Aim and Scope

The IASPER Journal of Interdisciplinary Research Journal welcomes articles on interdisciplinary research. Interdisciplinary research is a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice.

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Editorial **Policy**

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The identities of the referees selected by the Editorial Board are kept unknown to research authors. However, the reviewer's identity can be disclosed under some special circumstances. Disclosure of Peer Review can be granted under the following grounds: as evidence to prove that

the published paper underwent peer review as required by the University for ranking and financial incentives, for regulatory bodies such as the Commission on Higher Education, Accreditation of Academic Programs among others. Request for peer review results shall be made in writing.

Peer Review Process. The Editorial Board sends advance copies of an author's work to experts in the field (known as "referees" or "reviewers") through e-mail or a Web-based manuscript processing system. There are two or three referees for a given article. One is an expert of the topic of research and one is an expert in research and statistics who shall review the technical components of the research. These referees return to the board the evaluation of the work that indicates the observed weaknesses or problems along with suggestions for improvement. The board then evaluates the referees' comments and notes opinion of the manuscript before passing the decision with the referees' comments back to the author(s).

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- Unconditional acceptance
- Acceptance with revision based on the referee' recommendations
- Rejection with invitation to resubmit upon major revisions based on the referees' and editorial board's recommendations
- Outright rejection

In situations where the referees disagree substantially about the quality of a work, there are a number of strategies for reaching a decision. When the editor receives very positive and very negative reviews for the same manuscript, the board will solicit one or more additional reviews as a tie-breaker. In the case of ties, the board may invite authors to reply to a

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Score Notes

90.0 – 100.00 Easily understandable by an average 11 year old student
60.0 – 70.0　 Easily understandable by 13 to 15 year old students
0.0 – 30.0 Best understood by university graduates

Gunning Fog Index. Developed by Robert Gunning, an American Businessman in 1952, Gunning Fog Index measures the readability of English writing. The index estimates the years of formal education required to understand the text on a first reading. A fog index of 12 requires a reading level of a US high school senior (around 18 years old) or third year college / university in the Philippines. Readability tests (Flesch Reading Ease and Gunning Fog Index) are computed through http://online-utility.org.

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MATH for Math: The Common Stressors and the Academic Performance in Mathematics of Senior High School Students in a Philippine University

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ABSTRACT

Fear of Math stems primarily from student's stress driven by different factors. These stress factors must be dealt with for students to exhaust all opportunities to improve their mathematical skills and abilities. The descriptive-correlational study was conducted to identify the common stressor in mathematics among senior high school students and determined its association with their academic performance. Some 398 senior high school students were randomly selected to answer a stress-checklist instrument ($C\alpha=.92$). The academic achievement of the selected students was also retrieved. Data analysis was carried out using Chi-square. The study identified (1) subject factors –number of class hours per week, availability of references, topic coverage in one school year; (2) personal factors – peer pressure, readiness to new topic, prior knowledge; (3) classroom factor – class schedule; and (4) teaching factors–assessment techniques, teaching approaches, vocabulary used, sufficiency of examples, instructional materials, cause moderate stress to students. From among these stressors,

it is the personal factors that were associated with students' academic performance. Based on the findings, a MATH (**M**aintaining a healthy lifestyle, **A**sking help from experts, **T**hinking positively and **H**aving a growth mindset) coping strategy is proposed for senior high school students.

KEYWORDS

Mathematics, academic performance, stressors, descriptive design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century education challenges the skills and abilities of educators and students. This challenge is more emphasized among adolescent students who are not only pressed with the requirement in school in this century but also with their struggles with life. According to Liu as cited by Kai–Wen (2009), adolescence is generally observed as a stage where young people experience rapid growth of body and mentality especially during 12 – 25 years of age. In education, adolescents are learners receiving education in junior high, senior high, college and universities. Adolescence is an age of opportunity for children and a pivotal time for teachers to build on their development in the first decade of life, to help them navigate risks and vulnerabilities, and to set them on the path to fulfilling their potential (The State of the World's Children, 2011). With these rapid physical changes and mental development, students experience incompatibility consequently becomes stressed. As they grow and develop, outside factors such as parents, peers, community, culture, religion, school, world events, and media influence your people (Spano, 2014). The urgent need to cope with these incompatibilities and stresses from several factors are the main reason for investigating the everyday stressors that may affect a student's academic performance.

The 21st century requires logical-Math intelligence. A strong background in Mathematics is critical for many career and job opportunities in today's increasingly technological society (Meece, Eccles & Wingfield, 1990). However, many people have a deep-seated fear of mathematics. Undeniably, many students fear math and must deal with this fear on a daily basis. There would be an urgent need and desire to make mathematical ideas available

to everyone because people would now be living in a mathematical world (Robiños, 2013). According to Perry as cited by Mutodi and Ngirande (2014), a mathematics student can severely hamper his performance by being nervous, stressed and insecure towards the subject. Most mathematics teachers would agree that "fear of math" stems primarily from student's stress influenced by different factors. There are many symptoms of having weight in math including an unwillingness to attempt mathematics work, being unusually nervous when in a mathematics class and poor academic performance. In fact, for some people, their levels of stress in math are so high that they become nervous even merely reading aloud mathematical equations (Ashcraft & Moore, 2009). Stress in Math may also cause students to avoid math, math classes and math-related careers (Beilock & Maloney, 2015), and this avoidance undoubtedly impairs math achievement. Students can enter into a cycle in which their stress in math may cause them to perform worse in mathematics, and as a result, may tend them to avoid opportunities to improve their skills and mathematical abilities. A stressful environment can adversely affect the success people have in solving math problems (Beilock, 2008).

There are new pedagogies in the current educational system which range from kindergarten to tertiary level. Senior high students must have already realized that school work can be demanding because of the amount of time and different factors concerning the subject in Math, their likes and dislikes their teachers' instructional techniques and other environmental factors. This demand from school work brings a lot of stress on students. If not dealt with effectively, stress brings feelings of loneliness and nervousness, as well as sleeplessness and excessive worrying (Ross, Niebling & Heckert, 1999). In designing an effective intervention, it is imperative that the stressors specific to senior high students must be determined. Senior top students are at a critical period where they enter adulthood and at the same time are expected to complete the level and look for a good job or continue taking their tertiary education. The senior high curriculum, as part of the K to 12 programs, aims to produce graduates who are holistically developed, equipped with 21st century skills and prepared for the future, be it in pursuit of higher education or acquisition of middle – level skills, or geared towards employment or entrepreneurship (Senior High School Manual of Operations, 2016). As a result, they should enhance their stress management abilities to live a healthy life. Consequently, the purpose of this

study was to analyze everyday stressors in mathematics among senior high students of University of Perpetual Help System DALTA – Molino Campus.

FRAMEWORK

According to Lazarus and Folkman, as cited by Kai-Wen (2009), the existence of stress depends on the presence of stressors. Stressors are demands made by the internal or external environment that upset balance, thus affecting physical and psychological well-being and requiring action to restore balance (Yumba, 2008). Stressors are circumstances that disrupt or threaten to disrupt individuals' daily functioning and cause people to make adjustments (Yumba, 2008).

Many studies have determined the sources of stress which affect the students' academic performance. There is an effect of stress from social factors on intellectual abilities and academic performance (Ala, 2015), high and low performing students differed significantly on educational, family, miscellaneous and overall sources of stress. According to Saritas and Akdemir (2009), the achievement of students in math depends on instructional design, curriculum, strategies, teacher competency, school context, and facilities. Furthermore, Meece, Eccles, and Wigfield, (1990), concluded that math ability perception directly affects students' valuing of math as well as their expectations for success in math. Similarly, Kumari and Gartia, (2012) found that stress has a negative effect on a student's academic performance. Also, the student's attitude towards mathematics is a factor contributing to poor performance (Mbugua, Kibet, Muthaa & Nkonke, 2012).

