



# Mental health state of Filipino adolescents before and during the pandemic

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## UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CONFERENCES



April 19-20, 2023



April 20-21, 2023



April 21-22, 2023

# Key points

- Mental Health among Filipino adolescents is of great concern
- COVID 19 and Mental Health: Amidst the demands of the adolescence period, the pandemic seems to exacerbate the already vulnerable state of young individuals
- There are substantial gaps in the delivery of mental health care services and a dearth of community-based mental health facilities



# Mental Health

- A “state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community” (WHO, 2022)
- It is an integral part of health and is crucial in determining quality of life and productivity
- It matters in promoting human capital for people to productively contribute to their communities and help attain the SDG targets



# Mental Health concerns

- It is estimated that one in seven adolescents (10–19-year-olds) experience mental health conditions (WHO, 2021), with depression and anxiety as the two most common mental health concerns among young people

In the Philippines....

- The Global School-Based Student Health Survey (Philippine facts sheet) revealed that the percentage of adolescents (ages 13-17) who seriously considered attempting suicide increased from 11.6% in 2015 to 23.1% in 2019. Those who attempted suicide were about 16.8% in 2015 and in 2019 it rose to 24.3%.
- The recent Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality study results echoes this trend



# COVID 19 and Mental Health

- Significant increase in the prevalence of these mental health conditions globally (WHO, 2022)
- Younger people more affected psychologically than adults (Hechanova et al, 2022; Tee et al, 2020; Malolos et al, 2021).
- Restrictions were imposed (i.e., lockdowns) to vulnerable populations limiting interactions with others, and deepening social isolation
- These conditions resulted in higher psychological distress (Aknin et al, 2022) and mental health issues (Fancourt et al, 2021).
- Added to this is the shift to online learning modalities that contributed to negative mental health consequences (Alibudbud, 2021) due to new technological demands and information overload (Magsambol, 2020; Adonis, 2021).



This presentation aims to present the mental health condition of Filipino adolescents before and during the pandemic



# Measures

- **Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA) forms:** Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) and Youth Self Survey (YSR). Specifically the DSM oriented scales to measure mental health outcomes

## Anxiety Scale Components:

Clings to adults/too dependent  
Fears animals, situations, places  
Fears going to school  
Fears doing something bad  
Nervous/tense  
Having nightmares  
Too fearful/anxious  
Self-conscious  
Worries a lot

## Depression Scale Components:

Enjoys little  
Cries a lot  
Harms self  
Doesn't eat well  
Feels worthless  
Feels guilty  
Feels tired, lacks energy  
Sleeps less/more/trouble sleeping  
Talks suicide  
Unhappy



# Schedule of Assessment

## Pre-pandemic:

W2 2018 (**age 11**): Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; mother's report)

W4 Mar 2020 (**age 13**): Youth Self Report (YSR; IC self-administered)

## Early pandemic:

W4A Nov 2020 (**age 14**): CBCL, Anxiety items (mother's report)

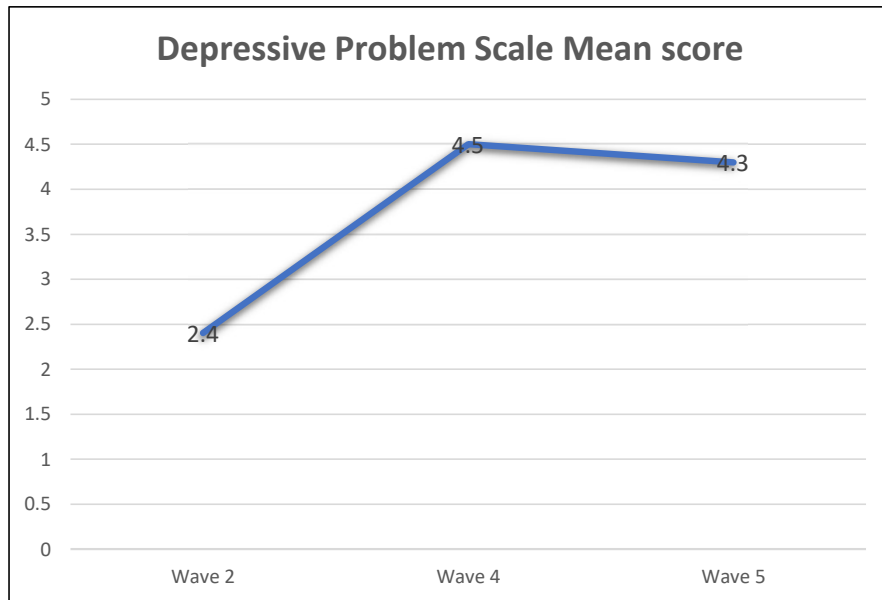
## Mid-pandemic:

W5 Jun-Aug 2021 (**age 15**): YSR, interviewer-administered (phone)

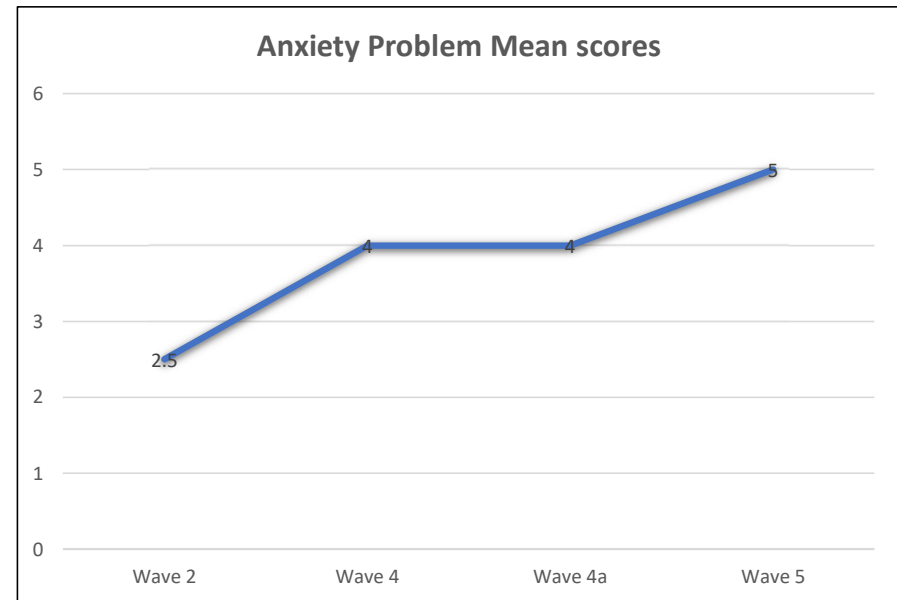




## Depressive and Anxiety Mean Scores across waves

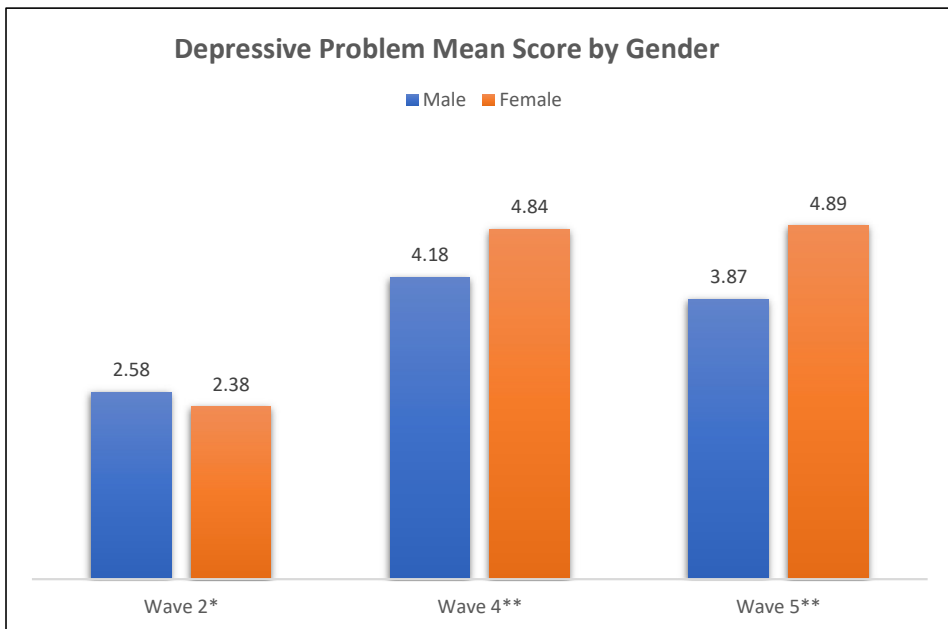


significant at  $p < .000$  between Wave2 and Wave4; Wave2 and Wave5

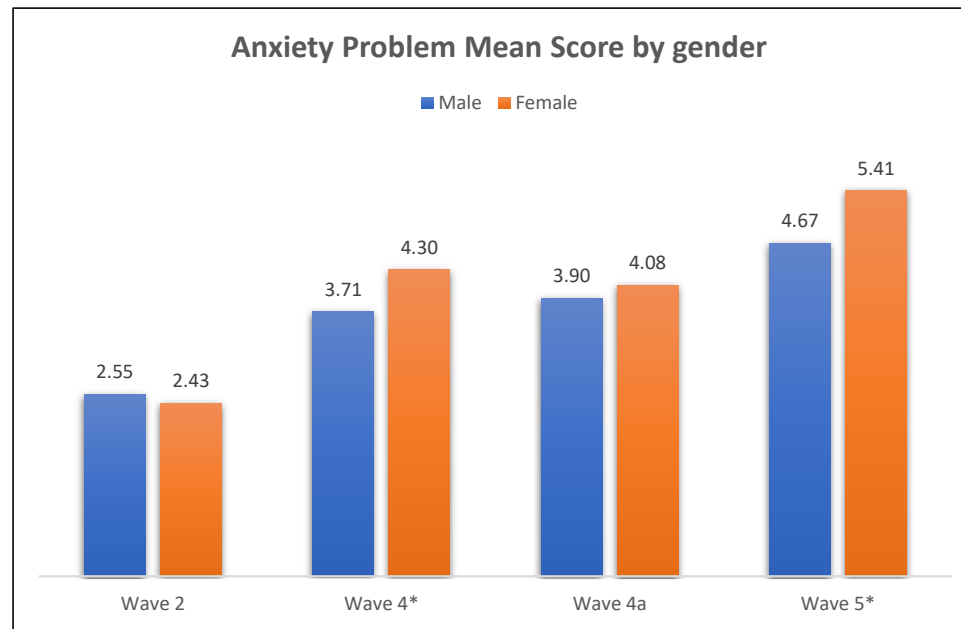


