



STRESSORS AND COPING MECHANISMS OF STUDENTS IN THE IN-PERSON CLASSES

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Abstract

This study used a qualitative research design study in nature. The researcher used thematic analysis in data that aims to answer the problems. In terms of stressors encountered by students learning confusion, financial stress, a poor learning environment, and poor learning materials lead to anxiety and low self-esteem. The stressors that affect the academic performance of learners in in-person classes lead to absenteeism and reduces overall academic achievement and finally lead to drop out. The learners who manage stress in school should take responsibility for any mistakes and practice good self-care. In terms of coping mechanisms, students employ to cope with those stressors by adopting a positive attitude and learner's social interaction that leads to a positive teacher-student relationship that promotes emotional learning and improved student outcomes.

The study concluded that stressors lead to anxiety and low self-esteem in learners that affect the academic performance of learners in the in-person classes because learners feel overwhelming stress related to school.

Finally, the best coping mechanisms for stressors the learners to adopt a positive attitude and social interaction lead to a positive teacher-student relationship, and produces unflappable learners with outstanding academic outcomes.

Keywords: Learners' Stressors, In-person Classes

1.INTRODUCTION

Big stressors in life—the ones all dread that many undoubted experiences at some point in life—can set our world into a tailspin, altering who is and how see the world forever. They also have the potential to eventually make us stronger if can learn to approach things a little differently. Younger school students are mostly getting used to the routine of the school day. But in later elementary grades, the responsibilities required of school work and thoughts of disappointing parents or

teachers can be stressful. Teaching students at this age how to manage stress in school can help them adjust to traditional schooling without getting overwhelmed.

. Psychological stress is a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or resources well-being.

According to Truman, K. (2022) Stress is a normal part of the human condition—a part that most of us would rather eliminate. Some people are more prone to feeling stress than others, and stress impacts people differently due to temperament, inborn personality traits, and how we've been taught (directly and indirectly) how to respond to challenging situations. Some people are naturally more resilient, while others are more sensitive and reactive to stress.

As Cite by Andrade, H. (2021) that during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers had a number of coping strategies, including exercising leisurely and experiencing mental health stressors. Some other stressors problems in the school according to Valente, S. (2020) in turn, conflicts between students can arise due to misunderstandings, fights, the rivalry between groups, and discrimination. Further, teachers work longer hours than many other positions, which often leads to burnout and stress. Some of the many contributing factors are lack of resources, work-life balance, and political issues. That is why teachers are losing what little time they have for planning due to sub shortages, which is stretching them thin.

This research is anchored to the transactional theories of stress and coping. The most influential theory of stress and coping was developed by Lazarus and Folk-man (1984) and it defined stress as resulting from an imbalance between perceived external or internal demands and the perceived personal and social resources to deal with them. In such a manner, this study faces many challenges inside and outside of the institution and all of them experience the impact of issues because of the external and internal demands of community, stakeholders and learners that may cause to stressors. Perhaps learners, and administrators looking also for coping mechanisms to weaken the impact of stressors. The internal demands are the physical aspects of the school, teachers, instructional materials, and teachers and learners' relationship.

This study significantly in the part of teachers and students how to overcome the stress at the time of new normal education. The researcher would be able to describe and design interventions on how to face this challenge in education, especially for the curriculum implementer and the learners.

To the administrator, through this research paper, the school head would be able to see what were the priorities during and after the pandemic so that teacher's leaser their problems and stressors in life especially during school days, since that teachers were a major role to facilitate and moderator of learning. Through this study, administrators were able to initiate what would be the best intervention to the problem faced by the teachers if in case a similar problem arise.

This study involved the following parameters that were projected to make this study different from other studies in the field and to find its rightful place in the broad area of educational research, as well as its input in the reservoir of knowledge.

This study focused only on the stressors encountered by the students in the new normal set-up of education and the mechanisms they employed in coping with these stressors. It is conducted in District I of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat. This was conducted in three integrated schools of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat, that were engaged in the in-person learning without tutorials at home after the three years pandemic and their impact to education.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This chapter offers qualitative research designed and phenomenological in nature the study. It also concerns the use of the instrumentation, the analysis method known as data analysis, or measuring of the quality rather than the quantity of stressors among pupils and teachers during the in-person classes.

