FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH COMMON MENTAL DISORDERS IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF BAHIA

FACTORES ASOCIADOS A LOS TRASTORNOS MENTALES COMUNES EN ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD FEDERAL DE BAHIA

FATORES ASSOCIADOS AOS TRANSTORNOS MENTAIS COMUNS EM ESTUDANTES UNIVERSITÁRIOS DA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA BAHIA

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Abstract
The present study sought to identify the factors associated with Common Mental Disorders - CMD in undergraduate university students on the campuses of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador - BA, in the year 2021. This is a quantitative, cross-sectional study. , of the exploratory analytical type, carried out with female and male undergraduate students, aged ≥ 18 years, regularly enrolled in all courses of the four shifts. Data collection consisted of the application of instruments: Socioeconomic-demographic Questionnaire (QSD) and Self-Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ-20). Data were submitted to quantitative analysis using SPSS software and a significance level of 5% ($p \leq 0.05$) was considered for a statistically significant association. A total of 509 undergraduates participated in this study, 367 (71.2%) female and 142 (27.9%) male, with a mean age of 24.06 years (SD = 6.566). The prevalence for suspected CMD was 78.6% of the sample. The results also show the main statistically significant associated factors when related to suspicion for CMD: being female ($p < 0.01$), non-white ($p = 0.02$), single marital status ($p = 0.01$), without support from the University in the face of adversity ($p < 0.01$) and who do not consider the University to be a welcoming environment ($p < 0.01$). In view of the above, it is pointed out the need for institutional behaviors, mental health care strategies and intersectoral assistance that lead to the biopsychosocial well-being of students.

Keywords: Mental Health; Higher Education; Mental Disorder.

Resumen
El presente estudio buscó identificar los factores asociados a los Trastornos Mentales Comunes - TMC en estudiantes universitarios de graduación de los *campus* de la Universidad Federal de Bahía ubicada en la ciudad de Salvador - BA, en el año 2021. Se trata de un estudio cuantitativo, transversal estudio, de tipo analítico exploratorio, realizado con estudiantes

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universitarios del sexo femenino y masculino, con edad ≥ 18 años, matriculados regularmente en todos los cursos de los cuatro turnos. La recolección de datos consistió en la aplicación de los instrumentos: Cuestionario Socioeconómico-Demográfico (QSD) y Cuestionario de Autoinforme (SRQ-20). Los datos fueron sometidos a análisis cuantitativo con el *software* SPSS y se consideró un nivel de significación del 5% ($p \leq 0,05$) para una asociación estadísticamente significativa. Un total de 509 estudiantes universitarios participaron en este estudio, 367 (71,2%) mujeres y 142 (27,9%) hombres, con una edad media de 24,06 años (DE = 6,566). La prevalencia de sospecha de TMC fue del 78,6% de la muestra. Los resultados también muestran los principales factores asociados estadísticamente significativos cuando se relacionan con la sospecha de TMC: ser mujer ($p < 0,01$), no blanca ($p = 0,02$), estado civil soltero ($p = 0,01$), sin apoyo de la Universidad en el ante la adversidad ($p < 0,01$) y que no consideran la Universidad un entorno acogedor ($p < 0,01$). Frente a lo anterior, se señala la necesidad de conductas institucionales, estrategias de atención en salud mental y asistencia intersectorial que conlleven al bienestar biopsicosocial de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Salud Mental; Enseñanza Superior; Trastorno Mental.

Resumo
O presente estudo buscou identificar os fatores associados aos Transtornos Mentais Comuns - TMCs em estudantes universitários de graduação nos *campi* da Universidade Federal da Bahia localizados na cidade de Salvador - BA, no ano de 2021. Trata-se de uma pesquisa quantitativa, de corte transversal, do tipo analítico exploratório, realizada com estudantes da graduação dos gêneros feminino e masculino, com idade ≥ a 18 anos, matriculados regularmente em todos os cursos dos quatro turnos. A coleta de dados consistiu na aplicação dos instrumentos: Questionário Socioeconômico-demográfico (QSD) e *Self-Reporting Questionnaire* (SRQ-20). Os dados foram submetidos à análise quantitativa utilizando-se o *software* SPSS e considerou-se o nível de significância de 5% ($p \leq 0,05$) para a associação estatisticamente significante. Participaram deste estudo 509 graduandos, sendo 367 (71,2%) do gênero feminino e 142 (27,9%) do gênero masculino, com idade média de 24,06 anos (DP = 6,566). A prevalência para a suspeição de TMCs foi de 78,6% da amostra. Os resultados evidenciam, ainda, os principais fatores associados estatisticamente significantes quando relacionados à suspeição para os TMCs: ser do gênero feminino ($p < 0,01$), com cor/raça não-branca ($p = 0,02$), estado civil solteira ($p = 0,01$), sem apoio da Universidade frente às adversidades ($p < 0,01$) e que não considera a Universidade um ambiente acolhedor ($p < 0,01$). Diante do descrito, aponta-se para a necessidade de condutas institucionais, estratégias de cuidado em saúde mental e assistência intersetorial que ocasionem o bem-estar biopsicossocial dos discentes.

Palavras-chave: Saúde Mental; Ensino Superior; Transtornos Mentais.

Introduction

The problems that afflict mental health are one of the main fields of discussion in public health today, which when related to university environment issues seems to have a significant impact on populations (BOLSONI-SILVA; LOUREIRO, 2016).

Entering Higher Education and becoming a university student constitutes a significant part of the identity of a portion of the Brazilian population, since it allows such people to develop autonomy and decision-making, while favoring the

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formation of new affective bonds, the advancement of skills and professional competences, and the insertion in new social groups (BARROS, 2021; BITTENCOURT; DE JESUS, 2018).

In this way, the dynamics of university student life requires movement in order to adapt to this new phase, which requires a process of adaptation and affiliation (COULON, 2017). In this respect, the University is understood as a stage of diverse social interactions and that demands from the university student many interpersonal and academic skills (BARROS; AMBIEL; BAPTISTA, 2021).

However, despite this being a natural flow in the life of a portion of the population, studies often describe the academic trajectory as a period of stress overload (SANTOS, 2011), psychological distress (ANDRADE, 2014) and physical exhaustion and emotional (FOGAÇA et al., 2012).

Anxiety and depression mark the academic experience of many university students and with the Covid-19 pandemic, declared in 2020, by the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, this reality seems to have worsened (NOVA; LIRIO, 2021). Such demands may exacerbate existing mental health problems or may increase the likelihood of them occurring (CASTRO, 2017).

Along these lines, this illness often begins with the appearance of symptoms of Common Mental Disorders - CMDs , also known as minor psychiatric disorders, characterized by insomnia, forgetfulness, decreased concentration, difficulty in making decisions, irritability, fatigue, feeling of uselessness and somatic complaints (headache, lack of appetite, tremors, poor digestion, among others) that designate situations of mental suffering, which due to their high prevalence are considered one of the biggest public health problems in the world (MURCHO; PACHECO; JESUS, 2016).

In this way, the concept of Common Mental Disorders was developed by Goldberg and Huxley (1992) and refers to a set of symptoms that include, in addition to non-psychotic depression, anxiety and non-specific symptoms (JANSEN et al., 2011) that generate situations of mental suffering, but which are often not covered by the classification criteria of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - DSM IV and the International Classification of Diseases - ICD10.

