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Research Article

The Academic Anxiety Level and Coping Mechanism of Seventh Graders in Public Secondary School

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ABSTRACT

This study explored academic anxiety and coping strategies among seventh graders in a public secondary school. It aimed to assess anxiety levels, identify causes, and examine how students manage stress. Using a sequential explanatory design, 61 students were randomly selected from 360 seventh graders. Results showed moderate anxiety levels, mainly due to peer noise, high expectations, peer pressure, and heavy workloads. Students coped through study planning, positive thinking, and support from teachers and family, while some resorted to avoidance, worsening stress. The study emphasized the need for schools to provide interventions like awareness seminars and structured support to promote healthier coping strategies. Teachers also play a key role in reducing stress by fostering a supportive learning environment. The findings contribute to discussions on academic anxiety and can help shape educational policies to improve students' well-being and success.

Keywords: *Academic anxiety, Coping Mechanism*

Introduction

In today's competitive academic environment, students face significant pressure, leading to academic anxiety, which negatively affects their performance and well-being. This anxiety stems from concerns about schoolwork, exams, and expectations, often manifesting as stress, lack of motivation, and physical symptoms. While mild anxiety can be manageable, excessive anxiety can severely impact students' mental, social, and emotional health, making it essential to understand its contributing factors and effects.

Equally important is exploring coping mechanisms—strategies students use to manage academic anxiety. These can be adaptive, such as problem-solving and seeking social support, or maladaptive, like avoidance and withdrawal. The effectiveness of these coping methods influences academic progress. With modern advancements, students now have access to various resources, including personal strategies, social support, and professional guidance, to help them manage anxiety.

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Ultimately, academic anxiety and coping strategies are interconnected. Students struggling with academic pressure seek ways to ease their stress, and their coping methods—whether positive or negative—shape their ability to handle academic challenges. As education evolves, both traditional and modern coping mechanisms continue to provide solutions to help students navigate their academic journey.

Academic Anxiety in Global Perspective

One could refer to the 21st century as the century of competitiveness; students are feeling more and more pressure to perform academically in this competitive society, which makes them anxious, tense, and more (Mochahary, 2022). Notably, anxiety is one of the psychological issues that students report experiencing most frequently, which is inevitable amid fierce competition in the educational field (Bülbül, 2023). According to SAMHSA (2021), anxiety is one of the most prevalent mental health issues among students. In line with this, during their academic careers, both domestic and overseas students experience anxiety as they adjust to new challenges and encounter changes (Tang et al., 2022).

Further, stress and anxiety are two of the main factors contributing to academic underachievement, as highlighted by Jimenez (2023). Similarly, Jannata (2020) emphasized that academic anxiety is commonly found in educational institutions and is often a result of the academic pressures experienced by students. Expanding on this, Dawngliani (2021) explained that academic anxiety can stem from various factors, including the learning environment, ineffective study practices, specific subjects, instructors, or tests. A specific form of academic anxiety is test anxiety, which relates to the general academic experience and includes anxiety associated with exams and learning in academic settings (Fishstrom, 2022).

The impact of academic anxiety is significant, as Zhang et al. (2020) identified it as one of the main causes of illness and impairment among high school students. Cebu (2023) further elaborated on this by emphasizing that academic anxiety encompasses stress, fear, and pressure related to tests, assignments, and

even social expectations tied to academic performance. Building on this, Bülbül (2023) conducted a thematic review analysis to identify current trends in academic anxiety. Meanwhile, Jiang et al. (2022) examined how academic anxiety affects problem behavior in students, exploring factors such as self-control, parent-child conflict, and subjective well-being. Rasool (2022) also contributed by investigating various factors associated with academic anxiety that lead to high levels of stress and demotivation.

With the advancement of modern technology, studies have also explored the connection between academic anxiety and smartphone addiction. One study examined how academic anxiety and academic control mediate the relationship between smartphone addiction and students' academic achievement. Additionally, some researchers have focused on subject-specific academic anxiety. For instance, Pizzie and Kraemer (2019) developed the Academic Anxiety Inventory (AAI), a reliable tool for measuring arithmetic anxiety and differentiating it from anxiety in other academic subjects. Similarly, Caviola et al. (2021) assessed the impact of different types of mathematical tasks on students' anxiety levels.

Beyond subject-specific anxiety, some studies have investigated the role of Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) in mitigating academic anxiety. Fiorilli (2020) examined how TEI prevents school exhaustion either directly or indirectly through anxiety and intellectual resilience. Romano (2020) also explored the impact of teacher mental support and TEI on school burnout. Another relevant factor studied is academic workload; Sari and Hazim (2023) investigated the relationship between academic anxiety and academic cramming among students.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of academic anxiety, Jimenez (2023) reviewed advancements, constraints, and future directions in detecting academic stress and anxiety in educational settings. Lastly, Rimonda et al. (2020) explored the effect of cinematherapy as an intervention to reduce students' academic anxiety levels.

