
**THRIVING AMIDST DIFFICULTIES: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS**

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study examined the lived experiences of academically challenged senior high school learners at Cabanglasan National High School during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: (1) What behavioral patterns do challenge senior high school learners show at school and at home? and (2) What coping mechanisms do they use to deal with their personal and family-related difficulties? The study aimed to understand how these learners navigate daily challenges and how such experiences shape their behavior, motivation, and overall well-being. Using a qualitative research design guided by Colaizzi's method of phenomenological analysis, data were collected through in-depth interviews with ten (10) purposively selected senior high school learners experiencing academic, emotional, family-related, or social challenges. Significant statements were extracted, meanings were formulated, and themes were identified to capture the essence of their lived experiences. The findings revealed that learners exhibited behavioral patterns characterized by emotional suppression, emotional release, contextual identity shift, emotional reactivity, and maladaptive responses. These patterns reflected both internal struggles and adaptive adjustments to challenging environments. In coping with their difficulties, learners relied on spiritual reliance, peer support systems, distraction and escape coping, self-reliant internal coping, and organized problem-solving strategies. The results indicate that while learners demonstrate resilience and personal agency, they also experience emotional vulnerability and occasional isolation. The study concludes that challenged senior high school learners possess both strengths and vulnerabilities in managing adversity. The findings underscore the importance of supportive school environments that foster emotional

expression, strengthen peer and spiritual support systems, and promote adaptive coping strategies to enhance learners' well-being and academic engagement. Therefore, it is recommended that schools implement structured guidance and counseling programs that provide emotional support, coping skills training, and safe spaces for learners to express and manage their challenges.

KEYWORDS: *Lived experiences, challenged senior high school learners, behavioral patterns, coping mechanisms.*

Family is the foundation of every child's emotional, social, and moral development. A stable family provides love, security, and guidance that help young people grow into responsible and emotionally balanced individuals. However, when this structure breaks due to separation, conflict, or neglect, adolescents often struggle with emotional distress, behavioral problems, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships. Studies have shown that family breakdowns can cause sadness, low self-esteem, aggression, and withdrawal among teenagers (Angelina, Rahayu, & Urcy, 2024; Hassan & Hatab, 2021). These challenges can affect not only their school performance but also their overall mental health and social adjustment. Therefore, understanding how learners from broken families behave, cope, and interact with peers is essential in helping teachers, counselors, and parents provide better emotional and academic support.

INTRODUCTION

In the international context, family instability has become a growing concern. According to Pu et al. (2024), family dysfunction significantly increases the risk of depression and suicidal thoughts among adolescents. Similarly, Nilsen et al. (2025) found that poor family finances and adverse experiences contribute to behavioral issues and emotional distress. In other countries, such as Indonesia and the United States, researchers also discovered that adolescents from broken homes show higher tendencies toward aggression and social withdrawal compared to those from complete families (Antikaningsih & Sarajar, 2025; Lesmana, Nurjamilah, & Amalia, 2024). These findings emphasize that broken families are not only a domestic issue but also a worldwide social and psychological challenge.

In the Philippine setting, the number of separated families has steadily increased, creating emotional and social problems among children and youth. Studies conducted in Metro Manila and other parts of the country revealed that parental separation and poor family relationships

are strongly linked to depression, stress, and low social confidence among high school students (Serrano et al., 2023; Sabillo, 2024). Daria et al. (2025) also found that weak family supervision may lead to poor peer choices and delinquent behaviors among Filipino adolescents. These national findings highlight the urgent need to support learners from broken homes, especially in senior high school, where emotional and social pressures are already high due to academic demands and identity development.

In the local context, Cabanglasan National High School has observed an increasing number of learners coming from separated or unstable families. Teachers and guidance counselors have noted that some of these learners display low motivation, mood swings, and difficulties in maintaining positive peer relationships. Some also struggle with confidence and tend to isolate themselves during class or group activities. This situation calls for a deeper understanding of how family background affects their behavior and coping patterns. By exploring the behavioral patterns, coping mechanisms, and peer relationship challenges of senior high school learners from broken families in Cabanglasan National High School, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can guide interventions and promote the emotional well-being and academic success of these students.