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CMDs are frequently located in various populations and their presence generates repercussions in productive sectors, absenteeism, increased state spending, and may result in increased demand for health services (FONSECA; GUIMARÃES; VASCONCELOS, 2008).

According to the literature review carried out by Graner and Cerqueira (2019), surveys carried out with university students estimate that between 18.5% and 44.9% of students present indicative of CMDs. This variation in results can be explained, among other factors, by the different instruments used in the surveys, by the clippings used, such as courses, for example, as well as by the cultural and socioeconomic differences of the Universities studied and their students (BARROS, 2021).

In the United States of America, the prevalence of CMDs in universities is 35% (NUS, 2015; AUCCCD, 2011;2012; BLANCO *et al.*, 2008). Among Canadian students, an index of 30% was found (ACHA, 2016; BAYRAM; BILGEL, 2008), while among Mexican university students, an index of 39.32% was found (BENJET *et al.*, 2019; BLANCO *et al.*, 2008). In Finland, the index ranged from 6% to 29% (NIEMI, 1988; SCHAUFELI *et al.*, 2002).

According to Caixeta (2011), in Brazil, in addition to the lack of epidemiological studies on CMDs in the university student population, there is a lack of methodological and statistical rigor. In general, the main focus of national studies is on the investigation of rates of use of mental health services offered by higher education institutions (CERCHIARI; CAETANO; FACCENDA, 2005).

In Brazil, in state public universities, the prevalence of CMDs varied between 25% (CERCHIARI; CAETANO; FACCENDA, 2005) and 58% (NEVES; DALGALARRONDO, 2007). In private higher education institutions, the rate was 72.2% (OLIVEIRA; ALMEIDA, 2020). Among the federal institutions of higher education, the Research of the Socioeconomic Profile of Students of Federal Universities, released in 2019, by the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education - ANDIFES, stands out. The study reports that psychic suffering affects 83.5% of students at federal universities and demonstrates that anxiety affects 60% of students, while the idea of death accompanies 10.8% of them, and suicidal thoughts, 8.5% (ANDIFES, 2019).

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Therefore, many scholars discuss the role of 04 (four) dimensions, or more, that place illness in mental health from the perspectives: Private/Individual; Collective; Socio-conjunctural and Academic /Institutional, and psychosocial, economic, institutional, environmental and demographic factors in the onset and course of mental disorders among university students (LEÃO, 2018; ARIÑO; BARDAGI, 2018; LIMA; DOMINGUES; CERQUEIRA., 2006; SANTOS *et al.,* 2017; STEPTOE; TSUDA; TANAKA, 2007).

Some of the economic, social and environmental factors that impact mental health are: financial conditions; exposure to unhealthy environments; gender issues; educational level; reduction of skilled labor; unemployment; homelessness or in precarious conditions; premature death; education; hunger; poverty; urbanization; sexual discrimination and gender violence; early adverse experiences; social exclusion and cultural stigma; abuse and neglect, among others. In the biological and psychological aspect, mention is made of growth and development; transition to adulthood; self esteem; social cohesion; unrealistic standards; association with other diseases; substance abuse, among others (AZEVEDO, 2018; TAVARES et al., 2011).

In view of the above, in view of the gaps left by previous studies, and recognizing the need for a better understanding of the relationships between Common Mental Disorders in the population of university students and the factors related to them, this research aims to estimate the prevalence of suspicion of Common Mental Disorders in undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador - BA, in the year 2021, and to identify the factors associated with CMDs in the aforementioned population.

Metodology

This is an exploratory analytical cross-sectional study with a quantitative approach (EYSENBACH, 2004; LAKATOS; MARCONI, 2010). Therefore, this study was carried out from March 17, 2021 to December 31, 2021, to characterize the population of undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of

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Bahia, located in Salvador, in terms of socioeconomic, demographic and social aspects. of the teaching-learning process, and estimate the prevalence of suspected Common Mental Disorders among such a sample.

In addition, it should be noted that the present study had the following inclusion criteria: undergraduate university students, aged 18 years or older, with active and regular enrollments in the 108 on-site courses, male and female, of all semesters, morning, afternoon, evening and full-time shifts in the period 2019-2020.

The information was obtained according to the Pro-Rectories of Graduation Teaching, Planning and Budget, as well as by the Coordination of Selection and Orientation of the Federal University of Bahia. In this study, postgraduate students, students located on the *campuses* of Vitória da Conquista and Camaçari and university students under 18 years of age were considered as exclusion criteria, as they considered ethical issues involved in research with minors.

The sample calculation took into account the homogeneity of the expected outcome, in this case Common Mental Disorders in university students. According to Agranonik and Hirakata (2011) the calculation of the size of a sample depends on four factors: estimated prevalence for the outcome of interest; level of confidence in the results; maximum estimation error; and the size of the population. Therefore, the sample was calculated using a prevalence of 25% as a parameter, with an estimated precision of 5%, confidence intervals of 95%, a fact that corroborates other population-based studies with university students (CERCHIARI; CAETANO; FACCENDA, 2005).

The statistical power used for the calculation corresponds to 80% (Power = 80%) and the sample is characterized by being of convenience given that the individuals were easily accessible and available (MAROCO; BISPO, 2003; HILL; HILL, 2002). Thus, the results can not be extrapolated with confidence to the universe of the population, since the probability of any element belonging to the sample is not equal to the probability of the remaining elements (MAROCO, 2007).

Thus, based on the quantitative population of active and regular undergraduate students (N = 40,727), based on the period 2019-2020 and obtained, according to the Provosts for Undergraduate Education and, Planning and Budget,

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as well as and by the IES Selection and Guidance Coordination, the final sample calculation totaled 287 students. Taking into account possible losses in the study, 10% more of the sample was considered. Therefore, the expectation of a final sample of N = 316 individuals was totaled.

This ratio was calculated in the free and open source statistical program known as OpenEpi. It can run from a web server or be downloaded and run without a web connection. No server required. Such a program, developed for calculations statistics, provides data for cases and measures in descriptive and analytical studies, stratified analyzes with exact confidence limits, paired and person-time analyses, sample size and power calculations, numbers random tests, sensitivity, specificity and other analyzes statistics, L x C tables and chi -square for dose-response (DEAN; SULLIVAN; SOE, 2021).

The dynamics of the investigation process, applied remotely, consisted of the application of the respective validated and self-administered questionnaires in the virtual environment of SiacWeb and Google Forms: Questionnaire of Socioeconomic-Demographic Data and of the Teaching-Learning Process (CERCHIARI, 2004; DALBOSCO, 2018) and *Self - Reporting Questionnare* - SRQ-20 (GOLDBERG; HUXLEY, 1992).

Due to the outbreak of the new coronavirus pandemic (SARS-CoV-2) in Brazil in mid-2020, and during the health crisis, all the procedures of this research were developed using information technology tools in the virtual environment. The survey was applied remotely using Google Forms and published on the SiacWeb digital platform of the Federal University of Bahia. The use of these virtual environments boosted data collection and represented an economic possibility by dispensing with the printing of questionnaires and the displacement of researchers. In addition, according to Faleiros *et al.* (2016) internet surveys provide greater practicality and convenience to study participants, which may result in an improvement in the number of responses obtained.