Coping Mechanism in Global Perspective

According to Cht (2022), coping mechanisms are methods that individuals use to ease their discomfort or relieve stress that they are currently going through in a certain situation. The strategies used to manage unpleasant circumstances, both internally and externally, are called coping mechanisms (Algorani, 2023). Additionally, the term "coping" pertains to an individual's attempt to handle significant demands that are deemed too overwhelming or beyond their capacity (Tahara, 2021). Coping mechanisms for stressful situations can support resilience and self-perception (CCM, 2024). Aligned with this, GoodTherapy.org (2023) states that coping mechanisms serve as mediums for individuals to handle stressful situations, as well as feelings of loneliness, resentment, anxiety, and grief. Moreover, people utilize coping strategies as a means of handling complex situations. Effective stress management can enhance both physical and mental well-being, ultimately improving one's performance capacity (Morin, 2023). In addition, Campbell (2025) emphasizes that coping mechanisms help individuals sustain their composure until they can fully adapt to transitions. Similarly, Godreau (2024) describes coping mechanisms as the unsung heroes that enable individuals to navigate difficult times. Meanwhile, Saxena (2023) highlights that coping mechanisms serve as strategies for managing stress, anxiety, and negative emotions. Lastly, Lt3n (2020) states that coping mechanisms are used to manage external circumstances that may lead to problems.

Thus, various studies have explored the role of coping mechanisms in academic settings. For instance, the study of Joseph et al. (2020) aims to evaluate academic anxiety, identify its causes, assess additional stressors, and investigate different coping mechanisms that students use to manage academic anxiety. Meanwhile, Hasty et al. (2020) examined how mental toughness (MT) influences the relationship between academic anxiety and academic negligence, considering that individual personality differences may lead to the use of distinct coping mechanisms. Similarly, Ayeras et al. (2024) assessed the causes of social anxiety issues among high school students, their coping

strategies, and the relative effects of academic anxiety on academic performance and self-esteem.

Furthermore, Brigati et al. (2020) evaluated the coping mechanisms students use in various types of active learning. Expanding on this, Sailo and Varghese (2024) explored academic anxiety, its stressors, effects, and the coping strategies employed by students. In addition, a study by Smida et al. (2021) established a conditional process model to examine the connection between academic coping mechanisms and academic anxiety. Meanwhile, the survey conducted by Teixeira (2022) investigated the relationships among psychosomatic symptoms, affect, emotion dysregulation, coping mechanisms, and perceived anxiety in higher education.

In another perspective, Marcus (2020) focused on underlying processes rather than motivational factors that contribute to "grade obsession" leading to academic anxiety. Similarly, Islam and Rabbi (2024) aimed to determine the causes of academic anxiety and examine the coping strategies employed by students. Additionally, Jeyasingh (2022) discussed the factors contributing to academic anxiety among adolescent students and their coping mechanisms. Lastly, Vallejo (2023) emphasized that while stress management techniques can help ease anxiety, identifying the factors contributing to academic anxiety is equally essential.

Academic Anxiety in Local Perspective

Moreover, anxiety is the brain's response to calming and warning of possible danger (Latorre et al., 2023). According to Atienza and Dominado (2023), one of the most prevalent mental health issues that students face is academic stress, primarily caused by concerns about grades and failing classes. Expanding on this, a quantitative study conducted by Royena (2023) compared the anxiety levels and academic performance of Grade 12 Senior High School students at Colegio de San Juan de Letran Calamba.

Additionally, students occasionally experience anxiety due to loneliness, which can undermine their self-esteem (Tus et al., 2022).

In today's world, where technology and education are increasingly intertwined, students

face unique challenges in adapting to academic demands. As a result, handling mental health becomes more difficult, leading to academic anxiety (Teodoro et al., 2023).

In alignment with this, Alec et al. (2021) explored how emotional intelligence influences students' ability to manage academic anxiety. Similarly, Chocanco (2021) conducted a survey assessing whether test anxiety significantly impacts students' academic performance. Furthermore, Aquino et al. (2023) investigated situational, dispositional, and environmental factors contributing to anxiety among senior high school students.

Focusing on situational factors, Loberas (2022) examined the anxiety levels of college students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, Gomez et al. (2022) conducted a survey analyzing academic burnout and anxiety among senior high school students across the Philippine archipelago.

Coping Mechanisms in Local Perspective

Additionally, a high amount of academic anxiety can impact a student's well-being and academic performance (Cayaon, 2022). Expanding on this, Parungao (2024) examined coping methods, social support, depression, and anxiety in college students undergoing significant developmental transitions and facing major challenges. In a related study, SciSpace (2024) found that Filipino college students' coping mechanisms were influenced by the classroom environment, which mediates the connection between anxiety and coping strategies.

