

# EXPERIENCING WORK STRAIN AND COPING STRATEGIES IN A CHANGING TEACHING ENVIRONMENT FOR PERSONAL RESILIENCY AND ENGAGEMENT AMONG PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

PAMELA MAY A. CALABRIA <sup>1</sup> & ELISA N. CHUA, Ph. D.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Elementary Grade Teacher II, Sto Angel Elementary School, Laguna Philippines Email [pamelamay.calabria@deped.gov.ph](mailto:pamelamay.calabria@deped.gov.ph)

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor V, Laguna State Polytechnic University- San Pablo City Campus, Philippines Email [elisa.chua@lspu.edu.ph](mailto:elisa.chua@lspu.edu.ph)

## ABSTRACT

This study wanted to find out the experiencing work strain and coping strategies in a changing environment for personal resiliency and engagement among public school teachers. This specifically aimed to answer the teacher- respondents perceive level of work strain as to emotion, personalization, conflicts, responsibilities, and resources. Also, the preferred coping strategies of teacher- respondents in terms of problem- focused coping and emotion- focused coping and how is the personal resilience of the respondents be described as to self- efficacy, motivation, peer support and administration support. To what extent is the work engagement of the teachers as to promotion, working environment, salary and incentives and relationship. The significant relationship of work strain factors and personal resilience and teacher's work engagement and the significant relationship of coping strategies of teacher- respondents and personal resilience and teacher's work engagement. This study utilized a descriptive correlational study to examine the work strain and coping strategies in a changing teaching environment for personal resiliency and engagement among public school teachers. Since there is a significant relationship between work engagement and coping strategies thus, the null hypothesis is not sustained. It is proposed that the Schools District of Sto. Angel may conduct an annual stress management program for all public teachers in elementary and secondary to provide them with vital coping and problem-solving skills for managing their everyday strain. Specific strategies help teachers at any grade level gain awareness of the ways they respond to stressful situations and improve their overall well-being and effectiveness. And to allow them to have in-depth knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Keywords: Work Strain, Coping Strategies, Personal Resiliency, Work Engagement

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An organization, by its most basic definition, is an assembly of people working together to achieve common objectives through a division of labor. An organization provides a means of using individual strengths within a group to achieve more than can be accomplished by the aggregate efforts of group members working individually.

Positive school cultures provide a safe, supportive, encouraging, inviting, and challenging environment for students and staff, which in turn allows students' academic achievement to evolve. Interventions and strategies for creating a positive school culture will be recognized and discussed.

Work strain is a stressful environment that will badly affect damage an employee's mental and physical health as mentioned. Points out that work to family conflicts also impact to increase the stress level of employees. Stressful situations can occur when an employee realizes that requirement of situations is larger than what they can handle and when those situations continue for longer period. Many teachers would agree. Teaching is not only hard work, but it can also be full of stress. Pressure due to school reform efforts, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision-making the burden of paperwork, and lack of resources have all been identified as factors that can cause stress among school staff (Anderson, 2020).

For so long, teachers have always been at the forefront in leading a classroom lesson, but with the spread of COVID-19, national lockdowns (partial and full) suddenly made face-to-face learning a thing of the past, non-relatable, irrelevant, and no longer viable. Without physical proximity with students, teachers now struggle to re-establish their role from a primary input provider to facilitator of learning- no longer a wooly idea in the clouds, but a stark reality to embrace for all. Additionally, mental block among teachers in accepting this new reality is realistically real, possibly alluded to lack of interest in exploring technology, deemed to be troublesome and time-consuming. Having established their comfort zone, many do not want to rock the boat drastically, as opposed to students, often millennials or Generation Z individuals, who willingly welcome implementations of technology sooner (Fisher, 2018).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 On Work Strain**

Work strain is a stressful environment that will badly affect damage an employee's mental and physical health as mentioned. Points out that work to family conflicts also impact to increase the stress level of employees. Stressful situations can occur when an employee realizes that requirement of situations is larger than what they can handle and when those situations continue for longer period. Many teachers would agree. Teaching is not only hard work, but it can also be full of stress. Pressure due to school reform efforts, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision making, the burden of paperwork, and lack of resources have all been identified as factors that can cause stress among school staff. (Anderson, 2020).