significant at  $p < .000$  between Wave2 and Wave4; Wave2 and Wave4a; Wave2 and Wave5; Wave4 and Wave5

# Depressive and Anxiety Mean Scores by Gender



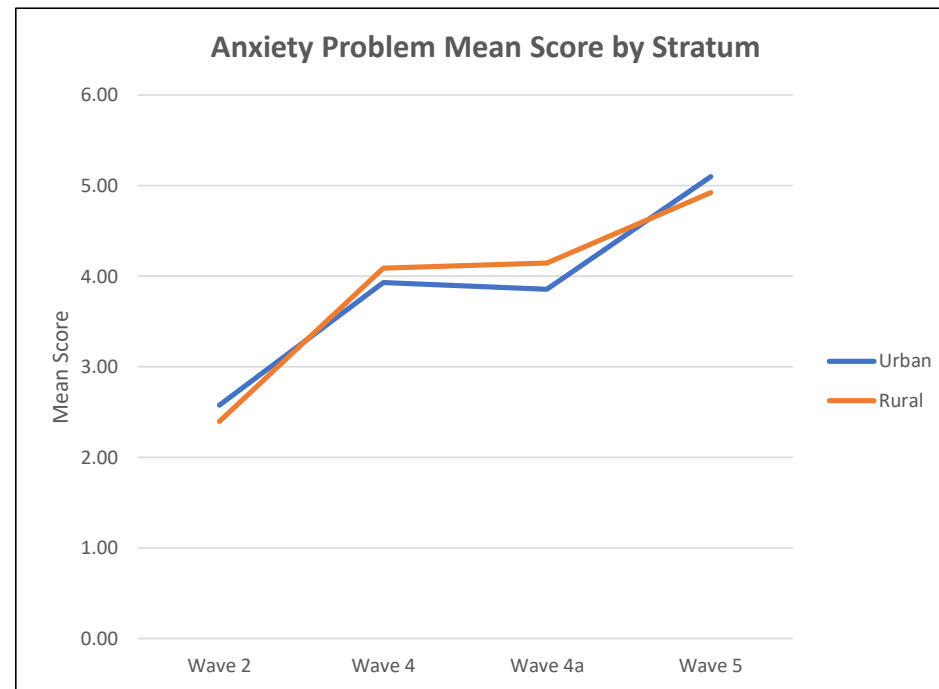
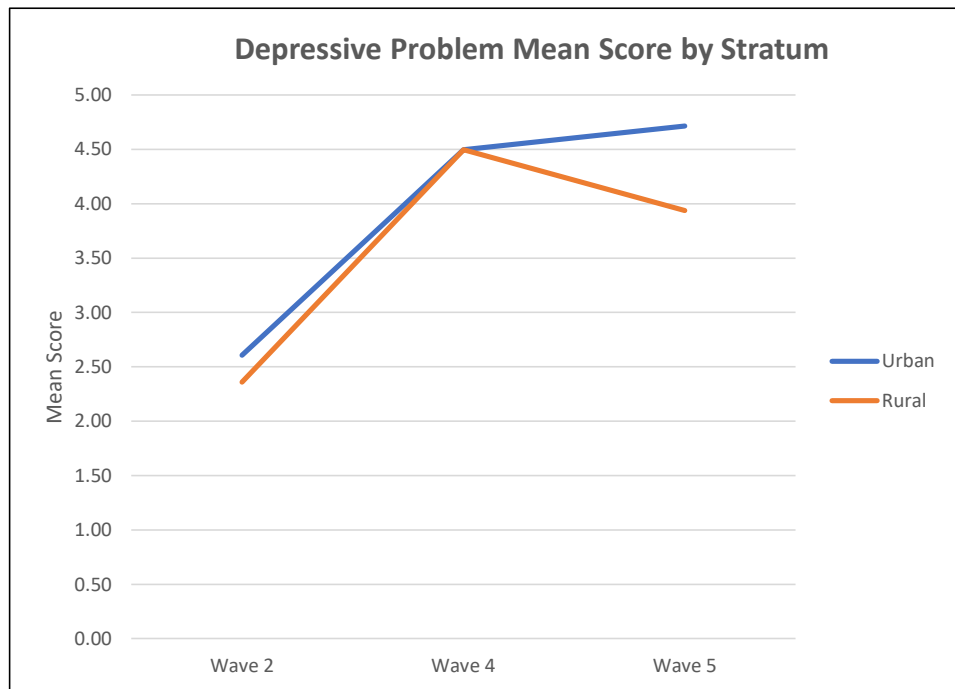
\*significant at  $p < .05$   
\*\*significant at  $p < .000$