To add, Abatayo (2023) states that coping mechanisms pertain to a person's response to stressful situations, while Dumagpi et al. (2023) explain that these mechanisms are driven by an individual's conscious mind. In alignment with these findings, Gliane (2023) assessed academic anxiety levels and coping mechanisms in students under a unique science curriculum, further exploring the relationship between these two variables. Meanwhile, Serrano and Reyes (2022) investigated the coping mechanisms of university students, leading to the development of the B.E.N.D. model for managing academic distress.

Building on this, Dulay et al. (2023) aimed to determine the connection between academic stress and coping mechanisms among Filipino irregular college students. Furthermore, Barrera and Badillo (2017) examined academic anxiety and the challenges faced by grade 7 students in a public school in Lipa City. Lastly, Cruz (2019) emphasized that many students can manage their anxiety levels or even excel in the classroom with the support of friends and family.

Recent studies have extensively explored the phenomenon of academic anxiety among students. Research by Alibudbud (2021) examined the prevalence and correlation between negative academic experiences, anxiety, and depression among Filipino College students. Meanwhile, Fullido (2023) explored the impact of test anxiety on high school student's academic performance, eyeing to establish programs to reduce anxiety and improve performance. Therefore, coping mechanisms were crucial for students. Research by Anzures (2023), states that students use social media and entertainment media like television for relaxation, seek out friends for support and conversation, and turn to prayer and meditation when feeling overwhelmed. While previous studies thoroughly evaluated academic anxiety in high school and college students, limited data is focusing specifically on seventh graders in public secondary schools that we are trying to focus on. Additionally, the research on coping mechanisms tailored to younger adolescents in this context remains the same. However, after evaluating the coping mechanisms, an intervention will be implemented.

This study aims to address the gap in investigating the academic anxiety levels of seventh graders in public secondary schools. It will determine the academic anxiety levels of the seventh graders and also determine the coping mechanisms they utilize to deal with academic anxiety. By examining both academic anxiety and the coping mechanisms they employ, this study will provide valuable insights into how students in public schools manage academic anxiety. The findings could inform the development of age-appropriate, context-sensitive interventions to help alleviate academic anxiety and enhance students' well-being. This study

will also disseminate awareness about academic anxiety and will provide coping mechanisms to overcome it.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers aim to determine the Academic Anxiety Levels and Coping Mechanisms of seventh graders in one of the Secondary Public Schools in Cluster 1 during the school year of 2024-2025 towards intervention program.

Specifically, this seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How may the academic anxiety level of the respondents be described?
2. How may the coping mechanism of the respondents be described?
3. What are the factors behind the academic anxiety and coping mechanisms of the seventh graders?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what intervention program can be proposed?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it seeks to share valuable insights about the Academic Anxiety Levels and Coping Mechanisms of seventh graders in a public secondary school. Understanding the causes of Academic Anxiety and the strategies the students use to cope with it has several vital roles.

Students. This study's findings will help students become more aware of their own levels of academic anxiety and coping techniques. This awareness can lead to better self-regulation and the usage of more effective strategies to manage academic anxiety, ultimately amplifying their well-being and academic performance.

Teachers. This study will provide data that can help teachers recognize signs of academic anxiety among students. By understanding the common stressors and coping strategies, they can develop more motivating and supportive teaching practices and give guidance or interventions to help students cope more effectively with academic challenges.

Administrators. By understanding the specific factors contributing to students' anxiety, administrators can develop and implement school-wide initiatives and programs to reduce academic stress.

Parents. Parents can gain glimpses into the types of academic challenges that their children face, and they will soon learn how to provide emotional and practical support at home. The study can also inform them regarding the positive coping mechanisms that can encourage their children.

Future Researchers. The findings of this study can serve as a foundation or reference for future studies on academic anxiety. Additionally, this study may prompt further exploration into interventions that can reduce anxiety and promote accessible coping mechanisms for students.

Scope and Delimitation

This study will focus on determining the Academic Anxiety Levels and Coping Mechanisms of seventh graders in one of the Secondary High Schools in Cluster 1 at Magalang Pampanga during the school year 2024-2025.

Specifically, this sought to examine the factors that contribute to academic anxiety, such as test pressure, workload, peer competition, and expectations. Additionally, this study has investigated the various coping mechanisms that students use to manage this anxiety. This research is limited to seventh graders only in a public secondary school. The data was gathered using adopted questionnaires. Lastly, this study will not include any students from private schools or students from other grade levels. Moreover, this study will focus solely on academic-related anxiety and does not take into different forms of anxiety (e.g., social or general anxiety).

Methods

Research Design

The researchers used the sequential-explanatory design of research to gather data regarding the academic anxiety levels and coping mechanisms of the seventh graders. According to Branum (2023), explanatory sequential design pertains to the gathering and examination of quantitative data first, followed by the gathering and examination of qualitative data. The primary purpose of the design is to elucidate or amplify quantitative findings. Additionally, this method combines numerical and qualitative investigation methods in single research. It uses

the advantages of both approaches to provide a deeper, more complex understanding of the study question. Numerical data, or quantitative data, offers quantifiable outcomes, but qualitative or descriptive data provides a more in-depth understanding of the viewpoints and experiences of respondents. By integrating these data formats and analysis, scientists can obtain a more comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the phenomenon they are studying (Clark, 2019).