The study applied the Qualitative Research Design specifically phenomenological case study. The only difference between single and multiple case study is the research design; however, they are within the same methodological framework (Yin,2017). The multiple case study design is a valuable qualitative research tool in studying the links between the personal, social, behavioral, psychological, organizational, cultural, and environmental factors that guide organizational and leadership development.

This study was conducted at District I of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat during the School Year 2022-2023 in-person classes specifically the Sigayan Integrated School.

The participants of this study were the 15 students of the integrated school in District I of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat such as Sigayan Integrated School who was possessively chosen by the researcher based on the following criteria: taking up modular distance learning in three consecutive years and officially enrolled as Grade 7 students in School Year 2022-2023 without tutorial at home, that were between ages 12-15, learners with no household partners in learning. Since this study employed the case study qualitative research design, the participants were subjected to in-depth interviews regarding their stressors and their coping mechanisms in the in-person set-up of education. During these interviews, the researcher used an interview guide composed of 3 sets of questions (exploratory questions, engaging questions, and exit questions) to get information from the participants.

In general, the conduct of this study involved the following steps: purposive selection of the participants, asking the consent of the participants to conduct the study, interview with the participants, and analysis of the data gathered.

This study applied purposive sampling technique in selection of grade level and student's respondent as well as the school. A purposive sampling technique was a type of non-probability sampling technique which uses the researcher's judgment in selecting the participants of the study. Alvi (2016) said that the criteria of the elements that included in the study were predefined. Therefore, researcher do not include everyone who was available, but rather those available who have met the defined criteria.

Ary et al. (2010) also commented that qualitative research is purposeful in selecting participants and settings. They select purposive samples who they believe are sufficient to provide maximum insight and understanding of what they are studying. They use their experience and knowledge to select a sample of participants that they believe can provide the relevant information about the topic or setting. It's a good idea to start off by coding a small amount of the data and conducting a thematic analysis to get a better understanding of how to proceed.

A develop questionnaire was administered in this study which used in the In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in identified integrated school. The instrument evaluated their content by expert before the researcher administer. After the content evaluation of instrument, the researcher finalized the questionnaires and ready for administering. The researcher also made used of the recording gadgets, such as camera, and mobile phones to gather reliable data from the participants which comprised by the teacher's adviser.

A qualitative type of study requires time and effort for the researcher to gather and transcribe the responses of the participants. Hence, the following were the steps to be followed in this endeavor:

This begins with seeking of letter of approval for the conduct of the study from the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School of East-West Mindanao Colleges, Inc., and from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Sultan Kudarat.

Another letter of permission was needed from the School District Supervisor at District 1 of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat, and the teachers. Then the researcher communicated and asked permission to the school principal of the chosen school.

When letters were signed and approved, the informed consent was given to the participants to inform them about the research study, purpose and procedures. The researcher also informed the participants about the confidentiality of all data gathered from them and their participation in this study was voluntarily.

After the participants' consent given, the researcher organized all the instruments used in the study, such as Interview Questions, and Gadgets (Camera and Mobile Phone). This was followed by the conduct of the In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the students.

Finally, the retrieval and collection of qualitative data. These data were organized, analyze and transcribe by the research to come up with reliable results and discussion. Strict compliance of health protocols was also observed in the conduct of this study.

data analysis starts to write analytic notes and compare and contrast the analysis from all the participants. The applied the coding by assigning to different parts of the data (Miles et.al, 2014). The researcher had to go through the whole set of data to code it. After the coding, thematic analysis method applied by the researcher in their discussion and presented in tabular presentation without numerical value analytical methods of interpretation by Wa-ambaleka, S. et.al (2017).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented the qualitative data gathered from the students' respondents who were encountered stressors in the in-person classes after the pandemic crisis at school of Sigayan Integrated. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis and presented in non-numerical frequency table distribution.