Other researchers discussed other causes of stress such as Kai–wen (2009) which found out that physical and mental factor, family factor, school-related factor, relationship and social factor were the stressors ground. Many stressors such as academic and financial problems (Siraj, Salam, Roslan, Hasan, Jin & Othman, 2014) stress many students, the causes of math anxiety can be placed in assessment, personal factors, nature, perception of math, negative experiences, learning environment and parent's affect (Ng, 2012). Majority of the first-year students experience a higher degree of academic stress which originated from course overload, evaluation procedures, a variety of personal agendas, familial and social factors (Yumba, 2008).

Stress and its manifestations such as anxiety, depression, and burnout have always been seen as a common problem among people in different professions and occupations. Success in mathematics requires not only knowledge of mathematical concepts but also the right mindset (Beilock & Maloney, 2015). There is a need to address these stressors by education institution as well as by psychologists. Students may need guidance and reassurance from a positive role model and someone whom they can trust to talk to about such stress. Teachers, parents, and administrators should work together to reduce the level of stress and enhance their coping strategy that promotes a healthy lifestyle (Kumar & Bhukar, 2013). Likewise, teachers can help improve students valuing of math by relating math to student's everyday lives, making math personally meaningful and counseling students about the importance of mathematics for various careers. Proper training of teachers, additional classrooms, and textbooks, better facilities such as libraries and computer rooms must be deemed as urgent as the implementation of any program (Oteyza, 2012).

Moreover, schools should design and offer-related courses to help students understand the meaning of well – being and learn how to cope with stress-induced problems (Kai-Wen, 2009) and ensure fundamental skills, focus on teacher training, changing the assessment, letting students write freely and carefully thinking how to give remedy to student's stress (Beilock & Willingham, 2014). One thing is clear that further research needed to explore the problem on stressors in math and factors affecting academic performance including social factors, family factors, school factors and peer or relationships with others (Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq & Berhanu, 2011).

Pries and Biggs' cycle of math avoidance as cited by Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) was adopted as a model to explain why students experience math stress. According to the model, students undergo four phases; the first phase, the students experience adverse reactions to math situations or related factors. These may derive from different elements, and lead to the second phase in which the student avoids math situations. This avoidance leads to the third phase which is poor mathematics preparation that results in the fourth and final phase: poor mathematics performance. For example, the student is encountering a financial problem (a personal factor) which influences his attitude (another individual factor) about being not able to finish his studies and then later will result to inadequate

preparation and attendance. The stress will then cause him not to perform well in examinations. A high-level stress situation creates worries about the situation and its consequences that compete for the working memory ordinarily available for performance (Beilock, 2008). The model presented can be well understood through figure 1, the cycle of math avoidance model.
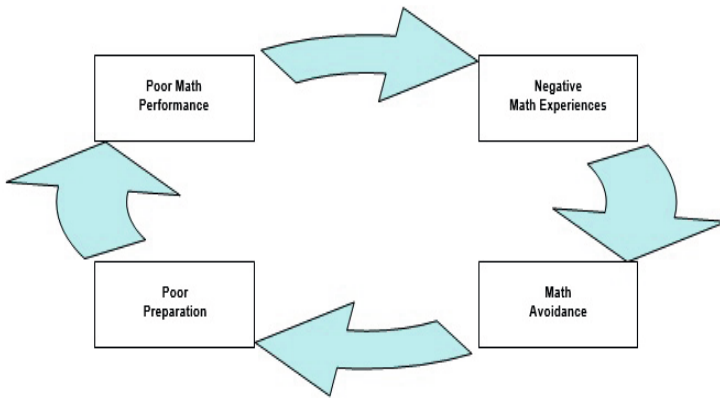
Figure 1. Cycle of Math Avoidance Model

The researcher believes that when students are in a state of stress, proper guidance from parents, teachers, school administrators and the right environment, will improve the performance of the students. Coping strategies, which deals with one's thoughts and feelings, can be facilitated by accessible professional and peer counseling, student support groups, and adequate faculty advising. The concept presented can be well understood through the paradigm shown in figure 2 that used the independent and dependent variables.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study specifically sought to answer the following objectives: (1) to determine the level of performance of the respondents in General Mathematics during the first semester of the school year; (2) to determine the level of stress of the students contributed by the following factors; (a) subject factors; (b) personal factors; (c) teaching factors; and (d) classroom factors; (3) to relate stress of the students and their academic performance

in General Mathematics; and (4) to design coping strategy program can be proposed to help students handle their stress based from the findings?

Hypothesis

There is no significant association between the level of stress of the students and their academic performance in Mathematics.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The primary goal of the research is to identify everyday stressors in mathematics among senior high students. Correlational research design employing a descriptive method was used in the study. This design describes which variables are not manipulated, and the researcher uses measures of association to study their relations (Vogt & Johnson, 2011).

Population, Sampling, and Respondents of the Study

The population includes 2762 randomly selected senior high students currently enrolled in a University in Cavite Philippines for the school year 2016 – 2017. Thirty – three (338) sample student – respondents were determined using Raosoft sample size calculator with 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument in gathering and collecting the desired data was a researcher – made the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into Part 1, which ask for student's average grade in General Mathematics for the first semester and Part 2, dealt with the level of stress the students obtained from the several factors such as Subject, Personal, Teaching and Classroom factors.

Validation and Data Gathering Procedure

A pilot test was conducted among 30 students, where the calculated Cronbach Alpha was 0.92, indicating a certain level of consistency. Revisions were by the result of Cronbach Alpha, corrections, suggestions and recommendation given.

Gather data, an approval letter was submitted to the administrators of the university. Their subject teacher validated the average given by students. For the secure distribution of the questionnaire, the entire respondents were requested to assemble in one room. The researcher personally administered the research instrument to the respondents, and the results were collected, tallied, tabulated and submitted for statistical treatment with the guidance of statistician.

Data Analysis

The following statistical techniques were used to ensure accuracy and reliability of results in the analysis and interpretation of the data: (1) Percentage, (2) Mean, (3) Ranking and (4) Chi-Square Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Academic Performance of the respondents in General Mathematics during first semester school year 2016 – 2017.

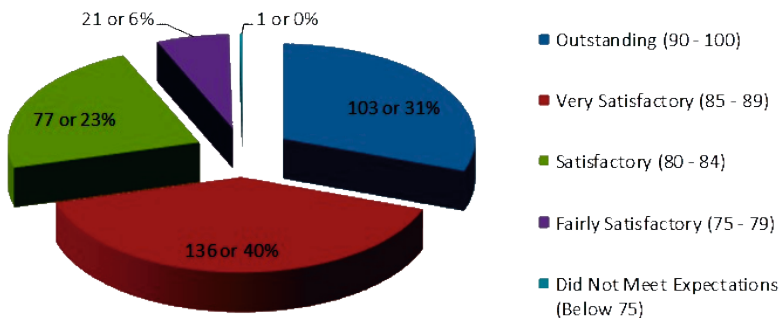There were 338 students involved in the research study.

Figure 3. Respondents Academic Performance
in General Mathematics

Based on the data, 136 (40%) of the respondents received a very satisfactory academic performance in General Mathematics, 31% Outstanding, 23% adequate and 6% reasonably satisfactory. The result may imply that most of the students performed well in their mathematics subject.

Level of stress of students contributed by the common stressors in Mathematics

Table 1. Level of Stress Students' Received Related to Subject Factors

Subject Factors	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. English as medium of instruction	1.52	Causing Mild Stress	4
2. Number of hours allotted per week	1.87	Causing Moderate Stress	2
3. Available References	1.73	Causing Moderate Stress	3
4. Coverage or scoop in one school year	2.08	Causing Moderate Stress	1
Overall Weighted Mean	1.80	Causing Moderate Stress	

Table 1 shows that the coverage or scope of Mathematics (WM = 2.08), number of hours allotted per week (WM = 1.73), and available references (WM = 1.73) caused moderate stress. Meanwhile, the use of English as a medium of instruction (WM = 1.52) caused only mild anxiety. The overall mean was 1.80 which indicates that students receive moderate stress regarding subject-related factors. Similarly, (Bataineh, 2013) also found out that overload hours every semester and inadequate resources such as book and lecture modules can contribute to student's stress.