SiacWeb is a service whose target audience is system managers and active undergraduate university students at the Federal University of Bahia. This service meets requests for enrollment, school transcripts, course curriculum, performance

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coefficient, proof of enrollment and course syllabus. In possession of a *login* and password, the student registers *online each semester* and has access to other system resources (STI, 2021).

Google Forms is a free digital tool for managing surveys and forms launched by Google (DIAS *et al.*, 2021) in which it was used to obtain data from each participant *online* by providing validated questionnaires and self applicable in virtual environment. Along with Google Forms, the Informed Consent Form was made available, a document of greater importance regarding the ethical aspect of a research project, its use is what guarantees the rights of the study participants. Thus, this term was used to explain to the participants the whole process they went through when they accepted to answer the questionnaires.

Therefore, the study took place in four stages: (1) sensitization process with course coordinators, employees, students and teachers, with the aim of presenting the research topic and reporting its importance; (2) presentation and signature of the Free and Informed Consent Term; (3) application of the Socio-economic-demographic and Teaching-Learning Process Data Questionnaire (CERCHIARI, 2004; DALBOSCO, 2018) and (4) application of *Self - Reporting Questionnare* - SRQ-20, instrument recognized by the World Health Organization in 1994.

The Socio-economic-demographic and Teaching-Learning Process Data Questionnaire - QSD is an instrument with the aim of providing registration and characterizing the population and evaluation of the teaching-learning process. It aims to obtain information related to personal and professional issues, extracurricular activities, institutional, social, economic and demographic aspects of academics, such as: gender, age group, marital status, origin, type of housing, family income, travel time and remunerated activity, and some characteristics of the teaching-learning process: year of admission to the university, course, period, grade and choice of course (CERCHIARI, 2004).

To identify the suspicion of Common Mental Disorders, the *Self Report was used. question* - SRQ-20 designed by Harding *et al.* (1980). The SRQ-20 was validated in Brazil for the screening of non-psychotic mental disorders. The answers are of the

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"yes/no" type and each positive answer is equivalent to one point. For the presence of CMDs to be characterized, it is necessary for the subject to reach a score equal to or greater than 7 positive points, regardless of gender (WHO, 1994; MARI; WILLIAMS, 1986; GONÇALVES; STEIN; KAPCZINSKI, 2008).

affirmative answers is considered as a cutoff point, considering the minimum score of 0, which corresponds to the absence of indications of Common Mental Disorders, and the maximum of 20 points, which corresponds to high indicatives of CMDs (OMS, 1994; GONÇALVES; STEIN; KAPCZINSKI, 2008).   This instrument is recommended by the World Health Organization for collective studies because it presents criteria such as ease of application and low cost (OMS, 1994; GONÇALVES; STEIN; KAPEZINSKI, 2008).

Initially, after the end of the collection period, the data typing, organization and coding procedure was performed using the Microsoft Excel® 2019 program, in which the duplicity of responses and exclusion of responses that did not meet the requirements were also verified. to the research inclusion criteria. After that, the data were compiled in the *software Statistical Package for Social Sciences - SPSS*, in its version 20.0, for the Windows operating system and the analyzes were performed in the same program.

Then, from the questions of the instrument used, SRQ-20, a CMDs variable was created in SPSS from the total score of each individual, in which the subjects were classified as "With CMDs" and "Without CMDs", according to with the cut-off points previously specified. Subsequently, a descriptive statistical analysis of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of undergraduate university students and the conditions of infrastructure, interpersonal relationships and the teaching-learning process at the University was carried out.

In addition, through exploratory analysis, the measure of central tendency (mean, median and mode) and the measures of dispersion (standard deviation) of the quantitative variables were estimated, as well as the absolute and relative frequencies of the qualitative variables. The SRQ-20 dichotomous score, here assumed as a quantitative approximation of the state of mental health through Common Mental Disorders, constitutes the dependent variable of the present analysis.

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The Prevalence Ratios of the outcome variable, exposure variable and the respective 95% confidence intervals were also calculated. The independent sample *t* test for difference between means, Pearson's chi -square test and Fisher's exact test were applied, considering a significance level of 5% ($p \leq 0.05$) for a statistically significant association (PEARSON, 1900; FISHER, 1935).

Data normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov -Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was evaluated using the Levene test (FIELD, 2009). *Bootstrapping* procedures were performed (1000 re-samplings; 95% CI BCa) to obtain greater reliability of the results, to correct deviations from normality in the sample distribution and differences between the sizes of the groups, and also to present a 95% confidence interval for the differences between the averages (HAUKOOS; LEWIS, 2005) .

This study was submitted to the Plataforma Brasil, in which the ethical aspects of the research were analyzed, with the approval of the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Psychology (CEP-IPS) of the Federal University of Bahia under the registration number of the Certificate of Presentation for Ethics Appreciation: 42414621.5.0000.5686.

All participants completed the Informed Consent Form and received a copy of it via e-mail. It should be noted that the data collection for this research only started after the CEP-IPS's consolidated opinion. This study also complies with the ethical principles of research set out in Resolutions nº 466, of December 12, 2012, and 510, of April 7, 2016, and Operational Norm nº 001/2013, by the National Health Council (CNS), and of the Ministry of Health, which regulates research on human beings in Brazil and Law No. 13,709 , of August 14, 2018, which deals with the protection of personal data in virtual media (BRASIL, 2018), since data collection was carried out with the aid of information and communication technologies.

Results

The socioeconomic and demographic profile of undergraduate university students investigated in this research demonstrates the predominance of students who identify with the female gender (72.1%), with 42.0% self-declaring themselves to

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be brown/brown race, the average being aged 24.06 years (minimum 18 and maximum 62 years; SD = 6.566). It should be noted that 96.1% of the participants indicated that they were not a person with a disability and/or had a special condition. Below, in Table 1, the respective frequencies of the socioeconomic and demographic aspects of undergraduate university students obtained through the QSD instrument are presented.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of the characterization of the socioeconomic and demographic aspects of undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, in the year 2021.

VARIABLE	N (509)	%
Gender		
Feminine	367	72,1%
Male	142	27,9%
Age Group		
Youth (18 to 24 years old)	346	68,0%
Adulthood (25 to 59 years old)	161	31,6%
Elderly (> 60 years old)	02	0,4%
Color/Race*		
Brown	214	42,0%
Black	148	29,1%
White	138	27,1%
Indigenous	03	0,6%
Yellow	06	1,2%
Current Marital Status		
Single	469	92,1%
Married	40	7,9%
Current Location**		
Salvador	331	65,0%
Metropolitan Region of Salvador	178	35,0%
Person with Disability/Special Condition		
Yes	20	3,9%
No	489	96,1%
Performs paid activity		
Yes	175	34,4%
No	334	65,6%
Total Monthly Income**		
Less than 1 Minimum Wage	291	57,2%
From 1 to 3 Minimum Salaries	130	25,5%
From 3 to 5 Minimum Salaries	47	9,2%
Above 5 Minimum Wage	41	8,1%
With whom you reside		
With the family	446	87,6%
Alone	39	7,7%
With friends	24	4,7%

Grades: * The color/race classification system structured into five categories (white, black, brown, yellow and indigenous) used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2013) in its household surveys for the racial identification of people was considered, which is replicated in the administrative records of the Union. ****The Metropolitan Region of Salvador comprises the municipalities of: Camaçari, Candeias, Dias d'Ávila, Itaparica, Lauro de Freitas, Madre de Deus, Mata de São João, Pojuca, Salvador, São Francisco do Conde, São Sebastião do Passé, Simões Filho and Vera Cruz. ***** We considered the value of the minimum wage for 2021, in the amount of R$ 1,100, made official through Provisional Measure n° 1,091/2021 and signed by the Presidency of the Republic (BRASIL, 2021). **Source:** Prepared by the author of the study based on applied research (2022).