Respondents/Participants

The respondents of this study will be the seventh graders in one of the Public Secondary Schools in Cluster I Division of Pampanga during the school year 2024-2025. The respondents of this study will be selected using a simple random sampling technique to ensure that each seventh grader will have an equal chance of participation, thereby reducing selection bias. Out of a total population of 360 seventh graders, 17% or 61 students will be selected as the sample size.

The researchers employed simple random sampling to select respondents. Simkus (2023) explains that this method ensures every member of the population has an equal chance of selection through a fair process. By assigning numbers to respondents and choosing them randomly, this approach provides an unbiased representation. Consequently, each seventh-grader has an equal chance of being selected, enabling a comprehensive analysis of their academic anxiety levels and coping mechanisms.

The participants in this study will be students who answered the highest in the questionnaire, also known as outliers. Using qualitative data, the researchers will cross-validate the responses to ensure a deeper understanding of the participants' academic anxiety levels and coping mechanisms. Homogeneous sampling will be employed.

According to Kassiani (2022), homogeneous sampling is a technique in which units are selected because they share the same characteristics needed in the sample. The main goal of this is to identify cases, individuals, or communities best suited to answering your research questions.

Instrument

The researchers used two adopted instruments, which means it has two parts to gather data regarding the Academic Anxiety Levels and Coping Mechanisms of the seventh graders. The first part of the questionnaires to determine the academic anxiety levels of the seventh graders will be adopted from Cassady, J.C, Pierson, E. E., & Starling, J. M. (2019). "Predicting Student Depression with Measures of General and Academic Anxieties. It states there that as a measure of the cognitive dimension of trait academic anxiety, building upon the traditional construct of "worry" in classic representations of academic anxiety. Validation studies demonstrated the questionnaire maintains strong construct validity (Cassady and Finch, 2015), and the current sample revealed strong internal consistency, ($\alpha = 0.970$).

Meanwhile, the second part of the questionnaires determined the coping mechanisms of the seventh graders will be adopted from Cabanach, R. G., Valle, A., Rodriguez, S., Piñeiro, I., & Freire, C. (2010). An English translation of "Escala De Afrontamiento Del Estrés Académico (ACEA)" This instrument has 23 items evaluating three approach strategies for coping: positive reappraisal, support seeking, and planning. Positive reappraisal is a secondary control strategy in which the student seeks to reassign the stressful event, highlighting the positive (e.g., "When I am faced with a problematic situation, I forget unpleasant aspects and highlight the positive ones"). The psychometric properties were acceptable regarding both reliability ($\alpha = 0.860$).

The interview protocol guide questions utilized for the study's qualitative portion were based on the quantitative phase's questionnaire, which includes an interpretation of the respondent's or outliers' responses. The participants were allowed to focus their responses on subjects they felt were essential and were free to investigate and voice their opinions independently. This will provide the researchers with clear and crucial data that will improve the current study.

Data Collection

The researchers gathered data by first sending a letter seeking the approval of the

school's principal to conduct the study. Second, they administered the adopted questionnaires to the respondents. Lastly, they gathered and processed the data from the respondents. Primary data will be the source of the study—a distinct or primary source of information that the respondents themselves gave. The data was collected through a questionnaire.

The researchers sought the approval of language teachers to approve the translated copy of the English interview guide. And started gathering the names of the outliers from the quantitative questionnaire. The researchers then started the interview for each outlier, reading the questions in different dialects for the outliers to better understand and answer smoothly. While the interview was ongoing, the researchers started the voice recorder with the consent of the outliers.

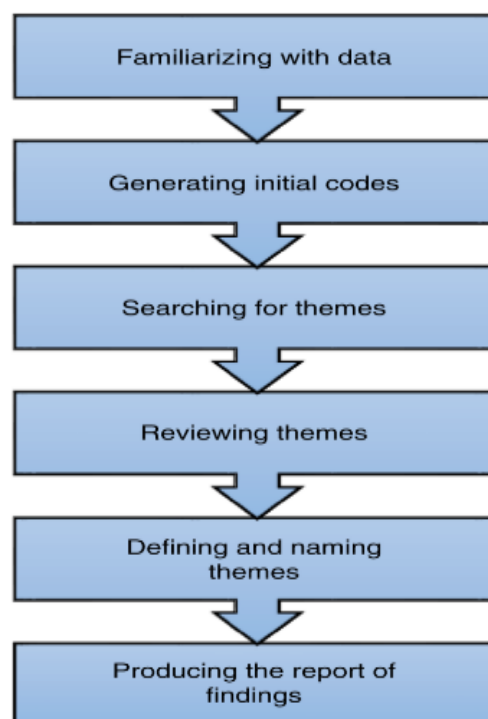
Ethical Consideration

The researchers used adopted questionnaires with the appropriate consent that will be obtained from its author. Additional data were collected with explicit permission from the participating students and relevant authorities. Efforts will be made to ensure that the respondents will not be exposed to any harm by taking part in this study. Prior to data collection, in-

formed consent will be obtained from the respondents, ensuring that all students who will be involved are fully aware of the study's aims, procedures, and potential risks. Steps will be taken to minimize any potential harm or discomfort that respondents might experience, and their involvement will be entirely voluntary with no monetary reward, with the option to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Confidentiality and privacy will be guaranteed, with the assurance that all information that will be collected will be used solely for the purpose of this study.