New classes, new teachers, and new routines can all be stressful for the learners and take time to adjust. As they progress through school and start taking more advanced classes, the increased difficulty can cause stress for learners. This is very common for teens entering their school.

Table 1

Presented Stressors Encountered by the Students in the In-person classes learning modality at Sigayan Integrated School			
Research Questionnaires	Code	Categories	Theme
1. What are the stressors encountered by the students in the in-person	Code S1 Work Pressure - Too much work at home	Poor work environment	

<p>learning modality at Sigayan Integrated School?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Late submission of projects - Difficulty in managing time - Distance of the school from home - Difficulty in organizing work - Difficulty in performing an activity <p>Code S2 Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of learning assignment - Difficulty in understanding the lesson - Poor classroom participation - Difficulty in cope-up with topic <p>Code S3 Student Basic Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of allowance - Limited food - Lack of transportation - No means of transportation - Problem with financial support - Difficulty in providing projects and school requirements <p>Code S4 Physical Aspect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unconducive makeshift - Lack of classroom - Lack of chairs and table 	<p>Poor work performance</p> <p>Poor work attitude</p> <p>Learning confusion</p> <p>Financial Stress</p>	<p>Anxiety</p> <p>Low Self Esteem</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of instructional technology - Poor internet connection 	Poor Learning Environment	
	<p>Code S5 Instructional Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient learning materials - Lack of school supplies 	Poor Learning Materials	

An item referring to stressors encountered by students at Sigayan Integrated Schools revealed in table 1 the thematic analysis in code s1 work pressure stressors described by the learners' respondents that too much work at home, late submission of projects, difficulty in managing time, a distance of the school from home, difficulty in organizing work and activity were encountered by the learners in the in-person classes. These were the reasons learners believed that work pressure led to poor work environment, poor work performance, and poor work attitude among the learners.

Another stressors was code s2 student learning stressor as perceived by the respondents because of changes from modular learning modality to in-person classes of learning, they answered same reaction such as lack of learning assignments, the felt of difficulty in understanding the lesson, poor classroom participation, and a difficulty to cope-up the on topic presented by the teachers and they categorized that everyone experiences learning confusion.

Stressors code s3 student basic needs described by the respondents that lack of allowance, limited food, lack of transportation or no means of transportation, problems on financial support, and difficulty in providing projects and school requirements may lead to financial stress among learners. Further, code s4 physical aspect stressors revealed by the learners that one of the problems in the school that become stressful to everyone were unconducive makeshift, lack of classroom, chairs, and tables, lack of instructional technology, and poor internet connection resulted in the poor learning environment. Lastly, code s5 stressors instructional materials, enumerated by the respondents that insufficient learning materials and lack of school supplies contributed to trigger stressors resulted to poor learning materials. In connection with above-identified stressors encountered by students in the in-person classes, they found out that stressors may cause the learners to experience anxiety as well as low self-esteem. The learners revealed that they might feel anxious when faced with a difficult problem at school, before taking a test or in attending classes, because mostly experiencing feeling of fear, dread, it might cause to sweat, feel restless and tense accordingly, and have a rapid heartbeat a normal reaction to stress. Similar study by El-Ghoroury, N.H et.al (2012) revealed that anxiety is cause by difficult problem experiences in the school,

with poor learning environment, financial stress, insufficient instructional materials, unconducive classroom were big contributor of anxiety and even low self-esteem may be felt by the students.

Item how stressors affect academic performance of learners in the in-person classes after the pandemic, researcher described in code s6, the effect of stress in academic performance. The learners felt pressure to fulfill the weight of their expectation, burden too much to their part, they believed that education won't be worth it, poor result of grades, can't memorized, and poor study habits. This effect is categorized into poor achievement and learned felt overwhelming stress related to school.

Finally, it resulted to absenteeism and reduces overall academic achievement and lead to drop out. It implied that learner's inability to motivate in duration of school year. The findings supported by the scholarly article of Kadapatti, (2021) stated that excessive stress can cause health difficulties such as fatigue, loss of appetite, headaches, and gastrointestinal issues. Academic stress has been linked to a variety of negative effects, including anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance. Additionally, XJ, Lin (2020) revealed that stress associated with academic performance among undergraduate students in China.