Table 2 presents the sample characteristics and the respective descriptive statistics regarding the infrastructure conditions at the University, interpersonal relationships and the teaching-learning process. It is observed that, among the

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courses, academics belonging to the areas of Biological Sciences and Health Professions stood out with a significant participation of 42.0% in this research. In addition, 22.4% of students reported having entered the University in 2020, 30.6% are studying the 1st semester and 36.7% indicated that their course shift corresponds to the morning period.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the conditions of infrastructure, interpersonal relationships and the teaching-learning process of undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, in the year 2021.

VARIÁVEL	N (509)	%
Course*		
Area I - Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Technologies	79	15,5%
Area II - Biological Sciences and Health Professions	214	42,0%
Area III - Philosophy and Human Sciences	124	24,4%
Area IV - Letters	18	3,5%
Area V - Arts	13	2,6%
Area VI - Interdisciplinary Bachelor's Degree	60	11,8%
Area VII - Superior Course in Technology	01	0,2%
Year of Entry		
Before 2015	27	5,3%
2015	19	3,7%
2016	32	6,3%
2017	54	10,6%
2018	75	14,7%
2019	95	18,7%
2020	114	22,4%
2021	93	18,3%
Current Semester		
1st Semester	156	30,6%
2nd Semester	64	12,6%
3rd Semester	72	14,1%
4th Semester	43	8,4%
5th Semester	48	9,4%
6th Semester	28	5,5%
7th Semester	36	7,1%
8th Semester	21	4,1%
9th Semester	17	3,3%
10th Semester	24	4,7%
Shift		
Morning	187	36,7%
Evening	63	12,4%
Nocturnal	78	15,3%
Full	181	35,6%
University as the first option		
Yes	444	87,2%
No	65	12,8%
Course as the first option		
Yes	299	58,7%
No	210	41,3%
First time in higher education		
Yes	368	72,3%
No	141	27,7%
Current Condition		
Only study	351	69,0%
Study and work	158	31,0%
Has any family member attended higher education		
Yes	161	31,6%
No	348	68,4%
Travel time from home to the University		
Less than 15 minutes	76	14,9%
15-30 minutes	101	19,8%
31-45 minutes	100	19,6%
46-60 minutes	121	23,8%
More than 60 minutes	111	21,8%

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Chose the course based on

Be the desired	389	76,4%
Lack of alternative	50	9,8%
Influence of friends, family and/or acquaintances	32	6,3%
Remuneration and prestige	38	7,5%

Access to the University

ENEM - SISU	498	97,8%
External Transfer	08	1,6%
Special Student	03	0,6%

University entrance category

Racial quotas	127	25,0%
Social Quotas	114	22,4%
Wide Competition	268	52,7%

Perception of the experience at the University

Excellent	76	14,9%
Good	242	47,5%
Regular	154	30,3%
Bad	28	5,5%
terrible	09	1,8%

Difficulties faced at the University

Excess of Course Subjects	69	13,6%
Assessment Activities Schedule	116	22,8%
Reconcile Double Day	123	24,2%
Methodology and Relationship with Professors	94	18,5%
Difficulty Adapting to the Institution	107	21,0%

Predictors of suffering at the University

Evaluative Activities	122	24,0%
Completion of course work	44	8,6%
Daily Displacement between Home - University	38	7,5%
Double shift	98	19,3%
Interpersonal Demands	127	25,0%
Physical Structure of the University	17	3,3%
Bureaucracy of Administrative Sectors	21	4,1%
Seminar Evaluative Activity	42	8,3%

The University is an environment that causes pressure

Yes	484	95,1%
No	25	4,9%

Personal issues can interfere with performance

Yes	509	100,0%
No	0,0	0,0%

Support from the University in the face of adversity

Yes	163	32,0%
No	346	68,0%

Discomfort and Evaluative Schedule**

Yes	481	94,5%
No	28	5,5%

Considers the University a welcoming environment

Yes	221	43,4%
No	288	56,6%

Note: * The courses belonging to Area I - Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Technologies are: Architecture and Urbanism, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Surveying and Cartographic Engineering, Control and Automation Engineering, Mining Engineering, Production Engineering, Engineering Electrical, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Sanitary and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science, Statistics, Physics, Geophysics, Geography, Geology, Degree in Computing, Mathematics, Oceanography, Chemistry (Bachelor's Degree and Industrial Chemistry) and Information Systems. The courses belonging to Area II - Biological Sciences and Health Professions are: Biotechnology, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Medicine, Nutrition, Dentistry, Collective Health, Biological Sciences, Pharmacy, Gastronomy, Degree in Natural Sciences, Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science. The courses belonging to Area III - Philosophy and Human Sciences are: Administration, Archivology, Archivology, Librarianship and Documentation, Law, Degree in Physical Education, Pedagogy, Executive Secretariat, Accounting Sciences, Economic Sciences, Social Sciences (Lic. and Bach.), Philosophy, History, Museology, Psychology - Psychologist Training, Social Work, Communication - Journalism, Communication - Production in Communication and Culture, Gender and Diversity Studies. The courses belonging to Area IV - Letters are: Vernacular Letters (Lic. and Bach.), Vernacular Letters and Modern Foreign Language, Foreign Language - English/Spanish (Lic.) and Modern or Classic Foreign Language (Lic. and Bach.). The courses belonging to Area V - Arts are: Performing Arts - Theatrical Direction, Performing Arts - Theatrical Interpretation, Plastic Arts, Singing, Composition and Conducting, Higher Course in Decoration, Design, Instrument, Degree in Drawing and Plastics, Degree in Music, Degree in Theatre, Popular Music and Dance. The courses belonging to Area VI - Interdisciplinary Bachelor's Degree are: Arts, Science and Technology, Humanities, Health, Interdisciplinary Bachelor's Degree in Science, Technology and Innovation. The courses belonging to Area VII - Superior Course in Technology are: Public Management and Social Management, and Technology in Land Transport. ****Generalized manifestations of malaise and discomfort and/or body discomfort were considered:

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nausea, headache, tremors, vertigo, arrhythmia and cold sweating. **Source:** Prepared by the author of the study based on applied research (2022).

The SRQ-20 score of the studied sample showed a variation with a minimum of zero and a maximum of twenty (M = 10.5; SD = 4.827), with a confidence interval of (95% CI: 10.08 to 10.92). The prevalence identified for suspected Common Mental Disorders (SRQ-20 score ≥ 7) was 78.6% of the sample.

After such verification, the procedure of comparing the averages in the level of suspicion of CMDs according to the genders was carried out. The results of the independent t-test found that, on average, female participants (M = 0.84; SD = 0.368) had higher indications of suspected Common Mental Disorders compared to male participants (M = 0.65; SD = 0.479) and (t (507) = 4.817; p ≤ 0.05; 95% CI: 0.113 - 0.269). It is observed that this difference is statistically significant considering the value of p ≤ 0.05 and the effect size of the difference was medium (Cohen's d = 0.47).