Statistical Treatment of Data/Data Analysis

The researchers used standard deviation as the statistical tool to assess the data. The seventh-grade respondents' academic anxiety levels will be measured for variability and dispersion. Calculating the degree to which each response deviates from the mean, will assist in revealing how consistently the students' academic anxiety levels and coping mechanisms vary. According to Omda (2023), a set of values' degree of scattering is measured by the standard deviation (SD), which is usually compared to the set's mean value. Whether the data set is a sample of the complete population determines how the SD is calculated.



In this phase of the study, the researchers used thematic analysis (TA) as a data analysis tool. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), TA is essentially a method for identifying and analyzing patterns in qualitative data. The authors view TA as theoretically flexible because the

search for and examination of patterning across language does not require adherence to any theory of language or explanatory meaning framework for human beings, experiences, or practices.

Result and Discussion

Table 1 Mean description of students' academic anxiety scale

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description
1. I often worry that my best is not as good as expected in school.	2.98	Moderate
2. I tend to put off doing schoolwork because it stresses me.	1.96	Low
3. I often worry that I am not doing assignments properly.	2.40	Low
4. I am less confident about school than my classmates.	2.40	Low
5. I have a sense of dread when I am in my classmates.	1.90	Low
6. I tend to find my instructors intimidating.	2.01	Low
7. I spend much of my time at school worrying about what is next.	2.36	Low
8. There is something about school that scares me.	2.19	Low
9. I'm concerned about what my classmates think about my abilities.	2.98	Moderate
10. I often feel sick when I need to work on a major class assignment.	2.14	Low
11. I have a hard time handling my school responsibilities.	2.47	Low
Total:	2.34	Low

The table 1 shows that the statements “They often worry that their best is not as good as expected in school” and “They are concerned about what their classmates think about their abilities” got the highest computed mean of 2.98, accompanied by the description of “Moderate.” The statement “They have a hard time handling their school responsibilities” acquired the second highest mean of 2.47 with a description of “Low.” The statements “They often worry that they are not doing their assignments properly” and “They are less confident about their school rather than their classmates” accumulated the third highest mean of 2.40, followed by a verbal description of “Low.” In contrast, the statement “They have a sense of dread when they are in their classmates” bagged the lowest mean value of 1.90 with a description of “Low.” Meanwhile, “They tend to put off doing schoolwork because it stresses them” obtained the second lowest computed mean of 1.96, followed by a description of “Low.” Lastly, the

statement “They tend to find their instructors intimidating” garnered the third lowest mean value of 2.01 with a verbal description of “Low.” In support of the study by Cassady et al. (2019), they show that “They often worry that their best is not as good as expected in school” and gained the highest mean value. “They are concerned about what their classmates think about their abilities.”

This implied that the respondents were worried that their best is not as good as expected in school. This highlights the key academic concerns among students, focusing on their anxieties, peer perceptions, and interactions with instructors. Similar to the study of Nexus International School Singapore (2024), it is shown that academic anxiety occurs when student experiences worry and anxiety due to school-related pressures, such as assignments, grades, or schoolwork. Notably, students often worry about not meeting expectations despite their efforts and are highly concerned about

how their classmates perceive their abilities. To support this, the study of Guiping & Huichang (2001) states that academic expectations are a primary source of stress and worry among students. According to the study by Huan et. al. (2008), school-related expectations as one of the primary sources of anxiety are also most likely to experience anxiety or feelings of worry about their abilities and to feel overwhelmed by themselves. These findings show the pervasive pressure to excel academically and the influence of peer dynamics on self-esteem. Most students experience anxiety, and lower self-esteem is the most influential factor of academic anxiety (Patama, 2024). In addition, another prominent issue is the challenge students face in managing their academic responsibilities. Aligned to the study of Nexus International School Singapore (2024), students may feel pulled down to responsibilities and have difficulty managing their prior responsibilities. This suggests that time management and balancing school tasks are significant stressors. Additionally, students frequently doubt whether they are completing assignments properly and feel less confident in their academic abilities compared to their peers, further amplifying feelings of inadequacy and self-

doubt. Furthermore, because of the heavy workload, most students struggle to accomplish their homework properly and on time (Smith, 2024). On the other hand, some concerns appear less pronounced. A sense of dread when interacting with classmates and stress-induced procrastination are reported less frequently, indicating these are not as widespread. Similarly, intimidation by instructors is a less common experience, suggesting that most students feel relatively comfortable in their teacher-student interactions.