### **2.2 Coping Strategies**

Understandably, the very notion of a teacher being the knowledge transmitter who solely prepares lesson plans and delivers them in class is no longer representative of demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century education intertwined technology. As students will gradually obtain greater access to knowledge, or even learn a technical skill, though a few clicks on their smartphone or tablets, the responsibility of educator in classroom and lecture theatre warrants re-evaluation. In the digital age, where virtual lessons are likely to see a rise in educational institutions worldwide, students will find themselves remotely attending classes without having their teachers or peers physically nearby for quick reference or enquiry. This places a emphasis on educators to take up the role of a facilitator and effectively guide, monitor and motivate their students through a screen. As access to information would no longer be the primary concern, being able to keep the engaged, interested and invested in their education will be the next greatest challenge for teachers and instructors across the globe (Luthra & Mackenzie, 2020).

### **2.3 On Personal Resiliency**

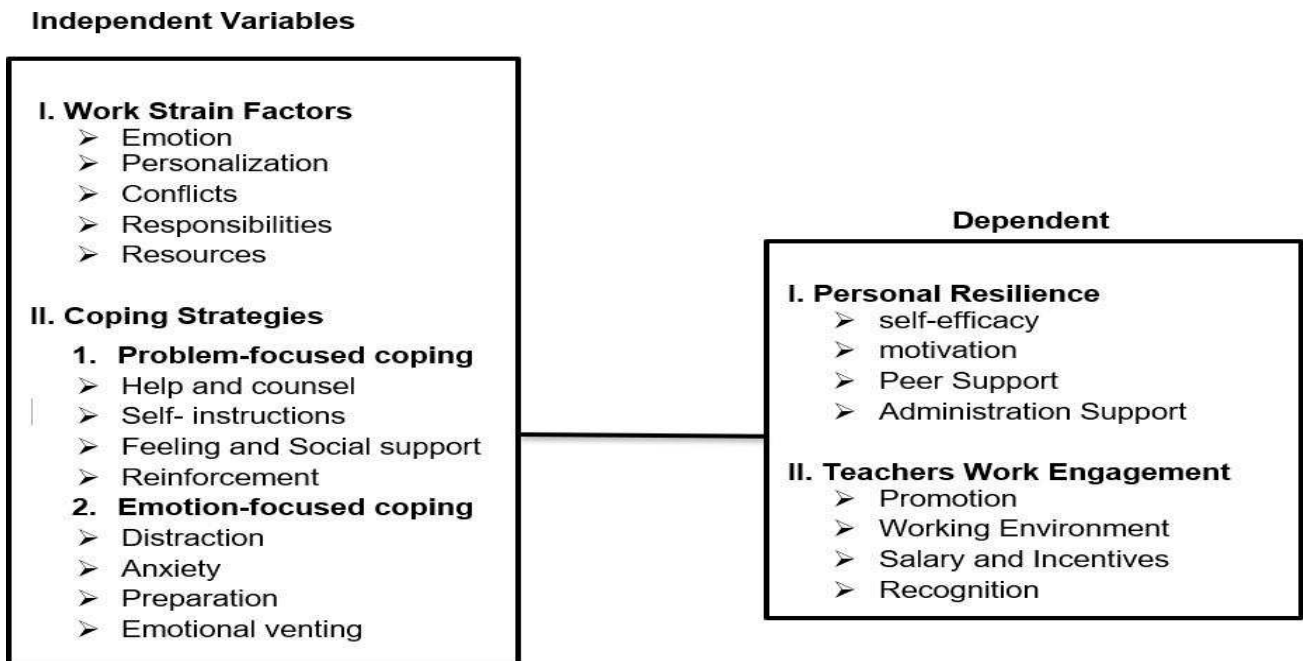
These in turn affect improved health, social interactions, and academic outcomes. This model appears to be a compensatory, and protective model of resilience. Strengthening positive interactions with communities, families, and peers can foster environments rich in the developmental supports and opportunities needed to develop resilience in young people. The place of educational facilities in helping to develop resilience in young people cannot be overestimated since a young person will develop friendships, skills, mentor relationships and be socialized to cope with future interactions in their school. Schools are also the context where significant change can be implemented with community, families, and peers. Teachers and other support staff need to be encouraged to become "turnaround" people and school's "turnaround" places. She notes turnaround teachers' model and creates the nurturing and empowering climates that in turn engage young people's innate resilience by developing their capacities for positive development and school connectedness (Bernard & Slade, 2009).