It is still possible to check, based on the results contained in Table 3, the evaluation of the suspicion of CMDs through the SRQ-20 items, distributed by four groups of symptoms or dimensions. Through the results shown in Table 3, it is identified that among the variables associated with the Depressive-Anxious Mood dimension, it was found that most participants (90.6%) felt nervous, tense or worried/at. For the Somatic Symptoms dimension, most of the sample reported sleeping poorly.

As for the Decreased Vital Energy dimension, the variables getting tired easily and difficulty in making a decision were the most influential components, both indicated by 70.7% of undergraduate university students participating in the research. Regarding the Depressive Thoughts dimension, it is pointed out that 68.8% of the sample indicated that they had lost interest in things.

Table 3: Assessment of suspected Common Mental Disorders (CMDs) among undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, in the year 2021, through the *Self - Reporting items Questionnaire* (SRQ-20), divided into four groups of symptoms, having ≥ 7 affirmative answers as a cutoff point.

VARIABLE	N (509)	%
Depressive-Anxious Mood		
Do you feel nervous, tense or worried?		
Yes	461	90,6%
No	48	9,4%

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Are you easily startled?

Yes	239	47,0%
No	270	53,0%

Feeling sad lately?

Yes	352	69,2%
No	157	30,8%

Do you cry more than usual?

Yes	196	38,5%
No	313	61,5%

Somatic Symptoms

Do you have frequent headaches?

Yes	252	49,5%
No	257	50,5%

Do you sleep badly?

Yes	301	59,1%
No	208	40,9%

Do you experience stomach discomfort?

Yes	237	46,6%
No	272	53,4%

Do you have bad digestion?

Yes	193	37,9%
No	316	62,1%

Do you have a lack of appetite?

Yes	164	32,2%
No	345	67,8%

Do you have hand tremors?

Yes	137	26,9%
No	372	73,1%

Decrease in Vital Energy

Do you get tired easily?

Yes	360	70,7%
No	149	29,3%

Having trouble making a decision?

Yes	360	70,7%
No	149	29,3%

Do you have difficulty finding satisfaction in your tasks?

Yes	348	68,4%
No	161	31,6%

Does your work bring suffering?

Yes	133	26,1%
No	376	73,9%

Do you feel tired all the time?

Yes	343	67,4%
No	166	32,6%

Having trouble thinking clearly?

Yes	302	59,3%
No	207	40,7%

Depressive Thoughts

Do you feel unable to play a useful role in your life?

Yes	262	51,5%
No	247	48,5%

Have you lost interest in things?

Yes	350	68,8%
No	159	31,2%

Have you thought about ending your life?

Yes	92	18,1%
No	417	81,9%

Do you feel useless in your life?

Yes	261	51,3%
No	248	48,7%

Note: Cutoff assigned consonant with the World Health Organization (1994), following Mari; Williams (1986) and Gonçalves; Stein; Kapczinski (2008). **Source:** Prepared by the author of the study based on applied research (2022).

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Chi-square Independence Test, statistically significant associations were observed (p-value ≤ 0.05 admitted) between the respective variables when related to suspicion for Common Mental Disorders and arranged in Table 4: Gender (χ^2 (1) = 22.276; p = 0.00), Color/Race (χ^2 (1) = 5.273; p = 0.02), Marital Status (χ^2 (1) = 6.675; p = 0.01), University support in the face of adversity (χ^2 (1) = 10.653; p = 0.00) and Considers the University a welcoming environment (χ^2 (1) = 22.323; p = 0.00).

Table 4: Description and distribution of the studied sample according to the multivariate analysis of the association between socioeconomic, demographic and academic factors and Common Mental Disorders among undergraduate university students on the *campuses* of the Federal University of Bahia located in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, in the year from 2021.

VARIABLE	CMDs		TOTAL n (509)	CR	CI (95%)	p
	YES n (%)	NO n (%)				
Gender						
Feminine	**308 (83,9%)**	**59 (16,1%)**	**367**	0,352	0,226 – 0,549	0,00
Male	92 (64,8%)	50 (35,2%)	142			
Age Range (years)						
Less than or equal to 24 years old	275 (79,5%)	71 (20,5%)	346	0,849	0,543 – 1,328	0,47
Greater than 24 years	125 (76,7%)	38 (23,3%)	163			
Color/Race*						
Whites	99 (71,7%)	39 (28,3%)	138			0,02
Not White	**301 (81,1%)**	**70 (18,9%)**	**371**	1,694	1,077 – 2,664	
Marital status						
Single	**375 (80,0%)**	**94 (20,0%)**	**469**	0,418	0,212 – 0,824	0,01
Married	25 (62,5%)	15 (37,5%)	40			
Current Location**						
Salvador	262 (79,2%)	69 (20,8%)	331	0,909	0,585 – 1,412	0,67
Metropolitan Region of Salvador	138 (77,5%)	40 (22,5%)	178			
Performs paid activity						
Yes	137 (78,3%)	38 (21,7%)	175	1,027	0,659 – 1,603	0,90
No	263 (78,7%)	71 (21,3%)	334			
Total Monthly Income***						
Less than or equal to 1 Minimum Wage	233 (80,1%)	58 (19,9%)	291	0,815	0,533 – 1,247	0,34
Greater than 1 Minimum Wage	167 (76,6%)	51 (23,4%)	218			
With whom you reside						
With family/ With friends	372 (79,1%)	98 (20,9%)	470	0,671	0,322 – 1,394	0,28
Alone	28 (71,8%)	11 (28,2%)	39			

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IES admission category						
Shareholders	188 (78,0%)	53 (22,0%)	241	1,067	0,699 – 1,631	0,76
Non-Quotaholders	212 (79,1%)	56 (20,9%)	268			
First time in higher education						
Yes	289 (78,5%)	79 (21,5%)	368	1,011	0,630 – 1,625	0,96
No	111 (78,7%)	30 (21,3%)	141			
Current condition						
Study	279 (79,5%)	72 (20,5%)	351	0,844	0,538 – 1,324	0,46
Study and Work	121 (76,6%)	37 (23,4%)	158			
The University is an environment that causes pressure						
Yes	384 (79,3%)	100 (20,7%)	484	0,463	0,199 – 1,079	0,06
No	16 (64,0%)	9 (36,0%)	25			
Support from the University in the face of adversity						
Yes	114 (69,9%)	49 (30,1%)	163			**0,00**
No	**286 (82,7%)**	**60 (17,3%)**	**346**	**2,049**	**1,326 – 3,167**	
Discomfort and Evaluative Schedule						
Yes	381 (79,2%)	100 (20,8%)	481	0,554	0,243 – 1,262	0,15
No	19 (67,9%)	9 (32,1%)	28			
Considers the University a welcoming environment						
Yes	152 (68,8%)	69 (31,2%)	221			**0,00**
No	**248 (86,1%)**	**40 (13,9%)**	**288**	**2,814**	**1,815 – 4,364**	

Note: *The four categories of color/race (black, brown, yellow and indigenous) were considered as non-white, according to the color/race classification system used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2013) in its household surveys for the racial identification of people, which is replicated in the Union's administrative records. **The Metropolitan Region of Salvador comprises the municipalities of: Camaçari, Candeias, Dias d'Ávila, Itaparica, Lauro de Freitas, Madre de Deus, Mata de São João, Pojuca, Salvador, São Francisco do Conde, São Sebastião do Passé, Simões Filho and Vera Cruz. *** We considered the value of the minimum wage for 2021, in the amount of R$ 1,100, made official through Provisional Measure n° 1,091/2021 and signed by the Presidency of the Republic (BRASIL, 2021). **Source:** Prepared by the author of the study based on applied research (2022).