Table 2. Level of Stress Students' Received Related to Personal Factors

Personal Factors	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Financial Difficulties	1.54	Causing Mild Stress	4
2. Prior Knowledge	1.81	Causing Moderate Stress	3
3. Readiness to new topic	1.91	Causing Moderate Stress	2
4. Peer pressure	1.93	Causing Moderate Stress	1
5. Health	1.03	Causing Mild Stress	5
Overall Weighted Mean	1.64	Causing Moderate Stress	

As indicated in table 2, peer pressure (WM = 1.93), readiness to new topic (WM = 1.91) and prior knowledge (M = 1.81) caused moderate stress. The table also shows that students received mild stress to financial difficulties (WM = 1.54) and health condition (WM = 1.03). The overall mean was 1.64 which indicated that students receive moderate stress regarding personnel related aspects.

Stresses of students come from personal stress including stress from adaptability, health, relationship, low self- esteem and frustration (Ji & Zhang, 2011). Moreover, the same study mentioned that adverse economic conditions produce heavy stresses on students. And low-income family conditions could bring about more weight. Social pressures can be a source of stress. The learner can feel pressure to fit in, to be known and make friends. The learners become more independent, which they may discover new and possibly risky situations where sometimes they need to make tough decisions and choices (The Understood Team, 2014).

Table 3. Level of Stress Students' Received Related to Classroom Factors

Classroom Factors	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Schedule assigned	1.70	Causing Moderate Stress	1
2. Number of classmates	1.45	Causing Mild Stress	2
3. Classroom condition	1.37	Causing Mild Stress	3
4. Classroom size	1.07	Causing Mild Stress	4
Overall Weighted Mean	1.40	Causing Mild Stress	

It may be gleaned from Table 3 that student – respondents established moderate stress to their Mathematics assigned schedule (WM = 1.70). However, in terms of classroom factors, respondents feel mild stress to number of classmates (WM = 1.45), classroom condition (WM = 1.37) and classroom size (WM = 1.07). Findings were supported by the overall mean of 1.40 which presents that classroom features can only give mild stress to students.

Table 4. Level of Stress Students' Received Related to Teaching Factors

Personal Factors	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Teaching approaches	1.85	Causing Moderate Stress	2
2. Sufficiency of examples	1.76	Causing Moderate Stress	4
3. Assessment techniques	1.86	Causing Moderate Stress	1
4. Instructional materials	1.61	Causing Moderate Stress	5
5. Vocabulary/Terms used	1.77	Causing Moderate Stress	3
Overall Weighted Mean	1.77	Causing Moderate Stress	

Based on the data shown in table 4, all related factors concerning teaching aspects cause moderate stress to students. These were assessment techniques (WM = 1.86), teaching approaches (WM = 1.85), vocabulary or terms used in Mathematics (WM = 1.77), sufficiency of examples (WM = 1.76) and instructional materials (WM = 1.61). Overall mean was 1.77.

Bataineh (2013) indicated that among stressors, teachers' fairness, quizzes, and examinations were all sources of stress among the students. Preston (2008) as cited by Ng (2012) argued that teacher's traditional methods intensified students stress and anxieties, that most teachers who were recipients of direct instruction might not provide enjoyment to students since their techniques are more on the constructivist way. The study also emphasized that assessment related techniques such as surprised math test, the student's waiting to receive the test result and final examination are situations that are most stressful for students.

The Significant association between the level of stress of students to common stressors/factors and their academic performance in Mathematics

Table 7. Result of Chi-square Test on Level of Stress and Student's Academic Performance in Mathematics

Variable	X^2		Degrees of Freedom	Significance	Decision
	Computed	Critical Alpha = 0.05			
Subject Factors	18.55			Not Significant	Ho: Accepted
Personal Factors	44.90	26.296	16	Significant	Ho: Rejected
Teaching factors	7.22			Not Significant	Ho: Accepted
Classroom Factors	18.70			Not Significant	Ho: Accepted

Based on Table 5, personal factors were associated, X2 (16, 338 = 44.90) = 26.296, p<.05) to students' academic performance. With this result, the hypothesis that "personal factors such as (1st) Peer Pressure, (2nd) Readiness to New Topic, (3rd) Prior Knowledge, (4th) Financial Difficulties and (5th) Health Condition have no significant association between level of stress of the students to common stressors and the student's academic performance in mathematics" was rejected.

On the other hand, the X2 value of 18.545, 7.215 and 18.702 were all less than the critical value, with these results the hypothesis that "subject factors, teaching factors, and classroom factors have no significant association between level of stress of the students to common stressors and student's academic performance in mathematics" were accepted.

Mental stresses of students have positive correlations with personal factors and economic conditions (Ji & Zhang, 2011). Individual factors include the ability of students to get along well with classmates and roommates, self – care abilities and family conditions. The finding supported the result of the study since peer pressure, financial difficulties, the readiness of students to a new topic and prior knowledge are very much related to such personal issues. Moreover, the study of Siraj, Salam, Roslan, Hasan, Jin and Othman (2014) concluded that students could be stressed due to academic reason, financial problem, and health problem. And to achieve higher academic performance students must able to manage their stress well. The study recommended that schools should expose students to various stress management topics, decision making in tight situations, team building, managing diversity, spiritual development, reflective thinking skills and interfaith discussion.

Coping strategy programs proposed to help students handle their stress

All events in life brought about a reaction, but there were varied ways through which a person responded to it (Esia-Donkoh & Yelkpiweri, 2011). Coping with stress is the attempt to manage and deal with it but may not necessarily lead to success. Since personal factors are significantly associated with the academic performance of students in Math, the researcher came up with a coping strategy program that sets the personal development as the first in the list priorities. Peer pressure is an aspect that can handle through asking help from experts. Research findings regarding readiness to a new topic and prior knowledge as associated with academic performance can be rectified by having a growth mindset.

Furthermore, financial difficulties and health problems need monitoring on a healthy lifestyle and positive attitude. Dealing with stress requires using different types of techniques. Positive reinterpretation and growth mindset were the two most effective strategies for problem-focused and emotion-focused coping styles respectively. Social support is considered one of the most important way of coping with academic stress. Hence, students need

to receive appropriate direction, nurturing, encouragement and guidance from significant adults (Sarita, 2015).

Better coping skills are associated with decreased anxiety levels and reduced risk for academic failure (Bataineh, 2013). The proposed coping strategy was formulated and validated through focus group discussion and is presented below:

You Can Do MATH!!

Strategy	Related Activities
Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle	• Workshops and Seminars on techniques in managing stress and on time management. • Do some physical exercise every day, even if it's just walking and relaxing the mind. You may enroll in some physical activities such as swimming, dancing and in the gym. • Take a good hour of sleep and eat nutritious food that will improve your ability to deal with stress. • Learn the correct breathing exercise and practice it every day. • Narrow down and analyze your schedule, responsibilities and daily tasks. Distinguish between the "should" and the "must". Drop tasks that are not truly necessary. • Get a massage, play with a pet, watch comedy movies or savor a warm cup of coffee or tea. • Avoid vices such as drinking alcohol too much, cigarettes and the use of drugs.
Ask Help from the Experts	• Form support groups made of administrators, teachers, peer facilitators, relatives, parents and colleagues. • Resolve personal conflicts and issues by talking to a counselor or mentor who can help you find ways to address those concerns. • Communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. • Work on exercises with friends who can help you and them as well.
Think Positively	• Use a calm and optimistic attitude to think about how to cope with the problem or situation. Learn and practice the mindful breathing technique. • Do not ignore stress, but rather deal with it. Be more assertive as you deal with stress. Always do the things that you enjoy like spending time to meditate, read, do gardening or listening to music. • Keep your sense of humor which includes the ability to laugh at yourself. Laughing must be regular because it helps our body to fight stress in diverse ways.

Have a Growth Mindset	• Shift your attention and emotions to self – encouragement. • Always simplify the problem and arrange a plan. Work at one task at a time. • Always change the way you think and treat the problems constructively. • Rewrite your notes and repeat the right solutions on the difficult exercises. • Remind yourself about your strengths and talk about resilience and your ability to use the past failures and defeat to move forward and become successful.