### **2.4 On Work Engagement**

The evidence regarding the antecedents and consequences of work engagement can be organized in an overall model of work engagement. In building this model, we draw on two assumptions from the job demands-resources (JD-R) model. The first assumption is that job resources such as social support from colleagues and supervisors, performance feedback, skill variety, and autonomy, start a motivational process that leads to work engagement, and consequently to higher performance. The second assumption is that job resources become more salient and gain their motivational potential when employees are confronted with high job demands example workload, emotional demands, and mental demands. Further, expanded the JD-R model by showing that job and personal resources are mutually related, and that personal resources can be independent predictors of work engagement. Thus, employees who score high on optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and self-esteem are well able to mobilize their job resources, and generally are more engaged in their work. The JD-R model of work engagement is graphically depicted in Figure 1. As can be seen, we assume that job resources and personal resources independently or combined predict work engagement. Further, job and personal resources particularly have a positive impact on engagement when job demands are high. Work engagement, in turn, has a positive impact on job performance. Finally, employees who are engaged and perform well can create their own resources, which then foster engagement again over time and create a positive gain spiral (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007)

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

The figure below explains how research flows. The independent variable box shows the Work strain factors in terms of emotion, personalization, conflicts, responsibilities and resources. Also, this includes the coping strategies as to problem-focused coping and emotion-focus coping. In addition, dependent variables encompass the personal resilience that covers self-efficacy, motivation, peer support and administration support. And Teachers work engagement in terms of promotion, working environment, salary and incentives and recognition.



**Figure 1: Research Paradigm**

## 3. Hypotheses

The following were the hypotheses of the study:

1. Work strain factors is not significantly related to personal resilience of teachers and work engagement.
2. Coping Strategies of teachers are not significantly related to personal resilience work engagement of teachers.

## 4. Methodology

This study is a descriptive correlational

study. The researcher used purposive sampling. There were one hundred thirty-one (131) public elementary school teachers, chosen from 149 teachers.

The content of the survey questionnaire was externally and internally validated by the experts. External validation experts include 2 principals, 2 Master Teachers, 2 Teacher III teachers, and 1 Teacher I who give knowledgeable comments and suggestions for the refinement of the instrument. After external validation, consolidation of suggestions, comments, and integration to the instrument is the internal validation done by four experts, including the thesis adviser, technical editor, statistician, and the subject specialist who add constructive comments and recommendations for the reliability and acceptability of the instrument. After the instrument was validated, the researcher conducted pilot testing using 30 respondents from a different district that is not the real respondents of the study.

After the pilot testing process, the result was given to the statistician to check and validate. Through validators, the contents of the questionnaire were modified and revised accordingly. Their comments and suggestion were highly considered for the final structuring of the questionnaire and subsequently distributed to the actual respondent, the public elementary school teachers of the District of Sto. Angel, Division of San Pablo City. The researcher used Google Forms for the questionnaires that will be sent to the district supervisor and the supervisor will send them to the group chat of the principal of 10 schools in the District of Sto. Angel.

## 5. Result

### 5.1 Testing of Hypotheses

Table 1 Test of Significant Relationship between Work Strain factors and Personal resilience

Work Strain Factors	Personal Resilience			
	Self-efficacy	Motivation	Peer Support	Administration
Emotion	.247**	.193*	.178*	.238**
Personalization	.302**	.223*	.214*	.265**
Conflicts	.142	.079	.040	.115
Responsibilities	.293**	.176*	.151	.168
Resources	.246**	.284**	.327**	.419**

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level

\*Correlation is significant at .05 level

**Verbal Interpretation of r-value:** +1.0 Perfectly Positive +/- association, +0.8 to +1.0 Very Strong +/- association, +0.6 to +0.8 Strong +/- association, +0.4 to +0.6 Moderate +/- association, +0.2 to +0.4 Weak +/- association, 0.0 to +0.2 Very Weak +/- no association

Using Pearson r correlation analysis reveals the respondent's perception as regards to work strain factors conflict is not significantly related to personal resilience as to Self-efficacy, motivation, peer support and administrative support. Work strain factors responsibilities is not significantly related to personal resilience as to peer support and administration. And resources is not significant to personal resilience as to peer support and administration.

It shows that teacher-respondents show resiliency who can thrive in difficult situations, are skilled in behavior management, can restrain negative emotions and focus on the positive, feel a sense of pride and fulfillment, and have a higher commitment to their profession. That no matter what trial comes they are motivated and go with the flow.