Discussion

In this research, in line with the data obtained through the Socioeconomic, Demographic and Teaching-Learning Conditions Questionnaire - QSD, the predominance of participation of students who identify with the female gender (72.1%), while the percentage of students who declared themselves to be male was 27.9%. Such a difference is also found in similar results of studies regarding the distribution and relationship of genders in higher education institutions (PORTA-NOVA, 2009; SCHLEICH, 2006; BARRETO, 2015; MELO, 2018).

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Even with the obstacles on the path towards equal opportunities, whether during schooling, at higher levels or in the labor market, women are predominant in various areas of Brazilian education (INEP, 2021). This phenomenon has occurred in Brazil and in several countries where female participation is increasing in Higher Education Institutions as a result of cultural and socioeconomic changes (IBGE, 2021; PNAD, 2021).

However, according to Kalsing (2021) it is necessary to contextualize the country historically, and analyze issues of gender, race and class to understand the results, which demonstrate that this growth in opportunities and access does not include black women.

> Women are entering the University in greater numbers than men, but not black women, it is necessary to make this caveat, white women are entering in greater numbers. And when we take the number of professors, the numbers are much lower in relation to men, so inclusion policies - such as quotas - are extremely necessary (KALSING, 2021).

Moreover, in this research, according to the significance level of 5% ($p \leq 0.05$) of Pearson's Chi-square Independence Test for the statistically significant association, it was observed that the socioeconomic and demographic variables Gender ($p = 0.00$), Color/Race ($p = 0.02$) and Marital Status ($p = 0.01$) correlate with Common Mental Disorders. Regarding Gender, the prevalence of CMDs was significantly higher in females. As for Color/Race, there was a significant increase in the prevalence of CMDs in the category of non-white people. When analyzing the results obtained in relation to Marital Status, a higher prevalence of the disorders studied was found in the category that takes single people as a reference.

Such results present statistically significant associations and corroborated by results of national studies carried out by Benvegnú, Deitos and Copette (1996), and confirming a similar study by Giglio (1976), as well as population studies in Brazil (AGUIAR, 1988; ALMEIDA-FILHO *et al.*, 1983; SANTANA, 1982) and abroad (DOHRENWEND *et al.*, 1980; LENNON, 1987; PAYKEL, 1991; ROSENFIELD, 1989; cited by ALMEIDA-FILHO *et al.*, 1992).

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Taking these findings into account, the main focus of our discussion will be on issues of Gender and Color/Race, since there is no consensus in the literature regarding the association of CMDs and Marital Status. However, this work offers new knowledge, that is, a lower prevalence of CMDs among married individuals in this population.

In this way, inquiries about this finding can be made taking into account the hypothesis of social determination, assuming that married individuals have greater family and/or social support (*buffer against*) to moderate the prediction relationship with problems of mental health (stress, depression and anxiety). However, it is important to make the reservation corresponding to the possibility of reverse causality (individuals with CMDs may have a lower chance of getting married), whose characteristics of this study (cross-sectional study) prevent the analysis (COSTA; LUDERMIR, 2005; COUTINHO; ALMEIDA-FILHO; MARI, 1999; JENKINS *et al.,* 1997; MARAGNO *et al.,* 2006).

However, as a curiosity, Marital Status had already been associated with mental health status during the pandemic period. Li *et al.* (2020), found that, among medical staff in Ningbo, China, the chance of insomnia was related to Marital Status, being lower in married individuals (OR = 0.57, p = 0.046, 95% CI: 0.33–0.99) (LI *et al.,* 2020). In addition, another study observed that the severity of psychiatric symptoms among health workers was significantly associated with Marital Status, as divorced, separated or widowed professionals had a greater chance of depression than single ones (TAN *et al.,* 2020).

That said, like other studies that made gender comparisons in relation to Common Mental Disorders, this one also found a significant difference (p = 0.00) from the comparison of means between female and male genders (AGUIAR *et al.,* 2009; ANDRADE; VALIM-ROGATTO; ROGATTO, 2011; BAYRAM; BILGEL, 2008; FURTADO; FALCONE; CYNTHIA, 2003; MARTY et al., 2005).

The higher prevalence of CMDs among women can be attributed to gender dynamics in power relations, which can result in oppression for females (PATEL *et al.,* 1999). Furthermore, according to Araújo, Pinho and Almeida (2005) and Martin, Quirino and Mari (2007), women experience higher rates of mood disorders and anxiety disorders than men, which is associated with variables related to living

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conditions, sociodemographic characteristics and occupational structure. In addition, it is found in the literature referenced in several studies that women are more predisposed than men to develop CMDs (LIMA; BRITO, 2018; MIRANDA; TARASCONI; SCORTEGAGNA, 2008; ROCHA et al., 2010; PINHO; ARAÚJO, 2012).

For Constantinidis and Matsukura (2021), a greater contextualization and deepening of female issues is needed, with gender issues and their meanings in mental health and life paths, including occupational roles, since male students have a lower risk of suffering psychic according to Bonsaksen, Eirum and Donohue (2015). Furthermore, according to Cunha and Carrillo (2005) and Cunha (2004), the authors found that women are more likely to develop signs of anxiety and depression and experience greater psychological distress than male students. These have higher levels of psychological well-being, as well as physical and emotional well-being, as well as a better adaptive factor.

In view of the above, the prevalence of CMDs was observed more frequently in female students (83.9%) and who declared themselves to belong to the Non-White Color/Race category (81.1%) (black, brown, yellow and indigenous). It should be noted that a literature review study suggested that the prevalence of mental disorders is higher in the non-white population than in the white population, although there is no consensus (SMOLEN; ARAÚJO, 2017). However, there is no biological basis for the association between Color/Race and mental health (COOPER; DAVIS, 1986; GOODMAN, 2000). Araújo's, Pinho and Almeida research (2005), mentioned earlier, revealed a greater presence of CMDs in women with black or brown skin color.

In fact, studies have suggested that frequent exposure to certain types of discrimination has negative repercussions on the mental health of non-white individuals. Racist experiences, for example, are related to substance abuse (CLARK et al., 2015), low self-esteem (MOLINA; JAMES, 2016), mental disorders (PARADIES *et al.,* 2015) and depressive symptoms in general (SHULZ et al., 2006). Additionally, studies have also pointed out the effects of racism on mental health and, consequently, on physical health, indicating high correlations with stress and depression, and with the decline in physical health, with a higher prevalence of cardiovascular diseases and obesity (DAVIS; STEVENSON, 2006; LAMBERT *et al.,* 2009).

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When dealing specifically with the implications of the intersection between racial and gender identities, some studies have pointed out that this may work both as a risk factor, by increasing the perception of discrimination experiences, and as a protective factor, cushioning the negative impacts of discrimination in mental health (NEBLETT; UMAÑA-TAYLOR, 2012; SELLERS et al., 2003). The Brazilian researcher Akotirene (2018, p.1) has focused on the intersection, and explains:

> Intersectionality is a theoretical and methodological tool used to think about the structural inseparability of racism, capitalism and cisheteropatriarchy, and the articulations arising therefrom, which overlapping repeatedly make black women more exposed and vulnerable to the transits of these structures.