CONCLUSION

Senior high students are generally performing well in Mathematics, but they are mostly happy to say that they do not like mathematics because it gives them reasonable level of stress especially stressors related to the subject, personal factors and the teaching style of the teachers. No one would deny that they cannot read and write, but more often it is socially acceptable when they say they hate mathematics. The research concluded that academic performance is affected by different factors such as peer pressure, readiness to the subject matter, ability to recall valuable learned knowledge, financial status, and health condition. There is a need to strategize and apply coping ways that will ease the student's level of stress in Mathematics. Learners should learn to take loving care of their health. They should join or create a core group that will help and gives support whenever needed. Learners should be encouraged to think positively and have a mindset of reforming problems into solutions.

Educational Implication

These findings and conclusions have practical implications for school administrators, faculty, parents and of course for students. Students can be assured that there is a positive relationship between stressors and their academic performance. Also, teachers can understand that stress has an impact on student's achievement and that they should create a better classroom atmosphere that will solicit a meaningful interaction and lifelong learning.

Parents should be aware of the fact that few related stressors need relative stress management and coping strategies, which are essential, for better performance of their children. Parents should also be motivated

to treat stress accordingly and be motivated to read resources to utilize coping styles and ways for positive direction about student's academic performance. Parents and core groups should continue to inspire learners to develop self-discipline and balanced state of mind.

Guidance and other offices related to student's welfare should not be lenient; instead, they should help students to remain concern about their academic matter more seriously while enjoying their company.

For administrators, there should be adequate planning in academic work such as enough enrichment programs, intervention, remedial programs, collaborative tasks, training and workshops that will promote conducive learning and happy environment for all learners. Management of the school should make room for stress management courses in the school curriculum and should organize stress management forum and campaign to help address stress among students.

The student's personnel services office in collaboration with the sports department and management should organize games and social programs for students. There should be a frequent interaction between academic staffs and students on how best to effectively eliminate any level of stress.

Furthermore, other research should be developed to better understand the higher degree of stress among students. A more significant number of respondents from other institutions must also be considered and giving focus on the students who received reasonably satisfactory to did not meet expectations of academic performance.

For students alone, good eating habits should be prioritized concerning stress management. Enough sleep and exercise should be practiced. There should be a right balance between working hours and study hours to avoid stress.

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Gunning Fog Index:	11.81
Flesch Reading Ease:	41.85
Grammar Checking:	97/100
Plagiarism:	4%

Factors Affecting Thai University Students in Learning English Speaking Course

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ABSTRACT

English speaking is an essential communication skill that is widely used in many sectors in Thai society; however, many Thai university students and graduates are incapable of using English for effective communication. This research investigated the factors affecting Thai university students' learning of English speaking course and explored the student needs, expectations and difficulties toward the course. Following the descriptive research design, 25 students majoring English for International Communication participated in the study. The Speaking Process for Thai EIC Students (SPTES) model was utilized to identify the internal and external factors which are supposed to operate, mediate and interact on each other throughout the three processing stages of speaking for successful learning. The findings revealed that EIC students' needs, expectations, and difficulties in ES1 were to a large extent shaped by their beliefs in practice on language-based exercises, focusing especially on five factors shaping the development of English speaking, and then further for interpretation of those five factors such as mediation provided in ES1, textbooks used in ES1, insufficient provisions in ES1, English

Grammar for ES1, and students' self-efficacy in ES1. The implications of the study rest theoretically with the SPTES model, offering some theoretical concepts for the design of a program for teaching English speaking to tertiary EFL students.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, the English language increasingly functions as an international language due to its remarkable usage by people around the world. Boonkit (2010) reports that among the four major language skills, speaking is considered the most necessary for effective communication in English, especially when speakers are not using their mother tongue.

Effective oral communication creates many benefits for speakers - for example, effective speaking results in achievements during speaking presentations, job training activities, job interviews, and many other business purposes (Osborn, Osborn & Osborn 2008). Therefore, there has been a rising demand for competent English users in Asia. When it comes to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), teaching and learning English speaking should be the most important given effective communication. Khamkhien (2010) supports the premise that teaching and learning English speaking is a critical objective to meet the requirement of the national and international demands for English speaking skills in Thailand.

Studies of international students' difficulties in learning English abroad

During the past decades, teaching and learning English speaking has expanded in Asian countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, and this has led to educational reform in teaching English as a foreign or second language (EFL/ESL) (Littlewood 1996; Li 1998).

The number of studies conducted to investigate the difficulties and concerns in teaching and learning English speaking has increased considerably (Flowerdew & and Miller 1995; Ferris & Tagg 1996). Many studies focus on international students, who find it difficult to improve their

speaking proficiency. Ferris and Tagg's (1996) study investigates university lecturers' perceptions of ESL students' learning problems especially in listening and speaking. Their findings reveal that most ESL students feel too embarrassed and uncomfortable to speak, ask questions or communicate with native English speakers in the classroom.

Learners normally apply language learning strategies to cope with language difficulties they encounter when they communicate in the target language (Bailey, 2005). Tabula, Balagtas & Castillo (2014) found that fillers, mimes, and self-repetitions are the most frequently used strategies to promote accuracy in interaction. It also revealed in their study that language attitude, motivation, and socio-economic status are the factors that impede students in oral communication. Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas (2000) report on international students' difficulties and problems in studying at one Australian university. During the study, international students revealed that they felt unhappy, reluctant and lacked the self-confidence to deliver an oral presentation in front of the class. Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas (2000) state that there are unresolved challenges faced by international students when doing a presentation in spoken English.

The findings reported in the literature show that international students encounter difficulties in English speaking and that they especially lack confidence in speaking English in front of the class.

Studies of learning to speak English in Asian Contexts

There are a number of research studies about students learning to speak English in Asian contexts. In Taiwan, Wen and Wang's (1996) questionnaire survey with the first year Taiwanese undergraduate students of English find that among the four English language skills, the majority of students believe their English speaking skills are the poorest. Tsui (1996) administered surveys to secondary English teachers in Hong Kong; and her findings show that shyness, embarrassment, and fear of making mistakes often lead to low English language capability. She also notes that other issues, such as the teacher's tendency to ask questions of more intelligent students, and students' inability to understand the teacher's instructions in class, might also lead to similar unsatisfactory results. Jackson's (2002) study about the participation of business students in their English language classroom discussion at a university in Hong Kong reveals that students feel embarrassed about participating in classroom activities because they

lack confidence, being especially fearful of making mistakes, and that they experience a language barrier when speaking English in front of other students or to the teacher in class. Evans and Green (2007) surveyed 4,932 university students from all departments at one university in Hong Kong. Their findings reveal that 60% of students report experiencing difficulties in English speaking, 40% report that speaking English fluently is difficult, and most students struggle with English speaking. Other studies indicate that many Asian students' difficulties in learning English (Lin, Gorrell, & Taylor, 2002) are because they rarely practice English speaking. Tran (1988) also states that students who study EFL have limited exposure to spoken English and that this limited exposure and lack of practice have a negative impact on their capability in English speaking.

This review shows that many Asian students are not good at English speaking and that their difficulties in learning English speaking in Asian contexts are often due to a fear of making mistakes or a lack of practice.

Teaching and learning English speaking in the Thai context

English now plays a vital role in Thailand (Strevens, 1980). It is the number one foreign language and is regarded as an essential communicative tool throughout Thailand in terms of education, career advancement, international trade, tourism, the medical field and even entertainment. As the demand for using English increases nationally and internationally, a number of Thai organizations involved in those industries have set out to develop Thai learners' English ability. The survey conducted by the Office of Educational Testing of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, during 1997–1998, reveals that at that time Thai learners had unsatisfactory English language capacity, particularly in speaking, when being evaluated against the national benchmarks (Wiriyachitra 2001). More recent studies (Bunnag 2005; Bolton 2008) report that the Thai candidates' scores on two international standardized tests: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) were ranked the sixth, while the Singaporean candidates were ranked the first (Office of the Education Council 2007). This clearly shows the urgency in Thailand to improve teaching and learning English speaking for Thai learners.