Teachers spending time and talking to their colleagues. Supporting each other when they're finding work or life challenging. Make sure the relationships they put energy into are ones in which they gain support to. Those are some of the qualities that a teachers have. The ability of teachers to adapt to stressful situations than others or can recover from challenging experiences when other can't. They can control our emotions to be resilient humans. To be emotionally resilient, we must be able to detect and regulate our emotions to control them.

Table 2 Test of Significant Relationship between Coping Strategies and Personal Resilience

Coping Strategies	Personal Resilience			
	Self-efficacy	Motivation	Peer Support	Administration
Help and Counsel	.456**	.472**	.512**	.522**
Self-instructions	.517**	.450**	.418**	.447**
Feeling and Social Support	.470**	.412**	.558**	.621**
Reinforcement	.520**	.479**	.557**	.606**
Distraction	.471**	.439**	.370**	.448**
Anxiety	.495**	.383**	.360**	.454**
Preparation	.638**	.546**	.437**	.518**
Emotional Venting	.524**	.510**	.425**	.491**

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)

**Verbal Interpretation of r-value:** +1.0 Perfectly Positive +/- association, +0.8 to +1.0 Very Strong +/- association, +0.6 to +0.8 Strong +/- association, +0.4 to +0.6 Moderate +/- association, +0.2 to +0.4 Weak +/- association, 0.0 to +0.2 Very Weak +/- no association

The respondent's perception of personal resilience, such as self-efficacy, motivation, peer support, and administration, is positively, highly, and significantly correlated to coping strategies in terms of help and counsel, self-instructions, feeling and social support, reinforcement, distraction, anxiety, preparation, emotional venting as revealed by Pearson r correlation analysis. The result of the test of the correlation between the respondent's coping strategies to their personal resilience that showed in table. The coping strategies of the respondents showed that there is a significant relationship between coping strategies and personal resilience. It showed the strategies of the teachers of Sto. Angel District use to cope with stress or help build teacher resiliency by self-organizing, obtaining new knowledge and skills, managing themselves and negotiating with colleagues to help deal with the problem and situation they have.

By having a teacher induction programs (TIP) for the new teachers to give them support as a new in the field of teaching.

Preparation has the highest significant correlation because teachers of Sto. Angel District participated on DepEd roll out mental health and psychological support programs for 2021. Taking off from initial efforts to promote mental resiliency, the Department of Education will launch a series of mental health and psychological support programs for this year. One critical component of effective teaching is preparation and planning physically, mentally, and emotionally. If the teacher lacks behind in planning, then it will lead to failure. Good teachers are always over-prepared. As stated by Glennie (2011) Although coping and resilience are related constructs, they are distinct in that coping refers to a wide set of skills and purposeful responses to stress, actions taken to deal with any type of stressors (large or small, daily or long-term), whereas resilience refers to positive adaption in response to serious adversity, it is the result of positive coping strategies following significant tragic events.



Table 3 Test of significant relationship between work strain factors and work engagement

Work Strain Factors	Work Engagement			
	Promotion	Working Environment	Salary and Incentive	Relationship
Emotion	.158	.229**	.257**	.214*
Personalization	.282**	.301**	.117	.322**
Conflicts	.190*	.070	.291**	.102
Responsibilities	.067	.185*	.033	.106
Resources	.294**	.291**	.442**	.342**

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level

\*Correlation is significant at .05 level

**Verbal Interpretation of r-value:** +1.0 Perfectly Positive +/- association, +0.8 to +1.0 Very Strong +/- association, +0.6 to +0.8 Strong +/- association, +0.4 to +0.6 Moderate +/- association, +0.2 to +0.4 Weak +/- association, 0.0 to +0.2 Very Weak +/- no association

Using Pearson r correlation analysis reveals the respondent's perception as regards to Work engagement is significantly related to work strain factors except work strain factors when it comes to emotion is not significantly related as to promotion. And responsibilities as to promotion, salary and incentives and relationship and Conflicts as to working environment and relationship. It implies that engaged teacher- respondents are still motivated despite their emotions, conflicts, and responsibilities.

Education is increasingly accepted to be a stressful profession, with various and different issues such as dealing with different emotion, personalization, conflicts, responsibilities, and resources. With the tremendous anxiety that teachers are facing, it is unavoidable that this will negatively affect children. This causes frustration of strained teachers, who can have a detrimental impact on pupils, prompting them to behave out and suffer from poor mental health, which causes even more pressure for the teachers. When students' emotions are running high in school, the results can be terrible. If a schoolteacher lacks the skills and resources to effectively talk about their feelings, it may harm their common good as well as that of their pupils. The greater a teacher's self-awareness is, the more they can be alert and aware of their students and help coordinate their classes.