In short, this information will show strong traces of the consequences of social inequalities circumscribed in the racist and sexist structures of higher education institutions, reinforcing the need for investment in admission policies - such as the quota policy established by Law n° 12.711/2012 - access to funding programs such as the University for All Program - Prouni , and the Student Financing Program – Fies (BRASIL, 2012), and the development of public notices and services that mobilize the fields of assistance and student permanence at the HEI in mitigating the effects of the phenomenon of vulnerability social in university students.

This phenomenon, in turn, according to Scott *et al.* (2018), refers to a set of precariousness and exclusion processes produced in contemporary times through social relations and which is characterized by its multidimensionality that exposes groups and people as unfavorable when compared to other parts of the population. This picture is aggravated when a large number of stressful events are perceived daily in individual or social contexts, as is the case of microaggressions (MATA; PELISOLI, 2016) - verbal or behavioral insults, intentional or not, that communicate hostile, derogatory racial offenses or negative to a person or a target group (SUE *et al.,* 2007).

That said, this present study made it possible to jointly identify, through the SRQ-20 and to consider seven or more positive responses as a cutoff score, regardless of gender, the prevalence of Common Mental Disorders among undergraduate university students at a federal educational institution. of Bahia, in the year 2021, which was extremely high (78.6%) when compared to the rates found in

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other studies in the Brazilian university population (OLIVEIRA *et al.,* 2020; BELLINATI; CAMPOS, 2020; GRETHER et al., 2019). According to Graner and Cerqueira (2019), the prevalence of this phenomenon varies according to the population studied, the context and the methods used in the research.

It should be noted that this high rate is included within the context of the current health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, caused by the new SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. According to Leão, Goto and Ianni (2021) the finding that the Covid-19 pandemic and social isolation/distancing measures generate suffering is intuitive, and studies have been confirming this.

Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has had devastating effects and many of them are expected to be long term. According to the Pan American Health Organization - PAHO, through the High Level Commission on Mental Health and Covid-19, it appears that the incidence of disorders such as depression and anxiety has jumped throughout the health crisis, overloading public systems. already deficient health. A PAHO analysis condenses data from the situation in the Americas: one third of the population infected with Covid-19 has been diagnosed with some mental disorder (PAHO, 2022).

In this sense, it is pointed out that during the Covid-19 pandemic, symptoms such as anxiety, stress, depression, loneliness and fear were present in the population of university students (MAIA; DIAS, 2020; TALEVI *et al.,* 2020; KAPAROUNAKI *et al .,* 2020; CHANG; YUAN; WANG, 2020; ZHAI; DU, 2020a; SAHU *et al.,* 2020; SON *et al.,* 2020; ZHANG *et al.,* 2020; HUCKINS *et al.,* 2020; ODRIOZOLA-GONZÁLEZ *et al.,* 2020; ELMER; MEPHAM; STADTFELD, 2020; ZHAI; DU, 2020a) and that this population was more vulnerable to such symptoms (MARIM et al., 2021; XIAO *et al.,* 2020). Symptoms that, even when present in previous research, have been accentuated since the beginning of the health crisis (ELMER; MEPHAM; STADIFELD, 2020).

Thus, when comparing the prevalence of Common Mental Disorders among university students with that of the general population, using the same screening instrument (SRQ-20), the university population gains great prominence, since the rates in the general population range from 17% to 35% (SANTOS, 2019; ALCANTARA; ASSUNÇÃO, 2016; PAZ DE LIMA, 2015), while, among undergraduate university students, some studies even present rates above 50% (OLIVEIRA *et al .,* 2020; BELLINATI; CAMPOS, 2020; GRETHER et al., 2019; ANDIFES, 2019).

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The high rate of suspected prevalence of Common Mental Disorders found in the present research (78.6%) is also well above those found in Brazilian population studies, which vary between 8% and 56% (ALMEIDA-FILHO *et al.,* 1992; COUTINHO, 1976; SANTANA, 1978; SANTOS; SIQUEIRA, 2010). And also that mentioned in other studies with university students (BENVEGNÚ; DEITOS; COPETTE, 1996; FACUNDES, 2002; FACUNDES; LUDERMIR, 2005; GIGLIO, 1976; RIMMER; HALIKAS; SCHUCKIT, 1982) which found from 31% to 39%.

However, the prevalence of suspected cases for CMDs observed in the present research is lower than the 83.5% found in students of federal institutions of higher education through the survey of the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education carried out in 2019. with Barros (2021), this variation in results can be explained, among other factors, by the different instruments used in the research, by the cuts used, such as courses, for example, as well as by the cultural and socioeconomic differences of the Universities studied and their students.

It is also evident that students with a higher prevalence of CMDs classified as sources of tension the extensive workload, competitiveness, personal demands, social and family pressure, from teachers and professionals in the area, during graduation. The intense demand of the workload and the competition during the education process collaborate to produce stress in university students and can lead to the involvement of CMDs and, consequently, negative interference in social life and physical well-being, thus affecting the academic experience and quality of these students' lives (NUNES, 2018; GRETHER et al., 2019).

Furthermore, in this present study, it appears that 95.1% of individuals denote the University as a space that causes pressure, in which 68.0% feel helpless in the face of the difficulties they experience during their academic trajectory. In addition, in this research, according to the significance level of 5% (p ≤ 0.05) of Pearson 's Chi -square Independence Test for the statistically significant association, it was observed that the variable University support in relation to adversities (p = 0.00) correlated with Common Mental Disorders.

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In this sense, the Covid-19 pandemic also brought greater difficulties in accessing public policies and social assistance for university students. Fiocruz (2020), in one of its booklets produced on mental health and psychosocial care in the Covid-19 pandemic, shows that issues of social lack of protection are highlighted in this period.

Furthermore, studies show that the pandemic and social distancing have led to an increase in symptoms of psychological distress among university students, with anxiety being the most reported (LEÃO; GOTO; IANNI, 2021). All of this ends up influencing, in some way, the field of students' mental health and needs to be observed by the student assistance team in the perspective of promoting actions to prevent injuries and psychosocial care (CERCHIARI; CAETANO; FACCENDA, 2005).

Andrade *et al.* (2016) also argue that the difficulty of accessing "institutional information" of services that HEIs already offer and that do not communicate efficiently, together with the lack of transparency of the institution, which has its information concentrated in an impractical system, makes the opportunities available to students highly dependent on informal contacts for their identification.

Therefore, another crucial point to think about is the university environment, which can be both welcoming and sickening. Colleagues who belittle and often ridicule others, professors who seem not to realize the need to be empathetic most of the time with students who, despite being mentally ill, still need to fulfill tasks such as working, studying, providing for the family, among others (RODRIGUES, 2020). It should be noted, according to Raposo (2018) and Nico (2000), that the promotion of a sense of belonging, supported by the construction of spaces of support and listening, promotes the appreciation of university students, which favors their permanence in life. academic.