Table 2

Presentation of the Coping Mechanisms Do Students Employ to Cope with those stressors			
Research Questions	Code	Categories	Theme
2. What are the coping mechanisms do students employee to cope with those stressors?	Code Personal management		
	- Having enough time to sleep	School-life balance	
	- Wake-up early in the morning		
	- Enough time to study		
	- Prioritize your work	Time management	
	- Have a leisure time		
	- Re-balance work and home		Adopt a positive attitude
	Code Parent support		
	- Asking tutorial class at home		
	- Asking parents follow-up	Parent Involvement	
	- Asking financial support for contribution.		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informing parents to have their own chairs - Let the parent to provide the chairs. - Google to the internet - Asking favor to the PTA for having room ventilated. <p>Code Learner's relaxation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having regular exercise - Eat well and limit alcohol - Deep breathing and muscle relaxation <p>Code Learner's behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect with supportive people - Good with your pet - Seek social support - Check your thoughts for negative bias - Don't neglect your favorite activities - Get professional help - Positive thinking and forgiveness - Distance yourself from the source of stress. - Maintain emotionally 	<p>Learners-life relaxation</p> <p>Positive self-image</p> <p>Self-distancing</p>	
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	supportive relationship - Lower your expectation - View the problem through a religious perspective		
2.1 How do coping mechanisms help you to reduce stressors?	Code Be calm - Always be happy - Connect w/ other people - Get enough time to sleep - Be active always in all activities - Eat well	Happiness Social interaction	Positive teacher-student relationship
2.2 What are the manifestation that coping mechanisms effective?	Code Dynamic - Learners able to engage in problem solving - Maintain emotionally supportive relationship - Expressing distressing emotion - Physically active - Learners maintain high academic performance - Learners always present	Participative Free from self-esteem Emotionally stable	Outstanding academic outcomes Unflappable

Table 2 revealed the responses of the learners' respondents on coping mechanisms do students employee to cope with those stressors coded, categorized and analyzed using thematic. To cope with those stressors, code s8 personal management was identified by the respondents. It can be materialized by individual who experiences stressors when having enough time to sleep, and wake-up early in the morning in order to have leisure time to prioritize the task so that learners re-balance work at home and in the school. Further, this statement categorized by the researcher that learners need to balance school-life aside from time management. Similar to the output of the study by Weber, J. (2019) stated

that students had balance school-life has contribution to academic performance, but students often prioritize academics at the expenses of personal factors, including relationships and exercise. This led to a decline in academic performance, as general health and well-being are critical to optimal academic functioning.

The code S9 referred to learners' relaxation, was another coping mechanism to cope with stressors, the students need have regular exercise, participate the community activity, eat well and limit alcohol, and deep breathing as well as muscle relaxation were another coping strategy to cope with stressors. This code was categorized into learners-life relaxation. The study supported this idea was current research of Ribeiro, L (2019) aimed to analyze the relationship of student's background variables and academic achievements. It was found out that learner's life or students background had positive relationship with academic outcomes.

Code s10 parent support revealed by the respondents had something to do with coping mechanism of stressors. This parent supports described by the respondents by means of learners concerned in study through observable manifestation asking tutorial at home, parent follow-up in their grades, asking financial support, informing parent to their basic school needs personally and to the classroom to make it conducive for learning. This was categorized by the researcher as parent involvement on school improvement and academic performance of children. Epstein, (2018) said that parental educational involvement had a significant role in reducing students' educational stress. Parents' practice of discussing future, talking of school activities, and school involvement had a buffering impact on the education stress of adolescents.

Code s11 Learners' behavior may reduce stressors in life by means of connect with supportive people around you, seek social support, and aside from that was check your thoughts for negative bias, don't neglect your favorite activities, aside from asking professional help to cope with stressors, try to be positive thinking and forgiveness, further, distance yourself from the source of stress so that you can maintain emotionally supportive relationship, positive behavior like lower expectation and view the problem through a religious perspective were contributed to cope with stressors in life. This coded statement leading to positive self- image and self-distancing behavior. According to Talsma, K. (2021) have shown that self-efficacy remains a positive, albeit modest, predictor of academic performance. To generalized the coded statement and categories was led to adopt a positive attitude. It implied that positive attitude was best coping mechanism to stressors. If students were very confident in their abilities and very enthusiastic about the value of the subjects, they were more likely to did well. Notably, students that were enthusiastic in all subject areas tended to perform better than other students.

