

STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AMONG ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY IN SELECTED STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN REGION III, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess the perception of the administrators and faculty towards the factors causing stress and the stress management strategies. The descriptive method of research was used with the questionnaire as the main instrument. Informal interviews were conducted to validate the data gathered. A total of two hundred twenty-eight (228) faculty members and eighty-one (81) administrators from seven (7) state universities and colleges in Region III served as respondents. The 5-point Likert-type scale was used to describe the perception of the respondents.

A typical faculty is a female, 30.77 years old, married, either a baccalaureate degree holder or a baccalaureate degree holder with MA/MS units, has been in the service for 17.69 years with an average monthly income of Php 13,981.96. A typical administrator is a male, 43.05 years old, married, either a Master's Degree holder, with MA/MS units or a doctoral degree graduate, has been in the service for 25.78 years with an average monthly income of Php 22,079.75.

The faculty perceived that role ambiguity, role conflict and physical environment seldom (2.33) contribute to stress. The administrators perceived that stagnation in the job position, job description, negative competition among colleagues, physical environment like pollution, study load in the graduate school, negative behavior or attitudes of others, and pressures from social attitudes are sometimes (3.12) considered as stressors, while role conflict, change in responsibilities at work, work overload, health problems, and salary not adequate for needs are oftentimes (3.69) considered as stressors. The faculty moderately agree (3.39), while the administrators agree (3.57) on the different stress management strategies.

There is no significant difference in the perception between the faculty and administrators towards the stress management strategies. There is no significant difference in the perception on the role conflict as source of stress as to age, civil status, educational attainment, length of service, and monthly income of the faculty. There is a significant difference in the perception on the role ambiguity and physical environment as sources of stress as to the age of the faculty. There is no significant difference in the perception on the stress management strategies when grouped according to sex, age, educational attainment, length of service, and monthly income of the faculty and administrators respectively.

Keywords: Stress, Stress Management Strategies, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Physical Environment

Introduction

An organization like the university operates on a wide range of disciplines and functions. The faculty members are expected to perform other roles in addition to the traditional roles of teaching and research. A number of changes in the higher education sector have changed the conditions under which the faculty or university administrator performs the job (Teichler, 2007). In carrying out their functions at work, stress among faculty and administrators is inevitable in many state universities and colleges in the country as a result of the interactions of people or groups with different expectations, interests, backgrounds, and roles in the society. Work-related stress occurs when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands (Blaug, Kenyon, & Lekhi, 2007). If left unchecked and unmanaged, stress will undermine the quality, productivity and creativity of employees' work, and employees' well-being (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua & Stough, 2001).

Because stress is unavoidable, natural and normal part of any complex organization like the university, the study on the Stress Management Strategies Among Administrators and Faculty in Selected State Universities and Colleges in Region III was conducted to describe the perception of the faculty and administrators on role conflict, role ambiguity, and physical environment as sources of stress, and on the stress management strategies.

Statement of the Problem

The study answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the faculty in terms of: (1.1) Age; (1.2) Sex; (1.3) Civil status; (1.4) Highest educational attainment; (1.5) Length of service; and (1.6) Monthly family income?
2. What is the profile of the administrator in terms of: (2.1) Age; (2.2) Sex; (2.3) Civil status; (2.4) Highest educational attainment; (2.5) Length of service; and (2.6) Monthly family income?
3. How may the perception of the faculty be described in terms of the following stressors: (3.1) Role conflict; (3.2) Role ambiguity; and (3.3) Physical environment?
4. How may the perception of the administrator be described in terms of the following stressors: (4.1) Stagnation in the job position; (4.2) Role conflict; (4.3) Job description; (4.4) Change in responsibilities at work; (4.5) Work overload; (4.6) Negative competition among colleagues; (4.7) Health problems; (4.8) Physical environment like pollution; (4.9) Study load in the graduate school; (4.10) Salary not adequate for basic needs; (4.11) Negative behavior or attitudes of others; and (4.12) Pressure from social groups?
5. How may the perception of the faculty be described towards the following stress management strategies: (5.1) Enhancing spirituality; (5.2) Enhancing self-awareness; (5.3) Stress debriefing; (5.4) Scheduling; (5.5) Socializing; (5.6) Speaking with others; (5.7) Smiling with others; (5.8) Listening to sound and music; (5.9) Enjoying siesta; (5.10) Stretching; and (5.11) Engaging in sports?
6. How may the perception of the administrator be described towards the following stress management strategies : (6.1) Enhancing spirituality; (6.2) Enhancing self-awareness; (6.3) Stress debriefing; (6.4) Scheduling; (6.5) Socializing; (6.6) Speaking with others; (6.7) Smiling with others; (6.8) Listening to sound and music; (6.9) Enjoying siesta; (6.10) Stretching; and (6.11) Engaging in sports?
7. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress when grouped according to the profile variables?
8. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the administrator on the sources of stress when grouped according to the profile variables?
9. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the faculty on the stress management practices when grouped according to the profile variables?
10. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the administrator on the stress management practices when grouped according to the profile variables?
11. Is there a significant difference in the perception towards stress management strategies between the faculty and the administrator?