Studies of teaching English speaking in the Thai context

Since English is taught in Thailand as a foreign language, the exposure to the English language is rather limited (Khamkhien 2010). Although extensive attempts have been made to reform the English language curriculum, many Thai learners' English ability still does not meet the standard required, particularly in terms of communicative competence.

In 1981, the Ministry of Education (MOE) changed the English curriculum and it emphasized that it was essential to teach English for communicative purposes and for communication in different situations, (Ministry of Education 1991, 2001). In 1999, Thai national education reform was enacted and set the goal of developing Thai students' English skills through a modern education system via learner-centred and communicative language teaching methods (CLT) (Office of the Education Council 2004). This led to the Eighth Thai National Education Development Plan in BE.2540–2544 (Office of the Education Council 2004), which notes that Thai students should have more opportunities to develop English speaking proficiency and that teachers should use a variety of approaches such as learner-centred and CLT to motivate students to learn to speak English. Educators and language teachers have since experimented with various teaching approaches to help learners learning effectively, such as task-based instruction, a content-based approach and CLT (Wongsothorn, 1999).

In Thailand, CLT has been introduced and promoted to meet curriculum reforms such as revising teaching materials and developing teaching facilities for communicative objectives (Khamkhien 2010). Saengboon (2004) discusses the CLT in Thailand as follows:

> In Thailand, it is deemed that CLT often fails to create sufficient opportunities for genuine interaction in the language classroom. This is because most of the Thai teachers are not familiar with the aural-oral method of CLT. They would emphasize grammatical competence and provide learners with pattern drills and rote memorization of isolated sentences, creating incorrect language forms and limiting authentic speaking activities. (Saengboon 2004, p.48).

Bilasha and Kwangsawad's (2004, p.12) study supports this situation about CLT in Thailand, noting that 'Thai teachers did not understand how to design speaking activities during practice and production'. Further,

Kanoksilapatham points out that 'Thai teachers experienced difficulty in selecting materials and activities that would match the students' speaking ability'(Kanoksilapatham 2007, p.23). It seems that the use of CLT by English language teachers in Thailand does not promote Thai students' ability to acquire adequate proficiency in English for communication. The suggestion to Thai teachers is that 'they should improve teaching communicative competence including testing by promoting the communicative approach needs to be revised' (Khamkhien 2010).

According to Yunibandhu (2004, p.18), '…the majority of English teachers are Thai in all levels of education who are largely unqualified as teacher'. In general, the teaching method employed in TEFL is the grammar-translation method and the communicative skill of speaking is rarely taught in language classrooms (Prapphal 1997). English teachers teach English grammar and vocabulary in students' first language (L1) so students can understand them better. Foley (2005, p.34) points out that the factors limiting the success of English language teaching (ELT) in Thailand include 'lack of proper curricula, dry teaching styles that overly focused on grammatical details, inappropriate textbook and testing and evaluation.'

This concern about Thai students' speaking ability prompted me to find out what EIC students need, what their expectations and difficulties are, and why learning English speaking has been so unsatisfactory and their speaking skills so insufficient in the ES1 course. Therefore, this project is to addresses this gap in the research on teaching English speaking to Thai EIC students and to investigate their needs, expectations and difficulties in learning English speaking in the ES1 course across four campuses of RUMTL, Thailand.

A model of speaking process for Thai tertiary students

'The model of Speaking Process for Thai EIC Students' (SPTES) was constructed especially for this study. As noted earlier, it was based on the three models by Bachman and Palmer (1996), Bygates (1987) and TOEFL (Luoma 2004). SPTES consists of three parts, addressing respectively external factors, internal factors and three stages of processing. All the three parts are deemed to be involved in the process of English speaking that EIC students have to go through in the ES1 course at RMUTL. It is clear from Figure 1 what makes up each of the three parts of the model of SPTES.
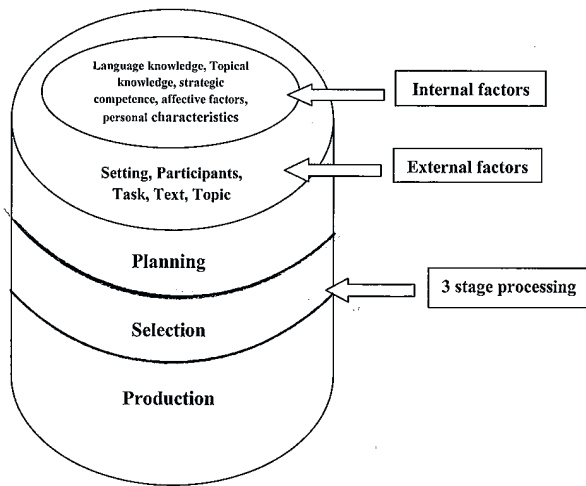
Figure 1. the model of SPTES

There are five internal factors in the SPTES model. The first is language knowledge, which refers to various kinds of knowledge about language in the user's memory. The second is topical knowledge, which refers to knowledge about different topics that the user brings to a language-use situation. The third consists of the basic personal characteristics of a person such as gender, age and native language. The fourth is strategic competence, which refers to the user's metacognitive organisation and observation of the situation. The fifth is the affective factor, which comprises a user's emotional responses to the case.

While the individual language user is central in Figure 1, represented by the circle of internal factors in the centre, the interaction between the individual EIC student and the context is visualised by placing the circle of internal factors within the bigger circle of external factors.

There are five external factors; the first is the setting—the physical location. The second is the participants—the individuals and their roles. The third is the task—a piece of work or an activity with a specific objective. The fourth is text—the type of language used to complete a task. The fifth is topic—the content of the information being addressed.

Bygate (1987) views that speaking involves three-stage processing, namely: the process of planning—an interactive speaking situation in which the learner needs to know information and interaction routines; the process

of selection—where learners use their knowledge of lexis, phrases and grammar to choose how to say what they want to say; and the process of production—when learners facilitate their speech production by simplifying, and using formulaic expressions, fillers and hesitation devices.

According to the SPTES model, speaking begins with the internal factors being motivated by the EIC student's perceptions and is influenced by both external factors and three-stage processing. The main internal operations of language proficiency happen in the EIC student's working memory, which houses the interaction between the five internal factors (topical knowledge, personal characteristics, strategic competence, affective factors and three-step processing). The consequence of this interaction is a language outcome which is reflected in the student's expression that is his/her choice of spoken words.

The SPTES model is used as the conceptual framework that guides the design of the research, in the investigation of EIC students' needs, expectations and difficulties, as the factors identified in the model that are deemed to affect their development in English speaking skills in the ES1course.

Research questions
1. What are the EIC students' needs, expectation and difficulties in the ES1 course at RMUTL?
2. What are the students' views on the factors that affect their learning English speaking in the ES1 course at RMUTL?

METHODOLOGY

Two questionnaire surveys were conducted in this study. One questionnaire was designed for the EIC students. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of the model of SPTES, which was constructed in this research, and which offers a conceptual framework to guide the design of the two questionnaires.

I used this questionnaire in the project: *QES1Students. QES1Students* was administered to the EIC students to investigate their needs, expectations and difficulties in the ES1 course across four campuses of RUMTL. One underlying consideration for conducting the questionnaire surveys was, as noted earlier, to achieve data triangulation to better reveal students' needs,

expectations and difficulties in the ES1course by examining them from different perspectives.

QES1Students is divided into three sections. The first section consists of eight Type 1 questions. It was designed to elicit demographic information about the participants' background including their history of learning the English language, previous extra-curricular English courses they might have studied at the high school level and their target future career. Such information from the participants would be useful for a proper interpretation of the external factors identified in the model of SPTES that guided the design of the research.

The second section of the questionnaire consists of 39 Type 2 questions. Each question is a statement that expects a response of a value ranging from 1 to 5 based on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating *strongly agree*, 2 indicating *agree*, 3 indicating *neutral*, 4 indicating *disagree* and 5 indicating *strongly disagree*. The 39 Type 2 questions were designed to elicit information from the EIC students about what they like and dislike about the course. Again, these questions target the factors identified in the model of SPTES.