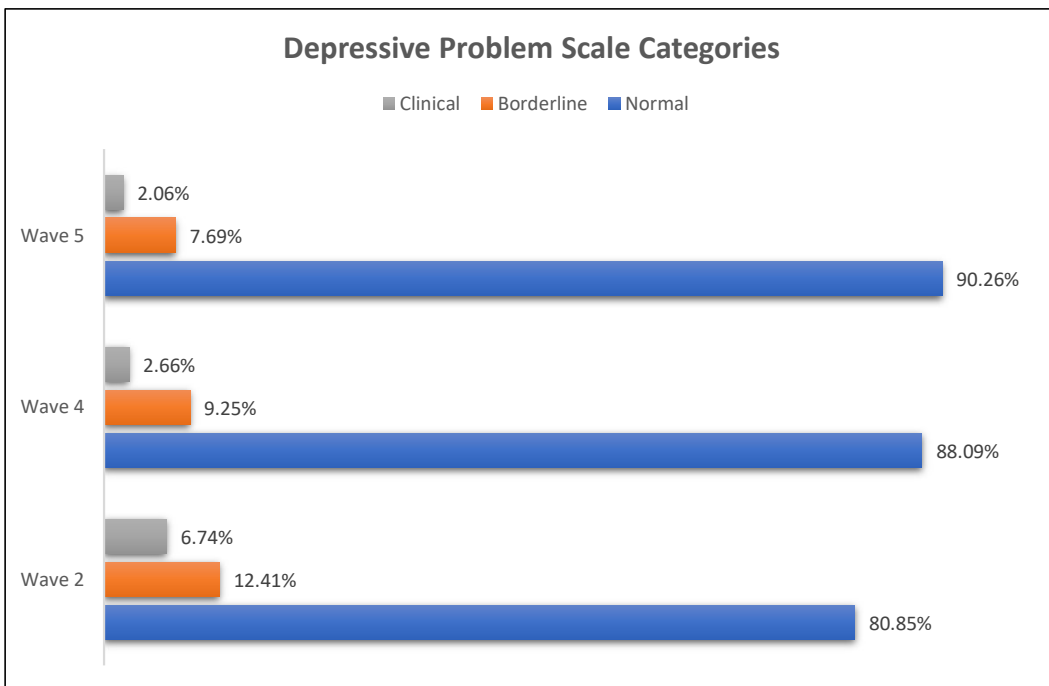
\*significant at  $p < .000$



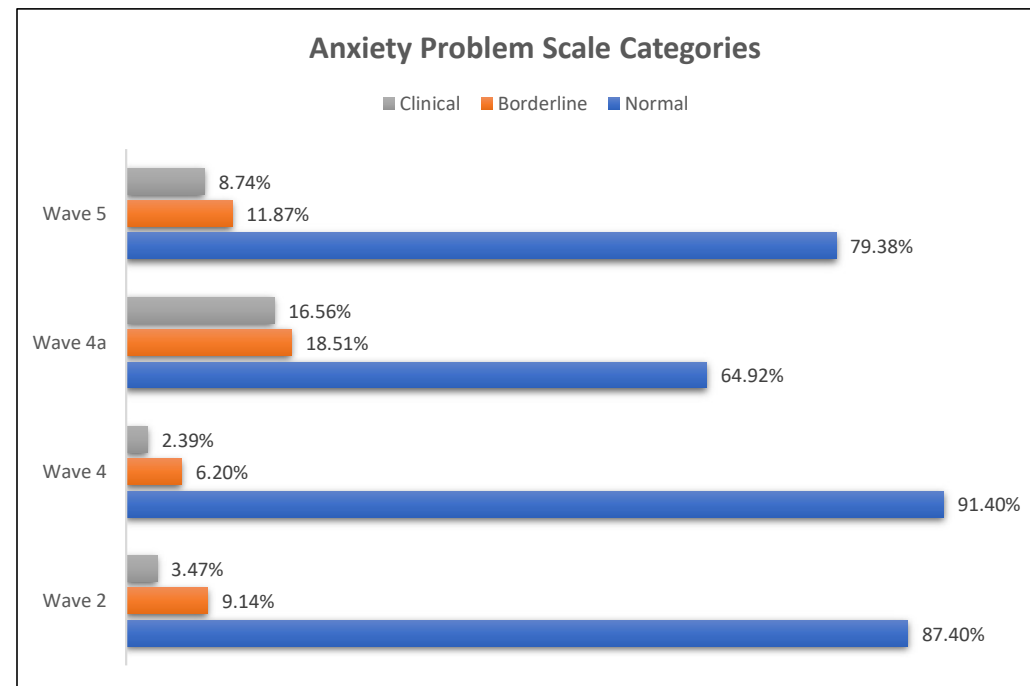
## Depressive and Anxiety Mean Scores Urban/Rural