Null Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested: (1) There is no significant difference in the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress when grouped according to the profile variables; (2) There is no significant difference in the perception of the administrator on the sources of stress when grouped according to the profile variables; (3) There is no significant difference in the perception of the faculty on the stress management practices when grouped according to the profile variables; (4) There is no significant difference in the perception of the administrator on the stress management practices when grouped according to the profile variables; and (5) There is no significant difference in the perception towards stress management strategies between the faculty and administrator.

Methodology

The study followed the descriptive design, and was conducted in seven state colleges and universities in Region III namely: (1) Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT), Baler, Aurora; (2) Bataan Polytechnic State College (BPSC), Balanga, Bataan; (3) Bulacan State University (BSU), Malolos City, Bulacan; (4) Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts and Trades (DHVCAT), San Fernando, Pampanga; (5) Nueva Ecija State University of Science and Technology (NEUST), Cabanatuan City; (6) Ramon Magsaysay Technological University (RMTU), Iba, Zambales; and (7) Tarlac State University (TSU), Tarlac City, Tarlac. A total of two hundred and twenty-eight (228) faculty members and eighty-one (81) administrators were included as respondents, computed as ten percent of the total number of both groups.

Results and Discussion

The Profile of the Faculty- and Administrator- Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the faculty and administrators in selected state colleges and universities in Region III.

Table 1

Demographic profile of the faculty and administrators in selected state colleges and universities in Region III

	Faculty		Administrator	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Age group (years)				
45 and above	11	4.82	41	50.62
40-44	18	7.89	21	25.93
35-39	44	19.30	16	19.75
30-34	52	22.81	2	2.47
25-29	37	16.23	0	0.00
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Mean age (years)	30.77		43.05	
Sex				
Male	98	42.98	44	54.32
Female	130	57.02	37	45.68
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Civil Status				
Single	52	22.81	14	17.28
Married	168	73.68	60	74.07
Widow	7	3.07	4	4.94
Separated	1	0.44	3	3.70
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Highest educational attainment				
Doctoral Degree Holder	10	4.39	29	35.80
MA/MS Degree Holder with Doctorial units	33	14.47	33	40.74
Baccalaureate Degree Holder with MA/MS units	99	43.42	17	20.99
Baccalaureate Degree Holder	86	37.72	2	2.47
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Length of service (years)				
31 and above	15	6.58	16	19.75
26 – 30 years	18	7.89	35	43.21
21 – 25 years	29	12.72	14	17.28
16 – 20 years	42	18.42	10	12.35
15 and below	124	54.39	6	7.41
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Mean length of service (years)	17.69		25.78	
Monthly income (Php)				
31,000 and above	1	0.44	9	11.11
26,000 to 30,999	2	0.88	20	24.69
21,000 to 25,999	0	0.00	12	14.81
16,000 to 20,999	26	11.40	21	25.93
11,000 to 15,999	185	81.14	17	20.99
10,999 and below	14	6.14	2	2.47
Total	228	100.00	81	100.00
Mean monthly income (Php)	13981.96		22079.75	

Most of the two hundred twenty-eight faculty respondents (66 or 28.95 %) belong to the age group 24 and below with 30.77 years as mean age. In terms of sex, 130 (57.02 %) are female and majority (168 or