Three points about the design of the questionnaire must be noted. First, it was not possible for the questionnaire to look into all possible aspects concerning learning and teaching English speaking in ES1. A painful balance had to be maintained between the comprehensiveness of the inquiry on the one hand and the feasibility and administrative constraints imposed on the researcher and the respondents on the other. As a result, as the researcher I had to rely on my years of experience in teaching ES1 and my existing knowledge of the context and all the possible elements involved in ES1 at four different RUMLT campuses and confine the inquiry to the areas and aspects deemed most likely to yield the appropriate information about EIC students' needs, expectations and difficulties in ES1. Second, the participants, being first year EIC students at the university, did not know what the ES1 course was supposed to be like; therefore, they might not have a clear idea of what they would need from the course. Nevertheless, I deemed they would be able to state what they liked and what they did not enjoy in the course.

Furthermore, in Thai culture, students are supposed not to be critical about what they study, or about the course or the teaching of the course, so it would be inappropriate for me to ask students to voice their concerns in the survey. What is more appropriate in Thai culture is to invite them to tell me what they liked/disliked. Third, in Thai culture, it is embarrassing for students

to admit they have difficulties in the course and thus to be indirectly critical about the course and/or the teaching. In order to get around these cultural dilemmas for the investigation, I decided to include in the questionnaire only the questions that asked students about what they liked/disliked or what they did not enjoy doing, and in a manner acceptable to Thai culture.

In order to achieve greater readability, the questionnaire for the EIC students was presented in Thai to avoid causing any language problems to the participants whose English capabilities varied considerably from person to person.

Data collection

Generally, a semester at a university in Thailand lasts for four months and is divided into two phases. The first semester commences on 1 June and ends on 30 September. This is followed by a one-month semester break. The second semester starts on 1 November and concludes at the end of February of the following year. After the second semester, there is a long semester break which lasts for almost three months.

The data collection was extensive for the research as it was divided into two periods. In Period I, I conducted the first student questionnaire survey. Similarly, the first focus group interview (i.e. the Pre-ES1 course interview) was also organized in this period with the first year EIC students on Tak campus.

The second period of the data collection took place on Tak campus. The in-depth interview with the lecturer was conducted at the same time as the questionnaire surveys. The second focus group interview was also organised with the first year EIC students in this period at Tak campus (i.e. Mid-ES1 course interview).

Data Analysis

In this research study, I adopted the triangulation mixed-method design. It means that the data consists of two sets: quantitative and qualitative data. In this situation, Mertler and Charles (2005) emphasize how to manage the data as follows:

It is absolutely critical to remember that you must use analytical techniques that will provide you with the appropriate information in order to enable you to answer your research questions or address your hypotheses. (Mertler & Charles 2005, p.123-124)

In other words, it was important for me to critically choose the data analysis techniques aligned with my research questions. Mertler and Charles (2005) further indicate that:

> it is important that the primary goal of data analysis is to reduce vast amount of data into smaller, more manageable sets of information. (Mertler & Charles 2005, p.126)

The following section discusses how I analysed the quantitative data.

Quantification of the quantitative data

The analysis of the quantitative data collected through the EIC student questionnaire (*QES1Students*) requires quantification of the responses collected through the surveys. Although the questionnaire enables the researcher to collect data in the field setting, and the data themselves are more amenable than qualitative data such as free-form field notes or participant observations' journals, the data generated through the questionnaire survey need quantification.

Accordingly, the data based on the *QES1Students* for EIC students so that they could be analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) as recommended by (Wolf 1997). As noted earlier, the questions used in the two questionnaire surveys were divided into three types. Type 1 questions were about the demographics of participants. They were not quantified and they were gathered in order to support the interpretation of the qualitative data.

Responses to Type 2 questions were Likert scale values, which were already in the numerical forms and thus did not need quantification.

Unlike Type 2 questions, Type 3 questions elicited multiple ranked responses. Due to its ordinal nature, the responses to Type 3 questions were easily quantified posing no problem at all. Details of the results will be discussed in the next section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors shaping the development of English speaking in ES1

On the basis of the content of the variables that loaded highly on each of the five factors, Factors 1–5 were named to embrace what their componental variables stood for:

- Factor 1: mediation provided in ES1
- Factor 2: textbooks used in ES1
- Factor 3: insufficient provisions in ES1
- Factor 4: English Grammar for ES1
- Factor 5: students' self-efficacy in ES1.

To further analyze the variables within each of the five factors, mean rating was adopted as a criterion to extract further information provided by the participating students in their responses. As noted in the above section, EIC students' responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranking from 1 to 5 (i.e. 1 *strongly agree,* 2 *agree,* 3 *neutral,* 4 *disagree,* 5 *strongly disagree*). The means of students' rankings were treated as the indicator of students' average attitude towards the statement included in the question: the lower the mean value is, the higher their agreement with the statement.

The interpretation of the meaning of the five principal factors is dependent on the interpretation of the variables that had strong loadings on them and the statements included in the corresponding questions. As noted in the earlier section, most of the statements included in *QES1Students* were about what EIC students liked/disliked or what they did or did not enjoy doing in the ES1 course due to the consideration of students' limited knowledge about English speaking and the Thai cultural constraints on the participating students. Therefore, what students liked or enjoyed doing was considered as what they wanted and expected of the course while what they disliked or did not enjoy doing was interpreted as what they did not expect or what they found difficult in the course. To facilitate interpretation, except for the demographic questions, the Type 2 and Type 3 questions in *QES1Students* were re-phrased to reflect the underlying concepts in the report.

Factor 1: mediation provided in ES1

Factor 1 comprised 16 variables. It is clear from Table 1 that the mean ratings for all 16 variables are smaller than 3, indicating that majority of the participating students agree with the concepts underlying the corresponding 16 statements about their needs and expectations.

According to SCT of SLA, human minds are mediated and language learning is a process that is subject to physical, social and mental mediation (Lantolf, 2010). A close look at the concepts underlying the 16 statements revealed that they were all about mediation involved in the ES1 course and they could also be further grouped into four features. If arranged in order according to the average mean values of the variables of the four clusters, they could be listed as follows (the decimals in the brackets below are the average mean value of the feature based on the mean ratings of the corresponding componental variables):

- Feature 1 (2.18): mediation with opportunities of practice
- Feature 2 (2.32): mediation with social interactions
- Feature 3 (2.34): mediation with teaching content and activities
- Feature 4 (2.49): mediation with instrumental support.

Table 1 presents all the 16 statements from the one with the smallest mean rating to the one with the largest mean rating. To be more specific, of the 16 statements, four (Q12, Q21, Q14 and Q9) were about the provision of opportunities for EIC students to speak English in ES1. Three questions (Q39, Q11 and Q10) were about students' opinions on social interactions in ES1. Six questions (Q7, Q22, Q19, Q8, Q13, and Q20) were about students' views on the content of ES1. Three questions (Q15, Q17 and Q16) were about the role of the instrumental supports available in ES1. It is evident that the order in which the four features of mediations are arranged may be regarded as an indicator of the agreement in the participating EIC students' responses to the four features since they are arranged on the basis of their average mean values.

The statistics about Factor 1 appear to indicate that, in terms of mediation provided in ES1, EIC students want four kinds of mediation: the mediation provided through opportunities for English speaking, social interactions, teaching content and instrumental support.

