Stress and Coping Strategies of Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Teachers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Rachelle Angela J. Romero 1, Fely A. Habla, Ed.D. 2
Graduate Studies, Sorsogon State College, Philippines

Abstract:
This study aimed to determine the level of stress and coping strategies of the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood teachers in Sorsogon National High School during the COVID-19 Pandemic A.Y. 2020-2021. Descriptive correlational method was used in the study. The questionnaire checklist was the main instrument to determine the profile of the TVL teachers, the sources of stress and corresponding stress levels. Purposive sampling was used which involved the 35 junior high school and 30 senior high school TVL teachers. Appropriate statistical tools and measures were used to analyze and interpret the data gathered.

Keywords: Level of Stress, Strategies, TVL Teachers, Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The social impact of the pandemic affected people from all walks of life. The risk to public health and the economic and social disruption threaten the long-term livelihoods and wellbeing of millions. The global economy has been impacted by the spread of COVID-19 to such a degree that even the well to do are finding it difficult to provide for themselves the usual comforts they enjoy. Society has been shaken as the virus outbreak affects all sectors of the population particularly social groups in the most defenseless situations.

The United Nations warned that if the social crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic is not properly addressed through policy may also increase inequality, exclusion, discrimination, and global unemployment in the medium and long term. Not exempted from the impact of the pandemic are the teachers who, under a sworn duty, expose themselves to the threat just to ensure that the education of learners is not stopped, (United Nations, 2020)

Teaching, apart from being commonly regarded as one of the noblest of professions, is also considered to be one of the most taxing. The responsibilities of teachers have extended far beyond the four walls of the classroom. As if the traditional classroom setting was not demanding enough, the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic ushered education delivery into a setting most teachers have not been trained for. The abrupt shift from traditional classroom teaching to the use of modular and online learning modalities have caught many teachers off guard. Regardless, the new learning delivery modalities must be adopted to ensure that education delivery will not put teachers and learners at risk of contracting the dreaded virus.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has long promulgated policies on occupational health. The organization considered biological hazards among others as a health hazard in the workplace. Such biological hazards include bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other living organisms that can cause acute and chronic infections by entering the body through respiration or breaks in the skin.

While the pandemic has amplified and aggravated stress, mental health issues have been on the rise among teachers for decades. COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented crisis and brought a new awareness to issues concerning teachers’ mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, imposing the need for changes to counter the detrimental damage to teachers’ wellness. To be able to effectively perform their duties as frontliners in the delivery of education, teachers must be well taken care of.

Living through the adaptation or adjustment period for the new normal setting, the researcher as a TVL teacher in SNHS, deemed it intriguing to look into the coping mechanisms or strategies used by her co-teachers in dealing with the stress caused by the changes in education delivery in response to the threat of the COVID 19 pandemic. This leads the researcher to conduct the study regarding the coping strategies of the TVL teachers in Sorsogon National High School during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OBJECTIVES

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the stress and coping strategies of the TVL teachers in Sorsogon National High School during the COVID - 19 Pandemic A.Y. 2020-2021

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following:

1. What is the profile of the TVL teachers along:
   a. Age
   b. Sex
   c. Civil status
   d. Length of Service
   e. Field of Specialization
2. What are the sources of stress of TVL teachers along:
   a. Delivery of learning instructions
   b. Assessment of learning
   c. Home/Family lifestyle adjustments
   d. Personal stress and anxiety

3. What is the level of stress of TVL teachers along the identified variables?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile and the level of stress of TVL teachers?

5. How do teachers strategize to cope with the stressors along the identified variables?

6. What can be proposed based on the result of the study

**METHODOLOGY**

This study aimed to determine the stress and coping strategies of the TVL teachers in Sorsogon National High School during the COVID-19 Pandemic A.Y. 2020-2021. The researcher employed the descriptive correlational design in the study. The descriptive approach determined the profile of the TVL teachers as indicated by their age, sex, civil status, length of service, and field of specialization. In addition, the sources of stress and corresponding stress levels were identified through the given indicators along four areas namely Delivery of learning instructions, Assessment of learning, Home/Family lifestyle adjustments and Personal stress and anxiety. The coping strategies of the respondent teachers were identified as palliative or direct action as revealed by their chosen decision in the given situations.

The correlation approach was employed to determine significant relationship between the profile of TVL teachers and level of stress in the identified four areas.

Purposive sampling was used in this study which involved the 35 junior high school and 30 senior high school TVL teachers. There were 65 teacher-respondents involved in this study comprised of 27 male and 38 female teachers. There were 11 male and 24 female respondents from the Junior High School department. There were 16 male and 14 female respondents from the Senior High School department.