Framework of the Study

This study was guided by three major theories that helped explain how family instability influences adolescents' behavior, coping mechanisms, and peer relationships, namely, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1969), and Minuchin's Family Systems Theory (1974). These theories are the foundation for analyzing how environmental, emotional, and systemic factors shape the experiences of learners from broken families.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory explained how the environmental systems surrounding an adolescent, such as family, school, peers, and community, interact and affect personal development. When the family system becomes unstable, as in cases of separation or neglect, the learner's emotional balance and social behavior are likely to be disturbed. This theory was essential in understanding how external environments, such as peer groups and school settings, can either worsen or help improve the behavioral patterns of students from broken families. As Hassan and Hatab (2021) found, family disruptions often extend their effects into school performance and social relationships, showing the strong link between home life and adolescent behavior.

Bowlby's Attachment Theory also played a central role in this study. It explained how early emotional bonds with parents or caregivers influence an adolescent's ability to regulate emotions and build relationships later in life. Learners from broken families, who may experience inconsistent affection or parental absence, are likely to develop insecure attachments. This may lead to trust issues, emotional instability, or difficulty maintaining friendships. The theory helped the researcher interpret how the absence of secure parental attachment contributes to behavioral and social challenges, consistent with findings by Sabillo (2024) and Shaheen et al. (2023), who emphasized the connection between weak attachment and low self-esteem among adolescents.

Lastly, Minuchin's Family Systems Theory was also applied to explain how each member of the family affects the functioning of the whole system. When parents separate or family conflict arises, the emotional stability of the entire family unit will be disrupted, affecting adolescents the most. As Daria et al. (2025) noted, poor family structure and communication patterns are strongly linked to delinquent behaviors and low social adjustment. This theory was relevant in showing that the behavioral and coping challenges of learners from broken families do not occur in isolation but are outcomes of a disrupted family system.

This study focused on exploring the lived experiences of challenged senior high school learners, specifically looking into the difficulties they face in their personal life, academics, peer relationships, and school engagement. It examined how these learners navigate daily challenges and how these experiences shape their behavior, motivation, and overall well-being. The study will also explore the meaning they attach to their struggles and the ways they cope with them.

The participants of this study were ten (10) challenged Senior High School learners from Cabanglasan National High School. These participants were purposively selected based on the type of challenges they are experiencing, such as academic difficulties, emotional struggles, family-related issues, or social concerns. The study was conducted within the School Year 2025–2026.

Scope

This study was limited only to the personal stories and experiences shared by the identified learners. It did not include Junior High School students, teachers, parents, or learners from other schools. The findings applied only to the selected participants and may not be generalized to all senior high school learners.

Furthermore, the study also acknowledged certain limitations, such as time constraints, since data collection must fit within the school schedule, and resource limitations, as the researcher has limited access to external support or additional tools for broader data gathering. Possible researcher bias is recognized because interpretations may be influenced by the researcher's perspective; however, efforts will be made to minimize this through careful documentation, validation of themes, and transparent analysis.

Review of Literature

This section presents relevant literature and studies that provide insights into the behavioral patterns, coping mechanisms, and peer relationship challenges of senior high school students from broken families. It highlights both foreign and local research to establish the theoretical and empirical foundations of the study. Reviewing these works is essential to identify existing knowledge, understand the gaps that this research seeks to address, and situate the present study within the broader context of adolescent development and family dynamics.

Behavioral Patterns of Adolescents from Broken Families

Adolescence is a crucial stage of development where individuals begin to shape their identity, regulate emotions, and establish meaningful social interactions. However, when adolescents are raised in broken families, their behavioral patterns are often influenced by the instability and emotional strain that comes with family disruption. These patterns may manifest in their emotional expressions, academic performance, and social relationships. To better understand these dynamics, various studies have explored how family breakdown impacts adolescent behavior across different contexts.

Research has consistently shown that adolescents from broken families exhibit distinct behavioral patterns shaped by their family environment. For instance, Angelina et al. (2024) employed a qualitative research design, using interviews and thematic analysis to explore the mental health and behavioral tendencies of teenagers from broken homes. Their study revealed that many adolescents experienced emotional instability, persistent sadness, and difficulty concentrating on academic tasks. These emotional struggles often translate into observable behavioral patterns such as social withdrawal, loss of motivation, and occasional displays of aggression when faced with stress or conflict. The researchers concluded that the lack of consistent parental guidance and support intensified these negative outcomes, making adolescents more vulnerable to both internalizing behaviors, like isolation and low self-esteem, and externalizing behaviors, such as aggression and defiance.