73.68 %) are married. Only 99 (43.42 %) have completed the Baccalaureate degree with MA/MS units. In terms of length of service, 124 (54.39 %) have rendered up to 15 years of service, with a mean of 17.69 years. The monthly income of 185 (81.14 %) faculty ranged from Php 11,000-15,999, with a mean of Php 13,981.96. Out of 81 administrators 41 (50.62 %) belong to the age group 45 and above, with 43.05 years as the mean age. Majority (44 or 54.32 %) are male and 60 (74.07 %) are married. Only 33 (40.74 %) are MA/MS degree holders with doctoral units and 35 (43.21 %) have rendered from 26-30 years of service with a mean 25.78 years. The monthly income of 20 (43.21%) administrators ranged from Php 26,000 to 30,999, with a mean of Php 22,079.75.

The data indicate that there were more female than male faculty members but there were more male than female administrators. The administrators rendered longer years of service and received higher salary than the faculty. The faculty and the administrators in the state universities and colleges possessed the minimum educational qualifications as required in the qualifications standards set by the Civil Service Commission and other government accrediting agencies.

Perception of the faculty on the sources of stress

The data on the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress is presented in Table 2. Two of the aspects of role conflict namely having a boss who keeps assigning different tasks allowing too little time to complete them, and receiving too many incomplete pressures from many people were seldom the sources of stress (both rated 2.40, rank 1.5th). The faculty perceived that role conflict was seldom the source of stress (2.33).

Table 2

Perception of the faculty on the sources of stress in selected state universities and colleges in Region III

	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank
Role Conflict			
Feeling you must do things you personally feel to be unethical.	2.18	Seldom	3 rd
Having a boss who keeps assigning different tasks allowing too little time to complete them.	2.40	Seldom	1.5 th
Receiving too many incomplete pressures from many people.	2.40	Seldom	1.5 th
Overall Mean	2.33	Seldom	
Role Ambiguity			
Not knowing what kind of people you work with.	2.49	Seldom	2 nd
Being unclear about how you are to perform the task in your job	2.48	Seldom	3 rd
Not knowing how your superior evaluates your performance	2.46	Seldom	4 th
Work overload or assigning new schedule of classes.	2.95	Sometimes	1 st
Overall Weighted Mean	2.60	Seldom	
Physical Environment			
Feeling too hot or too cold	2.43	Seldom	2 nd
Thinking there is a chance of being seriously injured on the job.	2.47	Seldom	1 st
Thinking there is real possibility of getting some disease from the job.	2.39	Seldom	3 rd
Overall Weighted Mean	2.43	Seldom	

Among the aspects on role ambiguity, it was perceived that the work overload or assigning new schedule of classes (with a rating of 2.95, rank 1st) was sometimes the source of stress. The faculty perceived that role ambiguity was seldom the source of stress (2.60). Among the physical environment components, thinking there is a chance of being seriously injured was perceived to be seldom the source of stress with a rating of 2.47. It was perceived that the physical environment was seldom the source of stress (2.43).

In the past, the faculty members were only responsible for transmitting knowledge and information to students. At present, the faculty member's role has changed (Daun, 2004). The demands and the need to handle demands and pressures from society, media, pupils, parents, university officials, and colleagues, may cause role conflict for the faculty. The constant change in educational policies is also a major source of stress, as it requires the faculty to acquire new skills and responsibilities at an unrealistic speed (Dollard, Winefield & Winefield, 2003).

Perception of the administrator on the extent of stressors

The data on the perception of the administrator on the extent of the twelve aspects of stressors is presented in Table 3. The administrator indicated that work load (rated 3.86, ranked 1st), inadequate salary (3.75, 2nd), role conflict (3.68, 3rd), health problems (3.60, 4th), and change in responsibilities at work (3.57, 5th), were often the sources of stress.

Many stress reactions of administrators arise from role conflicts and demands (Aamodt, 2009); individual skills or lack of them in dealing with the role, demands of the job (Wincent & Orqvist, 2009); or inadequate coping resources of the individual to handle the role requirements (Aamodt, 2009). A person's non-working life (e.g., family, friends, health, and financial situations) can also contain stressors that negatively impact job performance.