Table 1. Variables loaded highly on Factor 1: mediation provided in ES1

Question ID	Mean Rating
Q12: Need to have opportunities to participate in activities in ES1 to improve my spoken English.	1.77
Q21: The more opportunities to speak English in ES1, the more likely I'll speak English outside the classroom.	1.79
Q7: The learning tasks in ES1 need to be interesting.	2.11
Q39: Need more pair work and group work in ES1.	2.15
Q22: The learning materials of ES1 need to help me to speak English outside the classroom.	2.26
Q19: The learning tasks in ES1 need to prompt me to speak English outside the classroom.	2.36
Q11: Need to have pair work and group work in ES1.	2.38
Q8: The topics in ES1 need to be useful.	2.38
Q15: Need to have teaching aids and equipment that help me to improve my spoken English in ES1.	2.40
Q17: Need the language lab to improve my spoken English in ES1.	2.42
Q13: Need the learning materials of ES1 to improve my spoken English.	2.43
Q10: Need to have a positive teacher and student relationship to encourage me to speak English in ES1.	2.43
Q20: The topics in ES1 need to prompt me to speak English outside the classroom.	2.49
Q14: The class size needs to have a positive influence on my opportunities to speak English in ES1 .	2.49
Q16: Need the self-access center to improve my spoken English in ES1.	2.64
Q9: Time management by teacher needs to allow me to have opportunities to speak English in ES1.	2.66

Factor 2: textbooks used in ES1

There were 12 variables loaded highly onto Factor 2. Similarly, they could be grouped into two features on the basis of the concepts underlying the corresponding statements.

- Feature 1 (2.37): the expectation of the textbook as a whole
- Feature 2 (2.38): the expectation about the different aspects of the textbook

(Note: the decimals in the brackets are the average means for the two features.)

It is clear from Table 2 that the two groups of features were respectively about the students' responses to the textbook as a whole and the various aspects of the textbook. The former group consisted of four variables, namely, Q31, Q37, Q65 and Q40 with the latter being Q29, Q30, Q32, Q33, Q34, Q35, Q36, and Q38. The mean values for the two clusters of variables are 2.37 for the former and 2.38 for the latter.

The two almost identical mean values for the textbook used in ES1 indicates students' expectations of the textbook as a whole and about specific features of the textbook are of equal importance to participating students. Put in another way, according to the concepts underlying the corresponding statements, students consider that the textbook as a whole should allow for different learning styles, offer adequate opportunities for practice, meet students' needs and give rise to a pleasant and enjoyable learning experience. As for the specific features of the textbook, students expect satisfactory content, design and organisation and exercises that allow them to practise vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

Table 2. Variables loaded highly on Factor 2: textbook used in ES1

Question ID	Mean Rating
Q65: Studying ES1 needs to be enjoyable.	1.94
Q38: The topics of textbook need to cover a sufficient range of variety.	2.06
Q36: The textbook needs to provide sufficient vocabulary learning exercises.	2.34
Q29: The aims and approaches of the textbook need to meet my needs in ES1.	2.34
Q30: The textbook needs to suit the learning and teaching settings of ES1.	2.34
Q33: The content of the textbook needs to be satisfactory.	2.43
Q40: The teaching methods need to be satisfactory.	2.45
Q37: The dialogues and role play included in the textbook need to provide adequate opportunities for practice.	2.45
Q35: The textbook requires to provide sufficient exercises for English pronunciation.	2.47
Q34: The textbook needs to offer sufficient exercises for English grammar.	2.51
Q32: The design and organization of the textbook need to be satisfactory.	2.57
Q31: The textbook needs to allow for different learning styles.	2.62

Factor 3: insufficient provisions in ES1

Factor 3 includes four variables, designed to investigate what the EIC students found insufficient in the provision of ES1. It is clear from Table 3 that the participating EIC students found the opportunity to practice spoken English was insufficient in ES1. Also, they also needed more exercises in English pronunciation and vocabulary.

Table 3. Variables loaded highly on Factor 3: insufficient provisions in ES1

Question ID	Mean Rating
Q59: Need more opportunities to speak English to other students.	2.43
Q58: Need more opportunities to speak English to the teacher.	2.45
Q61: Need more pronunciation exercises in ES1.	2.47
Q62: Need more vocabulary exercises in ES1.	2.57

Factor 4: English grammar for ES1

Factor 4 consists of three variables, namely Q53, Q54, and Q60. These questions were intended to find out EIC students' views about grammatical knowledge and its role in learning English speaking in ES1. It is clear from the close to 2 mean rating for Q53 in Table 4 that most students attached great importance to the accuracy of the English they spoke. Interestingly enough, although they considered their grammatical knowledge of the English language was satisfactory (see the mean rating value for Q54), they still would like to have more exercises on grammar (see the close to 2 mean rating for Q60).

Table 4. Variables loaded highly on Factor 4: English Grammar for ES1

Question ID	Mean Rating
Q53: Grammar is most important for spoken English.	2.06
Q60: Need more grammar exercises in ES1.	2.08
Q54: My English grammar is satisfactory for my spoken English.	2.34

Factor 5: students' self-efficacy in ES1

Factor 5 also includes three variables: Q48, Q57and Q55. It is clear from the close to 3 mean rating values for the three variables in Table 5 that the

participating EIC students were not sure if they were satisfied with their spoken English as a whole (see the two mean rating values for Q57 and Q48) but they tended to be dissatisfied with their English pronunciation (see the larger than 3 mean rating value for Q55). However, it is normally against Thai culture for a student to admit less than satisfactory achievement or to claim success in learning. A neutral response, however, is often an indicator of a negative or less-than-satisfactory opinion.

Table 5. Variables loaded on Factor 5: Students' self-efficacy in ES1

Question ID	Mean Rating
Q57: I am satisfied with my spoken English.	2.94
Q48: I am confident with my spoken English.	3.00
Q55: I am satisfied with my English pronunciation.	3.06

In summary, the initial statistical analysis of EIC students' responses to the Type 2 questions in *QES1Students* indicates that these students' needs, expectations and difficulties could be categorised into five categories: mediation provided in ES1, the textbooks used in ES1, insufficient provisions in ES1, English grammar for ES1 and students' self-efficacy about their performance in ES1. These initial findings formed the basic groundwork on which a further analysis could be conducted on the data generated through Type 3 questions—discussed in the future research.

The discussions about the findings of the views of EIC students about the needs, expectations and difficulties based on *QES1Students* in this section shows students' views about their needs, expectations and difficulties in ES1. A major finding based on Feature 1 (mediation with opportunities of practice) within Factor 1 (mediation for learning in ES1), is that EIC students considered *the opportunities to speak English in ES1* as the most important factor that would help them speak English after class. However, unlike the EIC students, the findings of the lecturers' views show clear disagreement with the students' findings, as they thought they had tried their best to provide students with sufficient opportunities to practise speaking English in their lessons.

EIC students considered Feature 2 (mediation with social interactions), that is, pair work, group work and the relationship between the lecturer and students to be the second most significant factor for their success in learning ES1.

Students' responses in relation to Feature 3 (mediation with the teaching content), show that the textbook used in ES1 meets their needs, and the learning experiences related to the textbook are satisfying and enjoyable. However, unlike the EIC students, the lecturers are rather negative in their attitude towards the textbook used in ES1: they were dissatisfied with the communication situations prescribed in the textbooks and they found the materials provided in the textbooks insufficient in terms of the structure and the functions for communication.

A key finding derived from the questionnaire surveys is that the EIC students attached the greatest importance to the accuracy of the English they spoke. However, although they considered their grammatical knowledge of English was satisfactory; they still expressed a need for more grammar exercises in ES1. The lecturers mostly agreed that fluency and appropriateness are important in English speaking and that students should achieve fluency in ES1. However, they did not agree with students that it is the most important that English speaking be grammatically correct in ES1.

Limitation and Recommendation for Future Research

This research was limited in the scope of its investigation. As the outliers that were identified in the data analysis have suggested, the study did not look into the impact of the administrative and curricular issues, nor did it examine in details the impact of some individual differences like personality, gender and societal and economic backgrounds. All these issues and features may influence a student's success in learning English speaking in a course of ES1, therefore, further research the impacts concerning them should contribute to a better understanding of the process of learning English speaking in a TEFL setting like the ES1 course in RMUTL.

The limitation of the study also lies in the investigation of the impacts of the details of the classroom instruction and the design of learning activities. Due to the limited space and resources, this study was not able to look into the impacts of different texts, tasks, topics and different types of classroom interactions on EIC students' development in English speaking. Further research in these areas in the course like ES1 would certainly benefit teaching English speaking in Thai universities.