# Depressive and Anxiety Scale Categories



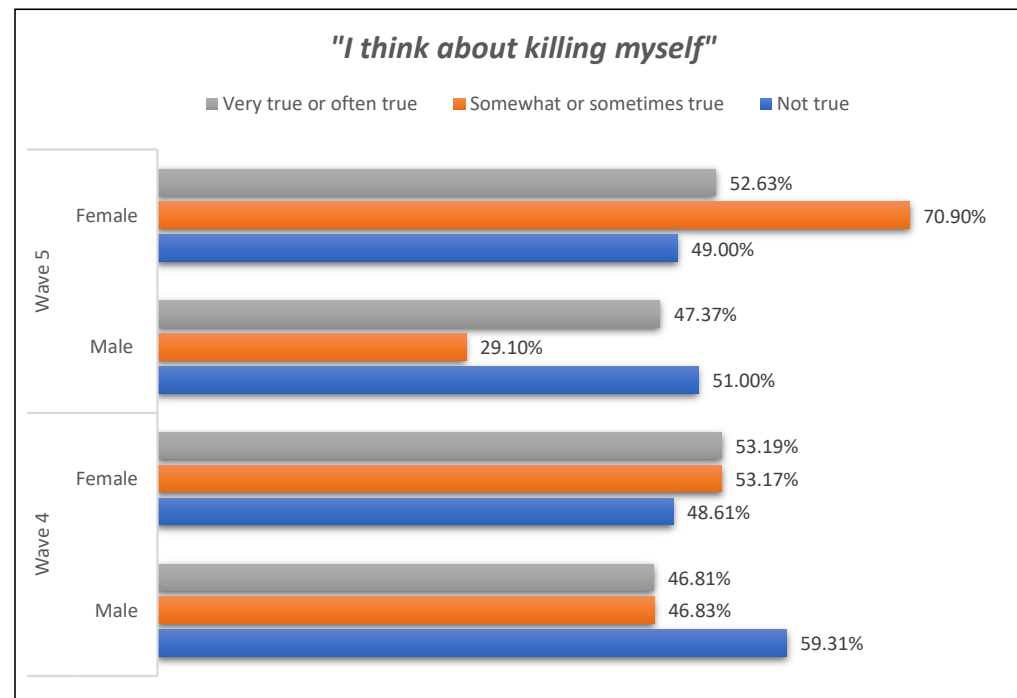
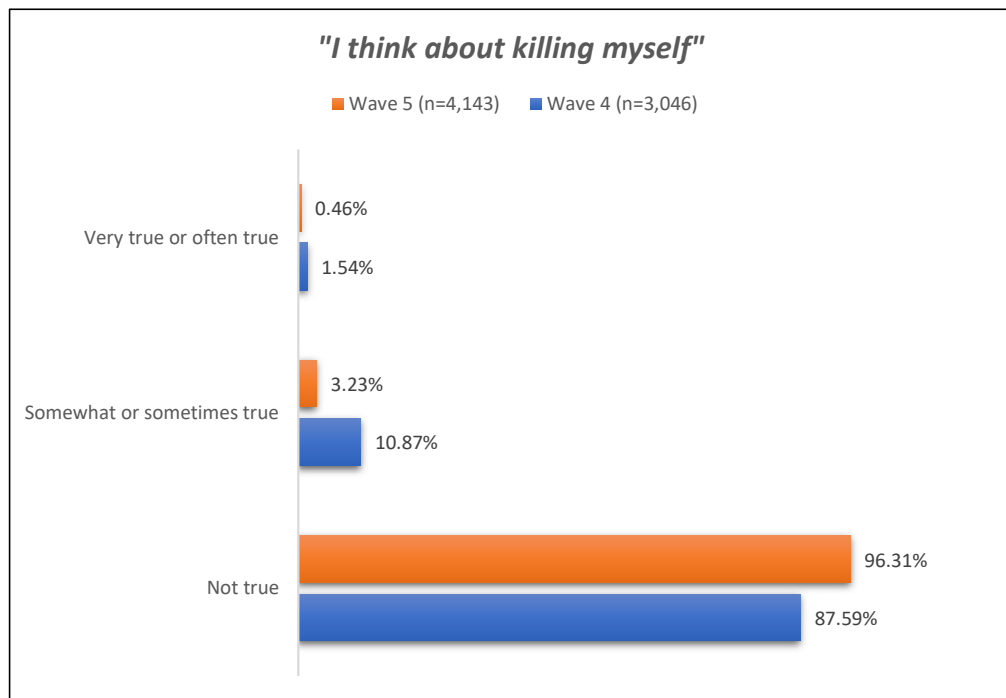
Proportion estimation (unweighted), significant across all waves



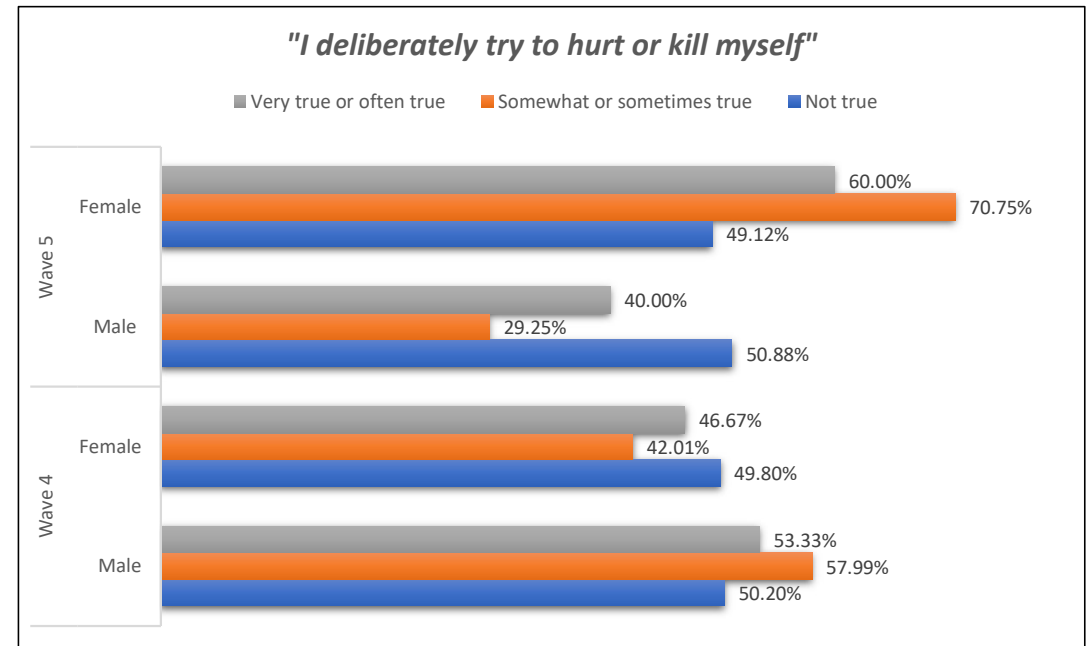
Proportion estimation (unweighted), significant across all waves