Interpretation:

The table presented the mean values and verbal descriptions of students' academic anxiety levels. The highest mean scores indicate that students worry about not meeting expectations and are concerned about their classmates' perceptions. These findings suggest that peer pressure and self-expectations significantly contribute to academic anxiety. On the other hand, factors such as interaction with instructors and stress-induced procrastination are less common concerns. This implies that while students experience academic anxiety, its intensity varies depending on the source of stress.

Table 2 Mean description of students' coping mechanism scale

	Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description
1	When I face a problematic situation, I forget the unpleasant aspects and highlight the positive ones.	2.96	Moderate
2	When I face a problematic situation, I express my opinions and seek support.	3.09	Moderate
3	When I face a problematic situation, I prioritize tasks and organize my time.	3.31	Moderate
4	When I face a problematic situation during exams, I try to think that I am capable of doing things well on my own.	3.36	Moderate
5	When I face a problematic situation, I ask a family member or friend whom I appreciate for advice.	3.14	Moderate
6	When I face a problematic situation while I am preparing for exams, I plan in detail how to study for the exam.	3.80	High
7	When I face a difficulty while I am preparing for exams, I try to think positively.	3.50	High
8	When I face a difficult situation, I talk about the problems with others coping with academic stress.	2.65	Moderate
9	When I face a problematic situation, I create an action plan and follow it.	3	Moderate

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description
10 When I face a problematic situation, I do not allow the problem to overcome me; I try to give myself a deadline to solve it.	3.45	High
11 When I face a problematic situation, I talk about stressful situations with my partner, my family or friends.	2.65	Moderate
12 When I face a problematic situation while I am preparing for exams, I focus on what I need to obtain the best results.	3.60	High
13 When I face a problematic situation, I think objectively about the situation and try to keep my emotions under control.	3.40	High
14 When I face a problematic situation, I seek advice and ask other people for help.	3.03	Moderate
15 When I face a problematic situation, I organize the personal resources I have to face the situation.	3.06	Moderate
16 When I face a complicated situation, in general I try not to give importance to the problems.	3.29	Moderate
17 When I face a problematic situation, I express my feelings and opinions.	3.21	Moderate
18 When I face a problematic situation, such as in exams, I usually think that I will do well.	3.40	High
19 When I face a difficult situation, I make a list of the tasks I have to do, I do them one by one and I don't move on to the next one until I have finished the previous one.	3.16	Moderate
20 When I face a problematic situation the night before the exam, I try to think that I am prepared to perform well.	3.13	Moderate
21 When I face a problematic situation, I talk to someone to find out more about the situation.	2.98	Moderate
22 When I face a problem, such as feeling anxious during the exam, I try to see it as something logical and normal in the situation.	3.27	Moderate
23 When I face a problematic situation, I change some things to obtain good results.	3.21	Moderate
Total:	3.20	Moderate

The table 2 findings revealed that students predominantly use problem-focused coping strategies such as planning and organization, alongside emotion-focused strategies such as positive thinking and social support. These findings suggest that while students are proactive in managing stress, they still require additional guidance in emotional regulation and stress management. The highest mean score (3.80) was for the statement, "When I face a problematic situation while preparing for exams, I plan in detail how to study for the exam." This suggests that structured planning is a primary coping mechanism for students, helping them feel in control of their academic

workload, reducing uncertainty, and increasing efficiency. Effective organization skills also play a role in stress management, as a significant number of students (Mean = 3.31) reported that prioritizing tasks and organizing time helped manage academic pressure. This aligns with Smith's (2024) study, which highlights the impact of structured time management on reducing stress.

In addition to problem-focused strategies, students also use emotion-focused coping mechanisms such as positive thinking, self-motivation, and seeking social support. Many students (Mean = 3.50) reported trying to main-

tain a positive mindset during exam preparation, which has been linked to lower anxiety levels and improved performance (Ashwini, 2024). This suggests that resilience-building strategies, such as cognitive reframing, may be beneficial in helping students manage academic anxiety effectively. Additionally, a moderate number of students (Mean = 3.14) sought advice from family members or teachers when facing academic difficulties, highlighting the importance of social support. Teachers, in particular, play a critical role in reducing academic anxiety by providing instructional support and emotional reassurance (Ansong et al., 2024). Open communication also serves as a psychological buffer against stress, as some students (Mean = 2.65) reported discussing their problems with peers or family members, which helps them process their emotions constructively (Godreau, 2024).

Students who actively employed coping strategies reported improved academic engagement and reduced stress. The qualitative data revealed that those who planned their study sessions found it easier to focus and retain information, while those who sought support from teachers and family members felt more confident in handling schoolwork. Additionally, individuals who engaged in positive self-talk were more likely to persevere through academic challenges.