Table 3

Perception on the extent of stressors experienced by the administrator in selected state universities and colleges in Region III

Stressors	Weighted Mean	Qualitative interpretation	Rank
Stagnation in the job position.	3.25	Sometimes	8.5 th
Role Conflict	3.68	Often	3 rd
Job Description	2.67	Sometimes	12 th
Change in responsibilities at work	3.57	Often	5 th
Work overload	3.86	Often	1 st
Negative competition among colleague	3.12	Sometimes	10 th
Health Problems	3.60	Often	4 th
Physical Environment like pollution	3.25	Sometimes	8.5 th
Study load in the graduate school	2.94	Sometimes	11 th
Salary not adequate	3.75	Often	2 nd
Negative behavior or attitudes of others	3.32	Sometimes	6 th
Pressures from social attitudes	3.30	Sometimes	7 th
Overall weighted mean	3.36	Sometimes	

Perception on the stress management strategies of the faculty and administrators

The data on the perception of the faculty and administrators on the stress management strategies across eleven aspects is presented in Table 4. Scheduling, which ranked first (4.43), followed by stress debriefing (4.32, rank 2nd), and listening to sound and music (4.26, 3rd) were among the stress management strategies which the faculty described to be in the strongly agree category. Smiling with others was ranked 11th (2.25) and was described by the faculty to be in the disagree category. Described to be in the strongly agree category by the administrators were scheduling (4.58, 1st), followed by stress debriefing (4.26, 2nd), and stretching (4.23, 3rd). Enhancing self-awareness was ranked 11th (2.15) and was described by the administrator to be in the disagree category. The faculty moderately agreed, while the administrators agreed on the identified stress management strategies.

Many workers express that their job is a prominent source of stress in their life but reduced workload, improved management and supervision, better pay, benefits, and vacation times can reduce the stress among employees ((Fredrickson, 2004). Promoting activities like exercise, relaxation activities, and other healthy practices can contribute significantly to improved work climate and personal stress management through effective coping (Khoshaba & Maddi, 2005).

Table 4

Perception on the stress management strategies among faculty and administrators of selected state universities and colleges in Region III

Stress management strategies		Faculty			Administrators		
		Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank
1.	Enhancing Spiritually	3.51	Agree	6 th	3.56	Agree	8 th
2.	Enhancing Self-awareness	4.00	Agree	4 th	2.15	Disagree	11 th
3.	Stress Debriefing	4.32	Strongly Agree	2 nd	4.26	Strongly Agree	2 nd
4.	Scheduling	4.43	Strongly Agree	1 st	4.58	Strongly Agree	1 st
5.	Socializing	2.82	Moderately Agree	8 th	3.77	Agree	5 th
6.	Speaking with others	2.41	Disagree	10 th	3.58	Agree	7 th
7.	Smiling with others	2.25	Disagree	11 th	2.20	Disagree	10 th
8.	Listening to Sound and Music	4.26	Strongly Agree	3 rd	3.60	Agree	6 th
9.	Enjoying Siesta	3.68	Agree	5 th	4.16	Agree	4 th
10	Stretching	2.88	Moderately Agree	7 th	4.23	Strongly Agree	3 rd
11	Engaging in Sports	2.69	Moderately Agree	9 th	3.15	Moderately Agree	9 th
Overall Mean		3.39	Moderately Agree		3.57	Agree	

Analysis of variance on the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress as affected by the profile variables

The summary of the analysis of variance on the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress as affected by the profile variables is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Analysis of variance on the perception of the faculty on the sources of stress as affected by the profile variables

Profile variable of the faculty	Degree of freedom		Role Conflict		Role ambiguity		Physical environment		F critical			
			Mean Square	F comp	Mean Square	F comp	Mean Square	F comp	$\alpha=0.05$			
	BG ^a	WG ^b	BG	WG	BG	WG	BG	WG				
Age	5	222	0.03	0.001	23.91*	0.17	0.003	57.18*	0.04	0.001	66.60*	2.12
Civil status	3	224	0.02	0.003	8.71*	0.03	0.001	29.87*	0.02	0.001	40.21*	2.58
Highest Educational attainment	3	224	0.01	0.001	11.49*	0.03	0.003	9.88*	0.02	0.001	40.73*	2.58
Length of service	4	223	0.03	0.001	41.81*	0.06	0.004	15.38*	0.02	0.000	43.36*	2.34
Monthly income	5	222	0.01	0.001	7.01*	0.02	0.002	11.58*	0.03	0.001	30.27*	2.12