# Suicide Ideation



# Suicide attempt and self harm



# REPUBLIC ACT 11036 “Mental Health Act” (2017)

- **Section 15.** *Mental Health Services at the Community Level.*

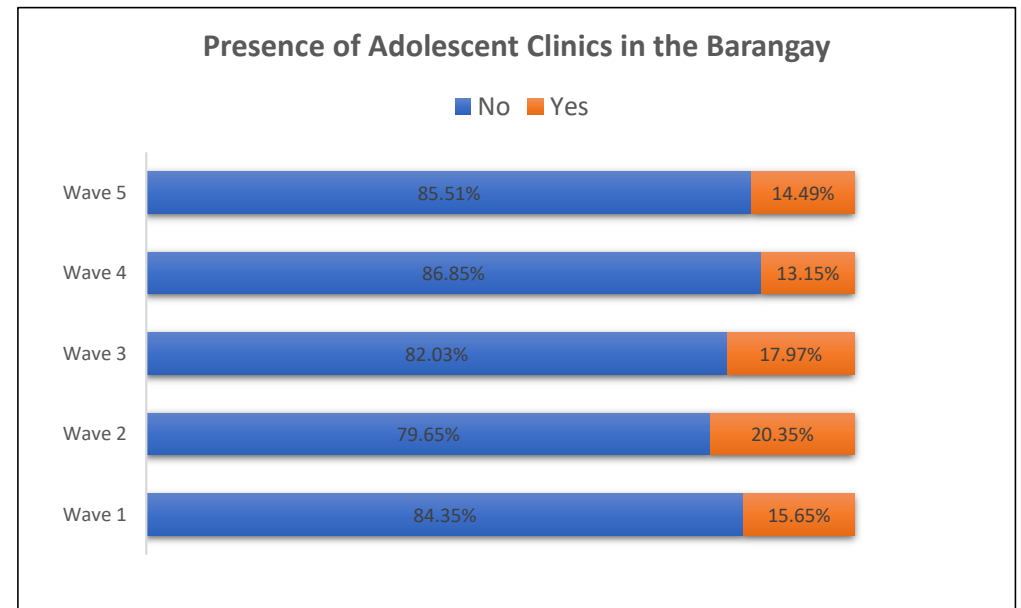
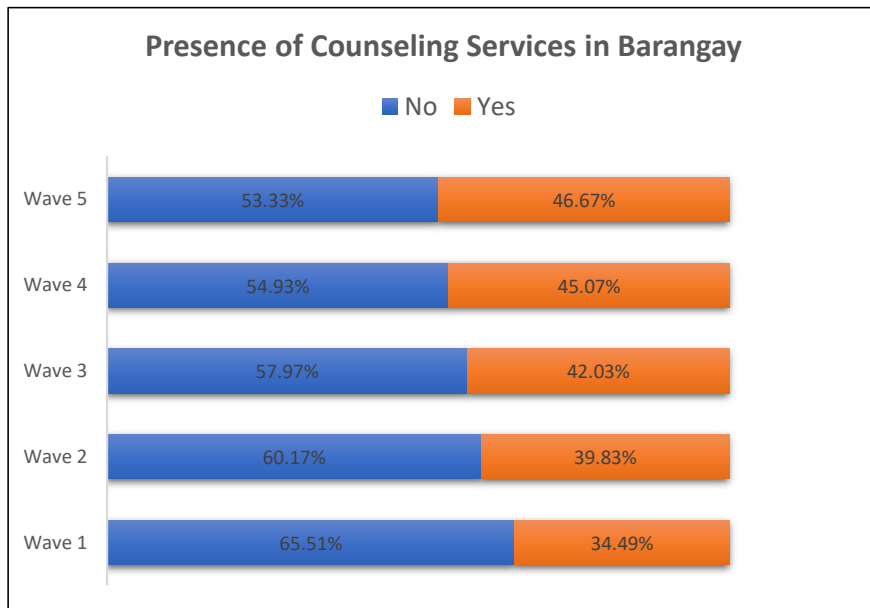
Primary mental health services shall be developed and integrated as part of the basic health services at the appropriate level of care, particularly at the city, municipal, and barangay level.