Work strain influence the success of learning, especially memory and cognition, and can affect the academic speed. Pleasure and interest stimulate involvement and grab the attention of pupils, whereas worry and panic hinder attentiveness and concern. Teachers who do not know adequately handle stress are less able to appropriately deepen their knowledge.

As cited by (Mauno, 2007) engaged employees are less likely to experience burnout and more likely to be attached to and satisfied with their organizations. As work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.

A lot of teachers who go into the field of education have a passion for teaching students. They want to make a difference, and they want to help those who need extra help; however, studies show that teachers can begin to feel the burnout after some time because of the stress that comes with teaching with sufficient resources. Even for teachers who are highly skilled and have a myriad of personal resources, decision making, and teaching practices may be hindered by stress and burn out arising from high demands and low organizational resources (Botanni, 2019).

Table 4 Test of significant relationship between coping strategies and work engagement

Coping Strategies	Work Engagement			
	Promotion	Working Environment	Salary and Incentive	Relationship
Help and Counsel	.457**	.595**	.406**	.543**
Self-instructions	.435**	.544**	.281**	.421**
Feeling and Social Support	.470**	.593**	.416**	.569**
Reinforcement	.500**	.628**	.404**	.567**
Distraction	.568**	.518**	.421**	.454**
Anxiety	.382**	.446**	.385**	.359**
Preparation	.453**	.546**	.356**	.484**
Emotional Venting	.508**	.585**	.373**	.478**

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level

**Verbal Interpretation of r-value:** +1.0 Perfectly Positive +/- association, +0.8 to +1.0 Very Strong +/- association, +0.6 to +0.8 Strong +/- association, +0.4 to +0.6 Moderate +/- association, +0.2 to +0.4 Weak +/- association, 0.0 to +0.2 Very Weak +/- no association

The respondent's perception of work engagement, such as promotion, working environment, salary and incentives, and relationships, is positively, highly, and significantly correlated to coping strategies in terms of help and counsel, self-instructions, feeling and social support, reinforcement, distraction, anxiety, preparation, and emotional venting, as revealed by Pearson r correlation analysis. The result showed that coping strategies were significantly and positively correlated with work engagement. This implies that the teachers in Sto. Angel District engaged and more likely have good relationship with each other that lead them to have positive attitude intentions and behaviors.

## 6. Discussion

This study attempted to identify the experiencing work strain and coping strategies in a changing teaching environment for personal resiliency and engagement among public school teachers. The teacher-respondents perceive their level of work strain as to emotion, personalization, conflicts, responsibilities, and resources. The preferred coping strategies of teacher-respondents in terms of problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. The personal resilience of the respondents be described as self-efficacy, motivation, peer support, and administration support. Work engagement of the teachers as to promotion, working environment, salary and recognition, and relationship. To determine if there is a significant relationship between work strain factors and personal resilience and teachers' work engagement. The referred coping strategies of the teacher-respondents significant to personal resilience and teachers' work engagement.

## 7. Conclusion

The findings gathered in the study led to the formulation of the conclusion:

1. There is a significant relationship between work engagement and coping strategies thus, the null hypothesis is not sustained.
2. There is a significant relationship between coping strategies and personal resilience.

## 8. Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The Schools District of Sto. Angel may conduct an annual stress management program for all public teachers in elementary and secondary to provide them with vital coping and problem-solving skills for managing their everyday strain. Specific strategies help teachers at any grade level gain awareness of the ways they respond to stressful situations and improve their overall well-being and effectiveness. And to allow them to have in-depth knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
2. Teachers may be involved in developing districts' responses to reducing teacher strain. COVID-19 could open a policy window through which to reconsider the job responsibilities of the typical public-school teacher.
3. Districts may consider ways to increase flexibility in teachers' schedules during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the long term. Although only a minority of public-school teachers might prefer remote schooling. It could still be attractive to a subset of teachers who wish for more flexibility in their schedules.
4. The study may be replicated including other schools in private and public. Clarifying the nature of the stress process in terms of two types of triggers/s one based on excessive demands and the other based on a concern with self-image.
5. The effectiveness of intervention strategies may be assessed to reduce teacher stress and exploring the impact of teacher-pupil interaction and classroom climate on teacher stress.
6. Future researchers may conduct an in-depth study on work strain and may use private and public teachers on a wider scope they may use several Seven Districts of San Pablo City.

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