The key instrument in this study was the researchermade questionnaire administered to the respondents that gathered the necessary data on the variables in this study particularly the respondents’ profile, the sources of their stress and their stress levels in the four areas: delivery of learning instructions in the new normal setting, assessment of learning, home, and family lifestyle adjustments, and the personal stress and anxiety. The instrument also identified the coping strategies of teachers whether palliative to lessen the impact of stress, or direct action as indicated by their chosen decision in the given situations.

Inferential statistics particularly chi square was employed to establish the correlation between the TVL teachers’ profile and their stress level. The variables were tested to determine if significant relationship is present between the profile of the TVL teachers and their stress levels in the four areas identified namely delivery of learning instructions, assessment of learning, home/family lifestyle adjustments, and personal stress and anxiety.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based from the data gathered, the following **FINDINGS** are revealed:

1. **Profile of the teachers in terms of Age.** There 23 or 35% of the respondents whose ages ranges from 23 to 32. Further, there are 13 or 20% ranges from 33 to 42, there are 14 respondents or 22% ranges from 43 to 52 and 15 or 23% ranges from 43 to 63 years of age. **Sex.** Forty-seven (47) or 63% of the total respondents are females while there are only 18 or 27% are males. **Civil Status.** There are 46 married teachers or 61% of the respondents while 19 or 29% are still single. **Length of Service.** There are 34 teachers or 52% among the respondents are ten years and below in the service. Next is, 17 or 26% of the group of teachers has 11 to 20 years in the service and, there are already 14 or 22% are old in the service with 21 years and above. **Field of Specialization.** There are 53 TVL teachers or 82% among the respondents and 12 non-TVl teachers.

2. The first three in ranks among the sources of stress of TVL teachers along: **Delivery of learning instructions.** a. poor internet connection during online classes, b. the lack of or insufficient supplies for printing modules c. learners cannot adjust to distance learning setup. **Assessment of learning.** a. some learners do not answer all the activities b. the learners seem to cheat in answering the activities c. the learners are not the ones who accomplish the activities. **Home/family lifestyle adjustments.** a. limited travel b. difficulty in balancing work and household chores c. limited options for leisure/recreational activities. **Personal stress and anxiety.** a. the fear of getting infected with the virus when interacting with people, b. anxiety for the general impact of the pandemic on the lives of the people c. feeling of being confined with limited movement due to lockdown or quarantine.

3. The computed overall weighted means for the level of stress of TVL teachers along delivery of learning instructions is 3.56, 3.07 for assessment of learning, 2.15 for home/family lifestyle adjustments, and 2.60 personal stress and anxiety. The computed Chi square values on the relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of stress along delivery of learning instructions, assessment of learning, home and family lifestyle adjustments, personal stress and anxiety in terms of: **age,** 2.57, 2.36, 2.71 and 2.12 respectively. **Sex.** 1.27, 8.81, .08 and .81 accordingly. **Civil status.** 5.69, .37, 2.53 and 2.69 respectively. **Length of Service.** 5.27, 3.97, 3.60 and 4.88 correspondingly **Field of specialization.** 94, .986, 42 and .51 accordingly.

4. The number of teachers who preferred direct actions on strategies in coping sources of stress is greater than the teachers who considered palliative.

Based on the revealed findings, the following **CONCLUSIONS** are drawn.
1. The profile of the teachers varies in terms of age, sex, civil status, length of service and field of specialization.
2. The teachers identified and considered a number of sources of stress such as delivery of learning, assessment of learning and personal stress and anxiety.
3. The level of stress as perceived by the respondents along delivery of learning instructions, assessment of learning, home/family lifestyle adjustments, personal stress and anxiety are very stressed, moderately stressed, mildly stressed and moderately stressed respectively.
4. There are no significant relationships between the profile of the respondents along delivery of learning instructions, assessment of learning, home/family lifestyle adjustments, personal stress and anxiety.
5. The respondents considered direct actions as the best strategy to cope with stresses.
6. An action plan for teachers was proposed to cope with the stressors in teaching during the COVID – 19 Pandemic.

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following RECOMMENDATIONS are made.

1. The teachers may consider their profile as factors that are being influenced by stressors.
2. The respondents may give necessary intervention to cope with the identified stressors.
3. The teachers may identify better coping strategies to address the level of stress.
4. An in-depth analysis may be conducted to further study the significant relationship of profile and level of stress of teachers.
5. The TVL teachers be given support in dealing with their stressors along the delivery of instruction, assessment of learning, home/family lifestyle adjustments and personal stress and anxiety.
6. An action plan in response to the sources and level of stress of TVL teachers during the COVID – 19 Pandemic may be reviewed/evaluated by authorities prior to each implementation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


Loeb, Susanna. (2020). Students who struggle will likely struggle more online. Education Week.


PUBLISHED ARTICLES

The Occupational Safety and Health Standards Act will protect the health of workers in the Philippines. 23 August 2018. News release, Philippines.


Aysha. Teachers go through more stress than any other professional, says study. India Today, September 27, 2019.
