support and open communication lead to better mental health outcomes in academic settings. Their work encourages schools to remove stigma around emotional struggles. Promoting help-seeking behavior can protect students from mental health decline.

Emotional well-being supports long-term mental health and success in life. Students who learn to manage their emotions early develop habits that benefit them beyond college. They become more adaptable, responsible, and motivated individuals. Emotional health is a lifelong skill that supports both career and personal life. When emotional well-being is prioritized, academic pressure becomes manageable. It shapes a more positive student experience and reduces the risk of dropping out. Good emotional habits can influence others and create a healthier school culture. According to a study by Lin and Garcia (2021), emotional well-being not only improves student outcomes but also promotes long-term psychological resilience. Their research suggests that emotional wellness education should be included in all college programs. Building emotional skills is key to facing both academic and life challenges.

***Synthesis of the Review:*** The reviewed literature aligns closely with the current study as it highlights the significant impact of academic pressure on the mental health of students, particularly in terms of stress levels, anxiety symptoms, burnout, and emotional well-being. Studies by Salari et al. (2021), Huang et al. (2021), Wang et al. (2021), Taylor (2021), and Liu et al. (2022) consistently emphasize how heightened academic demands contribute to psychological strain. These sources collectively suggest that stress and burnout are



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prevalent among students enrolled in challenging courses, such as criminology, and they all underline the importance of early recognition and intervention. The findings also share a common theme of how emotional well-being serves as a protective factor against the negative effects of academic stress, reinforcing the importance of emotional resilience and mental support systems.

While the existing literature offers a broad understanding of how academic pressure affects student mental health, the current study specifically focuses on criminology students at Northeastern Mindanao Colleges (NEMCO) in Surigao City—a population that has not been extensively explored in previous studies. Most prior research provides generalized findings on college students or focuses on larger universities in urban settings, often overlooking localized and course-specific contexts. Additionally, this study uniquely examines all four indicators—stress, anxiety, burnout, and emotional well-being—within one cohesive framework, whereas many related studies analyze only one or two variables in isolation. This localized and integrated approach aims to fill the research gap and offer more relevant data that can inform targeted mental health interventions for criminology students in this specific academic and regional environment.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHOD**

This chapter presents the research design, respondents of the study, research instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis.

#### **Research Design**

This study will utilize quantitative descriptive research design for Examining the Impact of Academic Pressure on Mental Health Among Criminology Students of Northeastern Mindanao Colleges. Statistical analysis such as regression analysis and correlation coefficients will be employed to identify any significant relationships among variables. This research design aims to provide a comprehensive quantitative assessment of the challenges and opportunities associated with factors causing impact and changes.

#### **Respondents**

The participants of the study are 4<sup>th</sup> year Criminology students of NEMCO. To effectively capture representative insights, the research employs a purposive convenience sampling technique to determine the number of participants based on their age, sex, Civil Status, and Year Level. The researcher purposefully selects participants based on specific criteria or characteristics relevant to the research question but within the constraints of convenience. This means that the researcher may choose participants who meet the criteria and are readily accessible, making data collection more manageable.



### **Research Instrument**

This study will utilize a researcher-made questionnaire. Part I surveys the socio-demographic profile of the participants in terms of age, sex, civil status, and Year Level. Part II answers the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO in terms of Stress Levels, Anxiety Symptoms, Burnout, and Emotional Well-being.

*Validity Test:* To establish the validity of the research instruments, a rigorous evaluation will be conducted by three experts: An English teacher, a member of the expert panel, and a CRIMINOLOGY teacher. They will thoroughly examine the instruments to ensure their accuracy and suitability for the research study, thereby ensuring the credibility and appropriateness of the data collected.

*Reliability Test:* To assess the reliability of the research instrument, a trial run will be performed. Independent individuals who are not part of the actual study will review and test the instrument to ensure its clarity and comprehensibility. This step aims to verify that the instrument consistently produces dependable and consistent results, ensuring the reliability and consistency of the data obtained.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers plan to obtain permission to conduct the study by sending letters to the Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education at Northeastern Mindanao Colleges. The letters, signed by the college dean of Northeastern Mindanao College will serve as validation from experts, official authorization to conduct the research, and approval from





the participants. Following the distribution of the questionnaires, they will be collected three days later. The researcher will then gather, organize, and analyze the completed questionnaires using statistical methods to interpret and discuss the collected data.

### **Ethical Consideration**

In conducting this study, the researchers will prioritize effective communication with the respondents, ensuring that they are well informed about the purpose and nature of the study. The researchers will emphasize the voluntary nature of participation, emphasizing the importance of the residents' willingness to contribute to the research. Additionally, the researchers will take necessary precautions to ensure that the study poses no harm to the environment or the local community, demonstrating a commitment to ethical and responsible research practices. Furthermore, the researchers will place a strong emphasis on maintaining the security and confidentiality of the respondents. They will handle the gathered data with utmost care, ensuring that it remains strictly within the confines of the research project and is not disclosed to any external parties. By upholding these ethical principles, the researchers aim to foster trust and confidence among the Respondents, creating a conducive environment for data collection and participation. This dedication to ethical conduct encompasses ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation



### **Data Analysis**

To analyze the results gathered in the study, the following statistical tools will be used:

*Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution.* This research tool will be utilized to determine the number of participants with regards to their age, sex, civil status, and Year Level.

*Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD).* This research tool will be used to determine the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO in terms of Stress Levels, Anxiety Symptoms, Burnout, and Emotional Well-being.

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).* This tool will be used to determine the significant difference among the Impact Academic Pressure on Mental health Among Criminology Students on NEMCO in terms of Stress Levels, Anxiety Symptoms, Burnout, and Emotional Well-being when the participants are grouped according to their profiles.



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