*- significant; ^a-between groups; ^b-within groups

There is a significant difference in the perception on role conflict as to age (23.91>2.12), civil status (8.71>2.58), highest educational attainment (11.49>2.58), length of service (41.81>2.34), and monthly

income (7.01>2.12). The age (57.18>2.12), civil status (29.87>2.58), highest educational attainment (9.88>2.58), length of service (15.38>2.34), and monthly income (11.58>2.12) caused a significant difference in the perception of the faculty on role ambiguity. There is significant difference in the perception on physical environment as to age (66.60>2.12), civil status (40.21>2.58), highest educational attainment (40.73>2.58), length of service (43.36>2.34), and monthly income (30.27>2.12).

Age can influence the type of workplace stress experienced, but it tends to be specific to certain aspects of the job. With respect to work experience, research has shown that people with more working experience tend to cope or manage stress well compared to novices on the job (Wichert, 2002).

Analysis of variance on the perception of the faculty and administrators on the stress management strategies as affected by the profile variables

The summary of the analysis of variance on the perception of the faculty and administrators on the stress management strategies as affected by the profile variables is presented in Table 6. There is significant difference in the perception of the faculty on stress management strategies as to civil status (35.09>2.70), highest educational attainment (6.47>2.70), and length of service (7.25>2.46). The civil status (14.63>2.73), length of service (4.94>2.49), and monthly income (20.84>2.34) caused significant difference in the perception of the administrator on stress management strategies.

Teachers have adopted a range of coping strategies most tend to be functional or active and some are dysfunctional or passive (i.e. self-distraction and use of humor) (Khan, Khan, & Khan, 2005).

Table 6
Analysis of variance on the perception on stress management strategies among faculty and administrators according to the profile variables

Profile Variables	Faculty					Administrator						
	Degree of freedom		Mean Square		F comp	F critical	Degree of freedom		Mean Square		F comp	F critical
	BG _a	WG _b	BG	WG		$\alpha=0.05$	BG	WG	BG	WG		$\alpha=0.05$
Age	5	222	0.02	0.173	0.10 ^{ns}	2.30	5	76	0.07	0.034	2.07 ^{ns}	2.34
Civil status	3	224	2.42	0.069	35.09*	2.70	3	78	0.09	0.006	14.63*	2.73
Highest educational attainment	3	224	0.24	0.038	6.47*	2.70	3	78	0.05	0.018	2.60 ^{ns}	2.73
Length of service	4	223	0.90	0.124	7.25*	2.46	4	77	0.26	0.053	4.94*	2.49
Monthly income	5	222	0.04	0.062	0.71 ^{ns}	2.30	5	76	0.34	0.016	20.84*	2.34

*- significant; ns-not significant; ^a-between groups; ^b-within groups

Test of significant difference in the perception on stress management strategies between the faculty and the administrators

The computed t-value (0.528) is less than the t-critical value (1.725) indicating that there is no significant difference in the perception on the stress management strategies between the faculty and the administrator. Regardless of the rank or designation, the choice of strategy to use under a specific circumstance is dependent on the stressed individual. Under certain circumstances the individual must select a strategy or a combination of strategies that suits the situation to effectively reduce the stress level.

Conclusions

The faculty in the selected State Universities and Colleges in Region III is a married, adult female, who has a baccalaureate degree with MA/MS units, has rendered more than a decade of service, and whose monthly income is not more than Php 15,000.00. The administrator is a married, adult male, is a master's degree graduate with doctoral units, has rendered more than two decades of service, and whose monthly income is not more than Php 25,000. The faculty perceived that stress is seldom caused by role conflict, role ambiguity, and the physical environment. The administrator perceived that stress is often caused by work

overload. The faculty and the administrator strongly agreed on scheduling as one of the stress management strategies.

There is a significant difference in the perception of the faculty on role conflict, role ambiguity, and physical environment as to age, civil status, highest educational attainment, length of service, and monthly income. There is a significant difference in the perception of the faculty on stress management strategies as to the civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. There is a significant difference in the perception of the administrator on stress management strategies as to the civil status, length of service, and monthly income. There is no significant difference in the perception on the stress management strategies between the faculty and the administrator of the selected state universities and colleges in Region III.

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