In a similar vein, Antikaningsih and Sarajar (2025) conducted a correlational study that examined the role of emotional regulation in shaping the behavior of adolescents from broken homes. Using standardized psychological scales and self-report questionnaires, the researchers assessed participants' ability to manage their emotions and linked these measures to observed behavioral outcomes. The findings showed that adolescents who had poor emotional regulation were significantly more prone to aggressive tendencies, such as verbal outbursts, impulsive reactions, and conflicts with peers. On the other hand, those who developed adaptive emotional strategies such as self-reflection, mindfulness, or constructive expression of feelings were less likely to engage in harmful or aggressive behaviors. These results highlight the protective function of emotional regulation in mitigating the negative behavioral effects of family disruption.

Furthermore, comparative studies deepen the understanding of these differences. Hariyadi and Istikomah (2021), using a comparative design between adolescents from intact and broken families, found that the latter group displayed lower discipline, reduced motivation in academic tasks, and more disruptive behaviors in school. Complementing this, Hassan and Hatab (2021) conducted a descriptive study in secondary schools in Najaf, Iraq. It concluded that family separation significantly influenced adolescents' aggression, poor peer relationships, and declining classroom performance. These findings highlight that family disruption not only affects emotional well-being but also spills over into academic-related behaviors and social adjustment.

In terms of deviant behavior, Lesmana et al. (2024) discovered through field research that broken family backgrounds increased the risk of adolescents engaging in antisocial acts such as truancy, disobedience, and early delinquency, suggesting that instability at home fuels difficulties in conforming to societal expectations. Supporting this, Lubis et al. (2025) noted that high school students from broken homes often struggled with mood swings, feelings of neglect, and emotional volatility, which were directly linked to erratic social interactions and conflict with peers.

On a broader scale, socioeconomic and structural family factors also play a crucial role in adolescent development. Nilsen et al. (2025) conducted a large-scale survey that examined the relationship between family conditions and adolescent well-being. The study found that financial instability significantly contributed to emotional distress among teenagers. In addition, family-based adverse experiences, such as neglect or conflict, were strongly associated with depressive symptoms and risky behaviors. These findings emphasize that

adolescent behavioral issues are not isolated but rather interconnected with both economic pressures and family stressors.

Similarly, Pu et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of existing studies to examine the relationship between family dysfunction and suicidal behavior among adolescents. By synthesizing findings from a wide range of quantitative studies across different cultural and socioeconomic contexts, the researchers were able to provide robust evidence on the psychological risks linked to unstable family environments. The results revealed a significant association between family dysfunction and increased rates of suicidal ideation and attempts in adolescents. Specifically, adolescents who experienced parental conflict, neglect, or lack of communication were found to be more vulnerable to severe emotional distress, which heightened their risk of engaging in self-harm and suicidal behavior. These findings indicate the severity of behavioral outcomes when adolescents lack adequate emotional support and stability at home, pointing to the critical role of family functioning in protecting mental health and preventing extreme behavioral consequences.

Finally, Shaheen et al. (2023) shed light on the mediating role of self-esteem in understanding the behavioral outcomes of adolescents from broken or left-behind families. Their study showed that weakened self-concept often led to a variety of behavioral problems, including withdrawal, low academic engagement, and difficulties in building positive peer relationships. However, when nurturance and emotional support from caregivers, particularly mothers, were consistently present, these negative effects were significantly reduced. Such support helped adolescents maintain a healthier sense of self-worth, which in turn promoted better social functioning and resilience despite the challenges of family disruption.

Coping Mechanisms in Response to Family Disruption

Adolescents from broken families often face emotional and social challenges that require them to develop strategies for managing stress and adapting to difficult circumstances. Coping mechanisms play a vital role in helping them regulate emotions, maintain academic performance, and navigate peer relationships despite family instability. These strategies may take the form of personal efforts, reliance on social support, or engagement in school-based activities, all of which influence how effectively they adjust to family disruption.