Interpretation:

The table outlined the mean values and verbal descriptions of students' coping mechanisms. The highest mean scores indicate that students prioritize detailed planning, focus on obtaining the best results, and maintain a positive mindset when preparing for exams. These strategies suggest that students are proactive in handling academic stress. However, moderate mean values for other coping strategies, such as talking to others or seeking support, indicate that while students use positive coping mechanisms, they may still need additional guidance in emotional regulation and stress management.

Sequential explanatory data on the academic anxiety and coping mechanism of students

The findings and discussion of this chapter were arranged in alignment with the order of the given research problems. The order follows Classmates noise as a factor for academic anxiety, Self as a factor for academic anxiety, Different coping mechanisms for academic anxiety, Improvement from the coping mechanisms, and Teacher's support as a factor for coping mechanisms.

Classmates' noise as a factor for academic anxiety

The responses that are being shown are based on the opinions of the seventh-grade students. One of the prominent and common problems they face in their classroom is the noise coming from their classmates, which affects their performance and leads to academic anxiety. According to Lapp (2020), it has been discovered that classroom noise negatively affects students. The action taken previously project indicated that noise adversely affects student performance. Students are having a hard time excelling in terms of their academics due to this issue.

According to the participants' narratives, their classmates' noise has been negatively affecting them. They have been prolonging the noise, and even the *teachers are having a hard time controlling it*.

Opo, yung ano po yung nakakaapekto po saakin yung mga ingay ng mga student ng mga kaklasi ko, tas nawawalan po ako ng focus dahil po sa ingay nila.

Yung classmates ko po. - PT1

Kayi masigla la, masigla, medjo.

Magmasigla la kasi misabi sabi la tangkay misane lang e makiramdam ka-reng mestra makanta. - PT2

Maingay po sila tyaka po, lagi po kaming napapagalitan tyaka nabababa po yung mga grade namen.

Mga kaklase po, sobra po ingay tyaka nakaka distract po sila pag nag iingay. - PT5

Maingay po sila tyaka po, lagi po kaming napapagalitan tyaka nabababa po yung mga grade namen .

Mga kaklase po, sobra po ingay tyaka nakaka distract po sila pag nag iingay. -PT7

Opo, tungkol po sa. kapag ano lang po, kapag maingay lang po ang mga kaklase ko. -PT10

Self as a factor for academic anxiety

The responses listed were in accordance with the opinions of the participants. Some of them showed that their self is also a factor in their academic anxiety. Some were pressuring themselves, and some were just ignoring the tasks they needed to do. According to Quinn (2024), self-pressure is the inner pressure we impose on ourselves. It's the mind that conjures expectations, thoughts, and scenarios about people, places, and things in life. When one puts pressure on oneself, it leads to stress and anxiety about not "fumbling" the opportunity. That's why some students were struggling because of their own actions, which leads to failure and academic anxiety.

According to the narrative of the participants, their own self is also one of the factors of their academic anxiety. Some tend to ignore tasks, and some tend to not have the capacity to do so.

Sa sarili ko po sguro, kase pine pressure ko po yung sarili ko. Paulit po ulet, yung mga binibigay po na homeworks na napaka dami pong homeworks, yung part po na stress na stress kase po lagi po akong leader, tas di man po tumutulong yung mga ka grupo ko. -PT4

I got used to procrastinating and it reached a point where I no longer know how to manage my schedule or time, it is related to oneself. -PT6

Sarili pu. Kasi pu feeling ku pu magka-sakit ku pu. -PT8

Sa sarili ko lang po. -PT9

Different coping mechanisms for academic anxiety

The responses listed were based on the opinions of the participants. It is evidently shown that even though they have academic anxiety, some of them do have coping mechanisms to deal with anxiety. And with these coping mechanisms, they were able to improve themselves. Based on the study of Freire (2020), coping strategies encompass cognitive and behavioral mechanisms designed to respond actively to the stressor, either by directly addressing the problem (primary control) or by managing the negative emotions linked to it (secondary control). With these strategies, students can handle their stress or anxiety in terms of their academics.

According to the participants' narratives, they use different mechanisms like self-entertainment, family motivation, and focusing on something they need to do, which later on helps them improve themselves.

Lumilibot ako, kapag hindi ko maintindihan. Maganda kasi di naiisip yung mga proyekto. -PT3

Motivation po? yung motivation ko po Yung sguro po family ko kase po Isa po sila sa ano like yung lola ko po kase di nmn po nila ako pini pressure pero sila po Yung motivation ko Sabi po nila ako daw po yung pag asa ng pamilya namen. -PT4

Mag aayusin po mga problema, pag manahimik nalang po at ayusin po namin mga probles. -PT5

Do the tasks immediately so you can rest and... so you won't feel pressured. -PT6

Wala naman po. Aayusin po. Makinig nalang po at ayusin. -PT7

Palampsan ku nalamu pu. Isipin ku na pu na lagpasan pu. -PT8

Ano po? ginagamit po? nag, mag practice po ako mag memorize ganun po. -PT9

Improvement from the coping mechanisms

The findings were in accordance with the opinions of the participants. It is proven that the coping mechanisms they utilize generate positive outcomes as they are able to overcome

their anxiety from those strategies. These strategies, when combined with strategies aimed at altering student evaluation and assessment, have the potential to lower student stress and anxiety levels while enhancing performance (Hsu, 2021). After utilizing these strategies, participants said that they improved themselves and they keep on improving.