In this present study, the results of the QSD indicate that 56.6% of the academics have the perception of the space of the higher education institution as a non-welcoming environment. It should also be noted that this variable Considers the University a welcoming environment (p = 0.00) also correlated statistically significantly, observing the significance level of 5% (p ≤ 0.05) of the Qui Independence

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Test - Pearson square, with Common Mental Disorders. Divaris *et al.* (2013) points out that such a negative perception of the academic environment among students can be associated with psychological distress and a drop in quality of life.

When we talk about welcoming environments, it is important to distinguish between environment and place. In this sense, Kaplan's and Kaplan (1989), Moser (1998) and Günther and Rozestraten (2005), studies are taken as a starting point, which demonstrate how the relationship between human behavior and the environment is intrinsic to the subjects' perceptions, values, beliefs and subjectivities.

According to Kuhnen and Bernardes (2014), exposure to welcoming environments can contribute to well-being and disease prevention, as well as relief from stressors. In this way, bringing university students closer to the welcoming environment promotes an attitude of respect and care for them, being an initiative in incorporating the idea of sustainability.

In summary, the investigation of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics associated with CMDs in undergraduate university students allows risk and protection factors to be identified, providing preventive actions and health promotion. According to Cerchiari, Caetano and Faccenda (2005) and Coutinho *et al.,* (2016), pedagogical policies and projects for access and permanence, combined with a flexible teaching system at HEIs, in which study and work can be reconciled, may have a positive impact on reducing the prevalence of Common Mental Disorders in this population.

In this sense, the results also show the importance of epidemiological studies on mental health in Brazil, both in terms of better understanding their associations with socioeconomic and demographic variables and, thus, guiding the recognition of risk groups, and in terms of investigating what is the best way to handle cases that fall into this category. Thus, according to the statistically significant association of the variables reported in this session with Common Mental Disorders in the studied sample, the results found seem to support the evidence that these are relevant variables for the occurrence of CMDs.

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In addition, it is necessary to agree on the reflection on the construction of an intercultural dialogue that involves discussions on actions to combat gender violence, structural racism and its discrimination in the university context. It is also considered of fundamental importance the development of attitudes and procedures that denaturalize such violence, that break the silencing. In summary, it is recognized that such themes and all their nuances, although necessary and urgent, are most often found outside student training, thus causing direct consequences in the creation of affirmative action policies, student assistance and welcome provided to students.

To this end, in addition to a decolonial epistemology from an Afro -diasporic perspective (FANON, 1968, 2008; KILOMBA, 2019; BERNARDINO-COSTA, MALDONADO-TORRES, GROSFOGUEL, 2019, GOMES, 2017, 2019) and a counter-colonial (SANTOS, 2019) It is also necessary to appropriate the Epistemologies of the South as an instrument of struggle in favor of the empowerment of subaltern social groups in a decolonial perspective.

Conclusions

Based on the results presented and on the discussions held previously, summarizing the propositions made explicit throughout this paper, this work presented the profile of the undergraduate university student at a federal institution of higher education in Bahia, in the year 2021, and the factors associated with the Disorders Common Mental during the academic experience. In addition, it also favored knowledge of the prevalence of CMDs in this population, providing scientific and social feedback through the contribution and impact of the present study for understanding the process of this phenomenon and subsequent creation of coping strategies and promotion of mental health in the university context.

It should be noted that, despite obtaining a sample within the established parameters and achieving all the proposed objectives, the present work presented important limitations regarding its population, since it is a convenience sample. Other limiting factors were: the beginning and end of the IES semester during the

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Emergency Remote Teaching mode during the Covid-19 pandemic, the exclusion of IES campuses in other municipalities in the State of Bahia and the conditions that demanded the computer usage, internet access and software incompatibilities.

That said, the characterization of the socioeconomic and demographic variables and the teaching-learning conditions allied to the suspicion of CMDs and the observation of the perception of the academic experience, correlated with the other literature review studies presented here, allowed identifying a high prevalence in the sample. (78.6%) of CMDs, highlighting a more exacerbated prevalence among females, non-white, single, without support from the HEI in the face of adversity and who do not consider the University a welcoming environment. It should also be underlined that such factors are statistically significantly associated with the suspicion of Common Mental Disorders in the studied sample, therefore, it is important to monitor these conditionalities for the development of CMDs.

The literature argues that university life is a period of great discoveries, learning and construction of important affective and social ties. However, it can also be characterized as another factor of pressure and difficulty in a person's life, but not the only one, since each person has their individual history before entering the University. Therefore, institutionally, it is necessary to make a joint effort to create strategies to face personal and collective difficulties in order to provide a healthier environment in the university community.

In this sense, in order to think about actions and other care strategies in mental health and in the context of Common Mental Disorders in undergraduates, it is necessary to know the dynamics, relationships, perceptions and experiences that surround this problem and that are not always graspable numerically. These elements must be understood together with the social, historical, cultural, institutional, political, economic processes, and for that, it is necessary to investigate the reality of the territories inhabited by these students, the macro and micro political conditions that permeate their daily lives. Understanding the way in which university students have positioned themselves on this issue is fundamental in guiding effective public policies.

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In addition, it is emphasized that the results of this present study also indicate that part of the highlighted variables related to Common Mental Disorders are likely to create preventive strategies focused on understanding the subjective dynamics that such a phenomenon is made up of elements of a plural and different determinations, in the understanding of the subjects in their totality, in their political and social contexts, and that such factors contribute to aggravate the CMDs in the individuals involved.

Life, subjectivity and suffering require careful analyzes that reflect the need for the Academy to fulfill its role of implementing policies, planning and management in health and pedagogical projects for this public from an intersectional perspective (that articulate sectors such as health, assistance, education, among others) fundamental for approaching a complex phenomenon such as CMDs. In addition, it is of fundamental importance to advocate political and social perspectives on mental health and suffering through a segment that faces an institutional culture that supports the values of diversity and integrates them into its systems and practices, always remembering that the individual is a social, complex being and its relationships with the environment in which it finds itself are influenced by broader social determinants.

Therefore, due to the growing impact that CMDs have been causing in world statistics and other gaps raised in the literature review, this study also shows that new research that addresses the factors associated with this phenomenon in the university population is fundamental. In this way, new studies are advised that expand the search carried out in the present research, with regard to the databases, as well as new empirical studies, so that we can advance in the identification of the factors and in the potentialization of the strategies and services they provide. assistance to this population.

Therefore, the consolidation and understanding of the factors associated with common mental disorders in university students from institutions of the federal higher education network still demand a lot of research and careful work on the theoretical-methodological foundation in view of the interdisciplinary character that the theme contains. In addition, some issues remain for reflection, such as the

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importance of thinking about ways of approaching and dialoguing with the Unified Health System in Brazil and studies that seek to know the predictors that have led to an increase in demand for mental health services for university students, to broaden discussions related to aspects of academic experience and the panorama of services offered by HEIs and by the public health system.

Therefore, it is recommended to expand the debate with the student body, in official instances, University associations and between government bodies, for a university environment of an inclusive nature and of collective construction, with less hierarchical and more fluid relationships, which focus on conduct and structural transformations so that the institution of higher education, allied with the students, adapt to the norms in agreement and generate benefits for both parties.

In summary, it is expected that studies like this one will reach greater visibility to issues related to mental health and Common Mental Disorders in university students, and that it will be a precursor of public policies for the prevention and promotion of health within the University that can cover students, professors and civil servants in the construction of a physical and social environment that prioritizes the health of the subjects through an expanded perspective and quality of life.

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