Akinbode and Carter (2025) conducted a scoping review to map evidence on resilience, strengths, coping strategies, and cultural influences among African families affected by intimate partner violence. They systematically searched the literature and synthesized qualitative and quantitative studies to identify common coping patterns across diverse African

contexts. The review found that families relied heavily on extended kin networks, community resources, faith-based supports, and culturally embedded resilience practices to manage stress and trauma; importantly, these social supports often functioned as the primary buffer against maladaptive coping (for example, substance use or isolation).

Similarly, Gervais and Jose (2023) used longitudinal survey data from the Youth Connectedness Project (over 1,700 adolescents assessed across three annual waves) to examine whether coping strategies mediate the link between family connectedness and stress-triggering problems. Their method relied on repeated self-report measures of family connectedness, coping behaviors, and stress-related difficulties. This allowed assessment of temporal relations and potential mediation effects. Results showed that stronger family connectedness predicted greater use of adaptive coping strategies (e.g., problem-solving, seeking support), and in turn those coping strategies were associated with fewer stress-related problems; conversely, weaker connectedness corresponded to more maladaptive coping and higher stress and behavioral problems.

In line with this, Romero et al. (2021) employed qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and family-centered analyses) to explore how Mexican-origin families cope collectively with racial-ethnic discrimination and related stressors. Their analysis documented several family-level strategies reframing discriminatory encounters with cultural pride, collective problem-solving, open family communication, and turning to extended family or community organizations for assistance. Importantly, the authors reported that “coping together” (mutual family support and mobilizing external social resources) strengthened adolescents’ emotional resilience and reduced the likelihood of withdrawal, internalizing symptoms, and other maladaptive responses.

Likewise, Lyu et al. (2019) used a descriptive qualitative approach, interviewing 21 Chinese parents whose children were hospitalized for cancer, to identify family coping strategies in an acute medical crisis. Through semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, the study found families used a mix of intrafamily support (emotional sharing, role reallocation), practical problem solving, and outreach to hospital staff, support groups, and community resources. Results suggested that families who actively sought external supports, whether from extended relatives, medical social workers, or peer caregivers, reported lower emotional burden and more adaptive coping. Those who isolated themselves experienced higher stress and poorer psychological adjustment.

Ren et al. (2018) examined the role of coping strategies in the relationship between family functioning and non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) among Taiwanese adolescents. Using survey data from over 2,000 high school students and applying mediation analysis, they found that emotion-based coping strategies such as distraction, venting, and acceptance were the most commonly used among younger adolescents. However, reliance on these strategies was strongly associated with poorer family functioning and greater risk of self-injurious behaviors, suggesting that while emotion-based coping may provide temporary relief, it fails to resolve underlying distress. This highlights the maladaptive consequences of overdependence on emotion-focused approaches in the absence of healthy family support systems.

In contrast, Sirgy et al. (2019) explored the protective role of coping strategies in the context of work–family spillover, surveying adults but offering insights relevant to adolescent–family dynamics. Their findings indicated that problem-focused coping, particularly problem-solving and cognitive restructuring, significantly reduced stress, anxiety, and depression among individuals experiencing high family strain. Similarly, Prates et al. (2024), in a scoping review of family-based interventions for children and adolescents with cancer, found that structured programs designed to strengthen family problem-solving skills improved communication, reduced family stress, and enhanced long-term adjustment.

On the other hand, avoidance and disengagement strategies are linked to maladaptive outcomes. Jaser et al. (2007) studied adolescents of parents with clinical depression and used cross-situational coping assessments across both family and peer contexts. Their results revealed that adolescents who primarily engaged in avoidance through denial, withdrawal, or ignoring stressors reported higher psychological distress, greater internalizing symptoms, and more conflictual relationships. By contrast, those who employed active coping strategies displayed stronger emotional adjustment and more positive family interactions.

Peer Relationship Challenges and Social Adjustment from Broken Families

Adolescents from broken families often face unique challenges in forming and maintaining peer relationships, which play a vital role in their social adjustment. The absence of stable family support may influence how they interact with peers, leading to difficulties in trust, communication, and conflict resolution. Since peer groups are a primary source of emotional support during adolescence, disruptions in family structures can magnify feelings of isolation, insecurity, or dependence on unhealthy peer dynamics. Exploring these challenges provides

valuable insight into how broken family backgrounds shape social development and adjustment in school and community settings.