- **Section 16.** *Community-based Mental Health Care Facilities.*

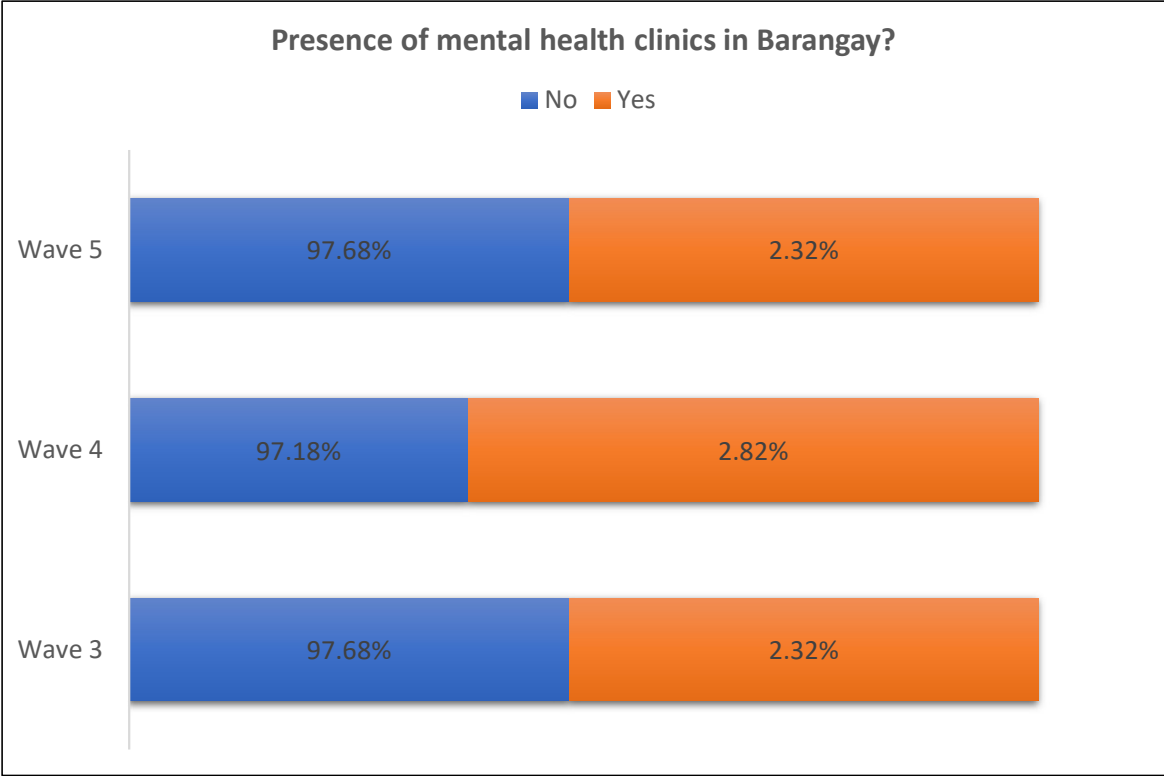
The national government through the DOH shall fund the establishment and assist in the operation of community-based mental health care facilities in the provinces, cities and cluster of municipalities in the entire country based on the needs of the population, to provide appropriate mental health care services, and enhance the rights-based approach to mental health care.



# Availability and access to Mental Health related services







# Key findings

- During the pandemic, anxiety rather than depression was the bigger mental health concern among these young adolescents, with anxiety sharply increasing in the early pandemic period
- Other than depressive and anxiety problem symptoms, several of them have contemplated on suicide and a few deliberately attempted to do so.
- There are substantial gaps in the delivery of mental health care services and a dearth of community-based mental health facilities



# Implications

- Given how susceptible adolescents can be to their experiences, there is a need to intensify mental health programs directed at them not only at the national level but most especially in their local communities
- A call for more mental health care professionals
- The need to promote mental health care education among adolescents and to imbue positive view on help seeking behavior.



# *Thank you!*

## **Mental health state of Filipino adolescents before and during the pandemic**

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*The data used in this analysis is from the **Longitudinal Cohort Study on the Filipino Child** which is jointly supported by the Philippine Government, UNFPA, UNICEF, SDG-Fund and the Australian Government; and implemented by the USC-Office of Population Studies Foundation, Inc. in collaboration with the USC Center for Social Research and Education, Research Institute for Mindanao Culture and Demographic Research and Development Foundation.*