Based on the participants' narrative, after employing these strategies, they say that they improved themselves, and some kept on improving themselves.

Yes po. Mas nakakaano po kasi ako, mas nakakasabay po ako sa lesson tas po mas naaano po ako mas nag-i-improve po ako. -PT1

Wa. -PT2

Opo kasi po pinag hihigitin ko pa po lalo. -PT4

Yes. -PT6

Opo, nakaksusunod po ako. -PT9

Teachers' support as a factor for coping mechanism

According to the participants' opinion, teachers can also contribute as a factor for their coping mechanisms. They say teachers can do and teachers doing something in order to help them with their academic anxiety. According to Ansong (2024), Teachers serve as vital players in the educational system. Teachers can offer instruction and foster an environment that promotes student learning by equipping students with informational, instrumental, emotional, and appraisal support helping them in academics and easing their academic anxiety.

Participants' narratives say that teachers can help students handle their academic anxiety through various means, such as support, teaching, comfort, advice, and talking with them about their problems.

Opo, ano po, yung mga teachers po sila po yung nagco-comfort sa mga students pag may problem. tapos po sila din po ang nagtuturo ng lesson like tapos pag may problem po kami pwede po namin silang kausapin, tas sila po yung mag co-comfort samin. -PT1

Parehas, itang kayi tuturu dakaming masalese bakanta akayi mila reng ahhh antinjan mila retang dapat intinjan. -PT2

Opo, kase minsan po yung iba pong guro like kapag po may problema po yung isaang estudyante parang nanjan din parang ina binibigyan din po sila ng advice yung mga ibang students na na iistress. -PT4

Wala po, pwedi po nilang gawin yung mga teacher na tulungan po, thank you po-PT5

Pwede naman pong ayusin ng mga teacher yung mga problema. PT7

Opo, pano pong tulong? tinuturuan po kame ine explain niya po yung ano, problem ineexplain nya po yun saamen. -PT9

Kapag ano po yung teacher po, pagturo po ng mga bata para matuto. -PT10

Conclusion

1. The findings of this study highlight the significant impact of academic anxiety on seventh graders, with peer noise, self-imposed pressure, and workload emerging as primary stressors. While students employ various coping mechanisms, structured planning, positive thinking, and social support proved to be the most effective strategies. However, some students resort to avoidance, which can exacerbate their anxiety.
2. Given these insights, it is essential to foster a supportive learning environment by implementing structured interventions. Schools should introduce programs that promote stress management, provide teacher and peer support, and encourage adaptive coping strategies. Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students, not only academically but also in managing their anxiety through reassurance and motivational techniques.

Recommendations

1. Minimize the noise in the classroom through the use of consequences if they continue making the noise. These consequences can help by providing a wall for the students to stop making noise.
2. Maximizing coping strategies and also allowing teachers to continue teaching and comforting the students. Teachers can also employ, disseminate, and teach various strategies for the students to use.

3. Future researchers may explore the effectiveness of specific intervention programs designed to reduce academic anxiety and enhance coping strategies.

Table 3 Intervention Program

Problem Identified	Objectives	Strategy/ Activity	Person Involved	Target Date	Outcome
Students are having academic anxiety	To provide awareness and understanding of academic anxiety, its effects and practical strategies to cope with it, ultimately empowering them to achieve academic success and well-being of Grade 7 students.	“Anxiety to Aspiration: Building Resilience in the face of Academic Pressure” (Webinar)	Students Speakers Teachers	First Quarter (June 2025)	At least 90% of the students will be able to attend and participate in the seminar. A good and satisfactory rating in the seminar. Students will be able to gain knowledge and be aware of their academic anxiety. Teachers were also expected to gain knowledge from this and be aware of their students.
Lack of coping mechanisms	To equip the grade 7 students with the knowledge, skills and strategies necessary to recognize, manage, and overcome academic anxiety, ultimately enhancing their academic performance, mental well-being and resilience.	“Unraveling Academic Anxiety: Strategies for Success” (Webinar)	Students Speakers Teachers	First to Second Quarter (August to September 2025)	At least 90% of the students will be able to attend and participate in the seminar. A good and satisfactory rating in the seminar. Students will be able to know various coping mechanisms and apply it to themselves to them with their academic anxiety. Teachers were also expected to gain knowledge from this and help their students.

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