Adolescents from broken families often experience heightened difficulties in forming and sustaining peer relationships, as family instability influences their emotional security and social adjustment. Serrano et al. (2023), through a quantitative survey conducted among senior high school students in Metro Manila, found that lower levels of social support and a history of family disruption were significant predictors of depression, anxiety, and stress. Their results suggest that weakened family bonds reduce students' capacity to rely on peers for emotional stability, thereby heightening vulnerability to social isolation.

Building on this, Daria et al. (2025) explored the effects of family dynamics on juvenile delinquency using a mixed-method design, combining surveys and interviews. The study revealed that adolescents from broken families were more susceptible to peer pressure and engagement in delinquent activities, largely due to the absence of effective parental guidance. This indicates that disrupted family environments not only affect academic or emotional well-being but also increase the likelihood of associating with negative peer groups.

Similarly, Sabillo (2024), in a qualitative exploration of learners experiencing parental separation, highlighted that many adolescents reported feelings of exclusion and difficulty building trust with peers. The study showed that disrupted family structures often resulted in psychosocial distress, which manifested in strained friendships and heightened sensitivity to peer rejection. Such findings underscore the role of family stability in nurturing adolescents' confidence in social interactions.

Delima et al. (2025) further deepened this understanding by conducting a qualitative study on junior high school students from broken families. Their findings revealed recurring experiences of bullying, withdrawal, and dependence on limited peer circles. Students often narrated how the lack of familial emotional support left them more vulnerable to negative peer interactions, emphasizing the ripple effect of broken families on broader social adjustment.

In a complementary manner, Digon (2023) employed narrative inquiry to explore adolescents' lived experiences, uncovering themes of loneliness, lack of belonging, and mistrust in friendships. The narratives revealed that these adolescents often masked their struggles in peer settings, yet internally grappled with self-doubt and fear of rejection. This reflects how broken family backgrounds complicate the ability to form genuine peer bonds.

Duco et al. (2025), using a descriptive survey, assessed learners from broken family orientations in terms of self-image, confidence, and motivation. Their results demonstrated that low self-confidence often translated into difficulties in peer communication and a heightened sense of social inadequacy. As a result, these adolescents tended to either withdraw from peer interactions or overcompensate by conforming to peer expectations, even at the expense of their own values.

Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature highlights that senior high school learners face various challenges that influence their emotional, academic, and social development. Studies show that learners who experience family-related problems, financial difficulties, or personal struggles often demonstrate changes in behavior, academic performance, and peer relationships. Emotional distress may lead to withdrawal, low motivation, anxiety, or difficulty concentrating in class. Similarly, academic-related challenges may result in poor performance, absenteeism, or reduced participation in school activities.

Existing research also emphasizes the importance of coping mechanisms in helping learners manage stress and adversity. Coping strategies may include seeking social support from friends and teachers, engaging in personal reflection, participating in extracurricular activities, or relying on faith and family guidance. Supportive school environments and strong peer connections are found to play a significant role in promoting resilience among challenged learners.

Although several studies have examined learner behavior, coping mechanisms, and peer relationships, most research focuses on quantitative approaches that measure levels of stress, academic performance, or behavioral outcomes. There is limited qualitative research that deeply explores the personal, lived experiences of challenged senior high school learners, particularly in rural public schools.

Moreover, existing studies often generalize adolescent experiences without focusing specifically on senior high school learners who are experiencing multiple and overlapping challenges. There is also a lack of localized research in Cabanglasan National High School or similar rural contexts that captures learners' voices and personal narratives.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by using a phenomenological approach to explore and describe the lived experiences of ten challenged senior high school learners. By focusing on their personal stories, behaviors, and coping strategies, the study aims to provide a deeper

and more contextualized understanding that may guide schools in developing more responsive support programs.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of challenged senior high school learners, focusing on their behavioral patterns, coping mechanisms, and peer relationship challenges. The approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of learners' personal meanings, emotions, and experiences beyond what quantitative methods could capture.

The research was conducted at Cabanglasan National High School in Cabanglasan, Bukidnon, a rural public secondary school serving learners from farming communities. Ten senior high school students who were experiencing personal, emotional, academic, or social challenges were selected through purposive sampling based on defined inclusion criteria and with parental consent.

Data were gathered through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, allowing participants to openly share their experiences while enabling the researcher to probe for deeper insights. The interview guide underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure clarity and relevance.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using Colaizzi's phenomenological method which involved extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, and validating findings through member checking to ensure credibility.