Item coping mechanisms help to reduce stressors as perceived by the respondents were though happiness and social interaction. The learners with stressors need to be calm by eating well, get enough time to sleep, and be active always in all activities so that they can connect with other people and leading to happy life. Happiness plays a vital role in well-being of school children and maintained social interaction, according to Rosli, Y. (2012) happiness is positively correlated with motivation and academic achievement. Generally, this above statement and categories lead to positive teacher-student relationship. This excellent relationship led to increased cooperation and engagement in the classroom. They also contributed to a welcoming, inclusive school climate that

promotes emotional learning and improved student outcomes said Nishioka, V (2019).

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

This chapter presented the summary result of data gathered from the respondents that was analyzed thematically presented in non-numerical data in the form of tabular and further illustrated in textual by the researcher.

Findings

Based on the thematic analysis of the researcher, the following were generated:

In terms of stressors encountered by students in the in-person classes at Sigayan Integrated School categorized into poor work environment, poor work performance, and poor work attitude among learners. Further, learners encountered learning confusion, financial stress, poor learning environment, and poor learning materials lead to anxiety and low self-esteem.

In terms of item how stressors affect academic performance of learners in the in-person classes categorized into poor achievement and learned felt overwhelming stress related to school leading to absenteeism and reduces overall academic achievement and finally lead to dropout.

In terms of item how learners manage stress in school that helps to cope-up academic performances, categorized in to two; learners should take responsibility for any mistakes did and practices good self-care. These were led to a kind of personality ready to admit mistakes and self-care.

In item table 2, the coping mechanisms do students employ to cope with those stressors categorized into; school life-balance; time management; learners-life relaxation; parent involvement; positive self-image, and self-distancing behavior. These categories lead to adoptive a positive attitude of learners that identified best coping mechanisms to cope with stressors.

In item referring to coping mechanisms help to reduce stressors categorized into happiness and learners' social interaction that was led to positive teacher-student relationship in the school that welcoming inclusive school climate that promotes emotional learning and improved student outcomes.

In item related to the manifestations that coping mechanisms effective categorized into: active participation of learners and free from self-esteem, and emotionally stable outlook of learners. These were led to outstanding academic outcomes and unflappable learners.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the thematic analysis of researcher, the findings of the study concluded that stressors categorized into, poor work environment; poor work performance; poor work attitude; poor learning environment; poor learning materials; stressor confusion in learning, and financial stress that led to anxiety and low self-esteem of the learners. Further, these stressors affect academic performance of learners in the in-person classes because learners feel overwhelming stress related to school. Finally, the coping mechanisms of stressors categorized into; learners need to school-life balance; time management; learners life relaxation; with parent involvement; positive self-image; self-distancing that led learners to adopt positive attitude, the best coping mechanisms. Additionally, learners cope-up and reduce stress by means of happiness, social interaction with positive attitude may lead to positive teacher- student relationship and predicted

the effectiveness of coping mechanisms through the manifestation of unflappable learners with outstanding academic outcomes.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended the following:

1. The classroom adviser may conduct a regular homeroom guidance and counseling before the proper lesson presented to the class.
2. The classroom adviser and subject teachers may introduce coping mechanisms in dealing problems and stressors twice a month in their allotted time schedule.
3. The subject teachers and adviser may initiate ice breaker to reduce stressors in life and give time to be happy in short period of time.
4. The school administrator may induce positive teacher-student relationship that led to friendly ecology of the school and produces outstanding academic outcomes.
5. The school administrator and teachers may maintain positive work environment, and adopt positive attitude among school head and teachers.
6. Further study may conduct similar to stressors and coping mechanisms that are focuses on the variables does not include in this research paper.

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