Strict ethical standards were followed, including informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and the provision of psychological support when needed. These procedures ensured that the study remained respectful, trustworthy, and protective of the participants' well-being.

Findings

This study explored the lived experiences of challenged senior high school learners, focusing on their behavioral patterns and coping mechanisms. From the analysis, several essential themes emerged under each research problem.

For Problem 1, which examined the behavioral patterns of challenged learners, five major themes surfaced: Emotional Suppression, Emotional Release, Contextual Identity Shift, Emotional Reactivity, and Maladaptive Responses. These themes revealed that learners often internalized their struggles, selectively expressed emotions, adjusted their behavior

depending on their environment, and at times exhibited heightened emotional reactions. In some cases, unhealthy behavioral responses were also observed. Collectively, these patterns reflect the complex emotional landscape of learners facing personal, academic, and family-related challenges.

For Problem 2, which focused on coping mechanisms, five themes likewise emerged: Spiritual Reliance, Peer Support System, Distraction and Escape Coping, Self-Reliant Internal Coping, and Organized Problem-Solving. These findings indicate that learners utilized both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies. They relied on faith, friendships, temporary distractions, personal resilience, and structured planning to manage stress and maintain functionality despite ongoing difficulties.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that challenged senior high school learners experience complex emotional and behavioral adjustments as they navigate personal, academic, and family-related difficulties. Their lived experiences are characterized by patterns of emotional suppression, selective emotional release, contextual shifts in behavior, emotional reactivity, and, in some cases, maladaptive responses. These behavioral patterns reflect both the internal struggles and adaptive adjustments they make in response to challenging circumstances.

Furthermore, the study revealed that learners employ a combination of emotion-focused and problem-focused coping mechanisms. They rely on spirituality, peer support, distraction strategies, self-reliant internal processing, and organized problem-solving to manage stress and maintain daily functioning. While some coping strategies demonstrate resilience and personal agency, others indicate a tendency toward emotional isolation and temporary avoidance.

Overall, the study concludes that challenged senior high school learners exhibit both vulnerability and strength. The findings highlight the necessity of supportive school environments that facilitate emotional expression, ensure access to support systems, and cultivate adaptive coping strategies to promote students' well-being and academic involvement.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following realistic and practical recommendations are proposed:

Strengthen School Guidance and Counseling Support. School administrators and guidance counselors at Cabanglasan National High School are encouraged to enhance the visibility and

accessibility of guidance services by conducting regular check-ins with learners, establishing open-door counseling hours, and facilitating small group sharing sessions. These initiatives can provide learners with safe spaces to express their emotions without fear of judgment.

Integrate Emotional Literacy Activities in Class. Senior high school teachers may incorporate brief emotional awareness activities, reflection journals, or classroom check-in routines at the beginning or end of classes. These simple practices can help learners recognize and express their emotions in healthy ways while reducing tendencies toward emotional suppression.

Promote Peer Support Programs. School administrators, student leaders, and the guidance office may organize peer mentoring or buddy systems among senior high school learners. Through structured peer support programs, students can assist one another academically and emotionally, strengthening their sense of belonging and reducing feelings of isolation.

Provide Coping Skills Workshops. Guidance counselors and invited mental health resource speakers may conduct short seminars or classroom-based sessions on stress management, time management, and problem-solving strategies. These workshops can help learners develop more adaptive coping mechanisms, particularly in strengthening their organized problem-solving skills.

Encourage Balanced Coping Strategies. Teachers, guidance counselors, and school club advisers may guide learners in balancing distraction-based coping strategies with constructive problem-solving approaches. Encouraging participation in healthy recreational activities such as sports, arts, and school organizations can also provide positive outlets for emotional expression.

Engage Parents Through Simple Communication Channels. School administrators and homeroom advisers may collaborate with parents by conducting brief orientations, parent meetings, or distributing informational materials about adolescent emotional development and supportive communication practices. Strengthening home–school collaboration can improve the support system available to learners.

Future Research. Future researchers may consider expanding the study by including a larger number of participants or incorporating the perspectives of teachers, parents, and guidance counselors to provide a broader understanding of the experiences and coping mechanisms of challenged senior high school learners.

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