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Gunning Fog Index:	11.32
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Influences of Administrators' Leadership and Communication Skills on Teachers' Empowerment and Students' Achievement

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ABSTRACT

Teachers and students perform at their best when they are managed by an administrator who possesses good leadership styles and communication skills. This study aimed to determine the influence of administrators' leadership and communication skills on teachers' empowerment and students' achievement in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines. It used a descriptive-quantitative design. The respondents were the teachers and students of five public secondary schools in the above-mentioned locale. The research instruments were surveyed questionnaire and an interview guide. Based on the findings of the study, administrators manifested an average extent of practice for leadership styles and communication skills. Teachers manifested an average extent of practice in terms of teachers' empowerment.

Moreover, students showed low achievement in English, Reading, Science, and Mathematics. Furthermore, administrators' leadership styles significantly influence teachers' empowerment but do not significantly

influence students' achievement. Meanwhile, administrators' communication skills significantly influence the teachers' empowerment and students' achievement. However, teachers' empowerment does not significantly influence students' achievement among public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. Thus, the research findings support the idea that administrators' leadership styles influence teachers, empowerment while administrators' communication skills influence both teachers' empowerment and students' achievement in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines.

KEYWORDS

Leadership, communication skills, teacher's empowerment, students achievement, descriptive design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Administrator's leadership and communication skills are two important factors that greatly influence teacher empowerment and student achievement. It has been said that a competent administrator with leadership competencies has a great impact on teachers and students performance. Also, the administrator's style of leadership and communication is the key to making or breaking the image of the school. One cannot be a good leader without good communication. Moreover, teacher empowerment is recognizing teachers' major contributions to improving student achievement; hence, administrators are an important component in empowering teachers to become effective and productive teachers that also influence student performance.

Administrators play a pivotal role in leading their school in a positive and, one can hope, an academically successful manner. Teachers and students tend to feel more comfortable if their administrator understands their role in the school and will respond to the administrators if they are motivated and inspired, (Fullan, 2009).

Bongao, being considered to be the center of the Tawi-Tawi province is where most of the public secondary schools are located. It is composed of different public secondary schools whose vision and mission is to provide quality education to thousands of young learners. However, in most of the schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, it has been observed that poor quality

education is evident in the teachers and students poor performances. Such problems were seen as a great impact that would affect the educational system in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines. To internalize all of these, administrators' leadership and communication skills have something to do with it; hence, this study was realized.

To have a clear picture of the nature of the study, the four variables, leadership styles, communication skills, teacher empowerment and student achievement interplay with one another. It is like a cycle that each contributes to the need of one another. Without the interplay of these variables, a school can never be effective, successful and productive.

Thus, the researcher would like to determine the influences of administrator's leadership and communication skills on teachers' empowerment and students' achievement in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippnes.

FRAMEWORK

The framework of the study is drawn principally from the Path-Goal Leadership Theory. The Path-Goal Model is a theory based on specifying a leader's style or behavior that best fits the employee and work environment to achieve goals (Mitchell & House, 1974). The goal is to increase an employee's motivation, empowerment, and satisfaction so that they become productive members of the organization.

The situation in this study as it relates to the Path-Goal theory begins at the leader's style or behavior. Here, a leader's style or behaviour includes leadership abilities like being directive, supportive, and participative. These skills can greatly influence a teacher and student performance through effective communication. He structures the climate to empower teachers toward constant improvement and can motivate students to make concerted efforts to improve their academic performance. Hence, a leader has to ensure that he adopts a style of leadership that can elicit both the teachers and students performance. Furthermore, how a particular leader performs his behavior, abilities/skills will always impact on teachers as well as students and so the school.

These four components (leadership style, communication skills, teacher empowerment, and student achievement) become now the path that will eventually lead or direct to the goal of which schools will only be

effective and productive when the four components present in this study work together.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influences of administrators' leadership and communication skills on teachers' empowerment and students' achievement in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines. Specifically, the objectives are: (1) to determine the extent of practice of administrators' leadership and communication skills, (2) to ascertain the extent of practice of teachers' empowerment, (3) to find out the students' achievement in English, Reading, Mathematics and Science, and (4) to examine the significant influence of administrators' leadership and communication skills on teachers' empowerment and students' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive-quantitative design. The respondents were the teachers and students of five public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

The development of the survey questionnaires involved preparation, selection, adaptation, and modification of the item-questionnaire. Meanwhile, the development of Interview Guide questions involved preparation and construction of questions which were all based from the quantitative result of the study to strengthen, supplement or confirm the data that were gathered through survey instruments.

To measure the reliability of the research instruments on Leadership Style, Communication Skills and Teacher Empowerment, face validity was employed. To measure the reliability of Students' Achievement Test, it was pilot tested using comparable sample in one of the schools in Bongao. Kuder-Richardson formula 21 coefficient was 0.759 which means that the instrument has a high-reliability index.

The study utilized two types of research instruments. The first type of research instrument was a survey questionnaire. Four separate questionnaires were utilized in this study, to wit: Leadership Style Questionnaire, Communication Skills Questionnaire, Teacher Empowerment

Questionnaire, and Student Achievement Test.

The second type of research instrument was an Interview Guide. This tool is composed of questions that generate tangible data that support the quantitative findings. Four separate interview guide questions were designed for a specific purpose, to wit: Interview Guide on Leadership Style, Interview Guide on Communication Skills, Interview Guide on Teacher Empowerment, and Interview Guide on Student Achievement.

The researcher personally conducted the gathering of data and fully explained the intent of the study. Survey questionnaires for teachers and test questionnaire for students were distributed and administered to gather the needed data. In the case of an interview, respondents were asked several questions based on the quantitative findings to strengthen, supplement and confirm the data gathered through survey instruments. The conversation was tape-recorded. In keeping with the ethics of research, the identities of the respondents and the schools in this study were made confidential.

Descriptive statistical analyses: mean and weighted mean were used for research questions number 1, 2 and 3 to determine the extent practice of administrators' leadership styles, administrators' communication skills and teachers' empowerment. Linear regression was used for research questions number 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 to determine the significant influence of administrators' leadership styles and communication skills on teachers' empowerment and students' achievement. Meanwhile, the mean and average mean were used for research question number 4 to describe students' achievement in English, Reading, Science, and Mathematics.

Interview Guide helped the researcher generate descriptive data that supports the quantitative findings based on the survey instruments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Influences of Administrator's Leadership and Communication Skills on Teachers' Empowerment and Students' Achievement

Variables	Result	Description
Administrators' Leadership Style	3.44	Average Extent
Administrator's Communication Skills	3.25	Average Extent
Teacher's Empowerment	3.58	Average Extent
Student's Achievement	11.38	Low Achievement
Influence of Administrator's Leadership Styles on Teacher Empowerment	0.004	Significant
Influence of Administrator's Leadership Styles on Students' Achievement	0.079	Not Significant
Influence of Administrator's Leadership Skills on Teacher Empowerment	0.001	Significant
Influence of Administrator's Leadership Skills on Students' Achievement	0.028	Significant
Influence of Teacher Empowerment on Students' Achievement	0.958	Not Significant

As shown in Table 1, the result of the study revealed that administrators' leadership styles in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi manifested an average extent of practice with a total mean score of 3.44. It implies that administrators need to look deeper into the problems as to how they can improve and manage leadership by bringing out leadership styles problems or identify its root cause and be given emphasis so to improve their attitude/behavior to acquire good leadership styles and create a positive influence in school. The findings of this study support the observation made by Fisher (2005) that administrators' leadership styles are seen in their behaviors and how they interrelate with school staff. If he possesses an effective leadership style, he can engender a positive climate in the school.

Administrators' communication skills in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi manifested an average extent of practice with a total mean score of 3.25. It implies that administrators should consider communication as an integral part of an effective and successful academic institution thereby emphasizing the importance of communication by making sure that skills in communication be improved at its highest level to achieve linearity most especially in information dissemination. The findings

of this study support the observation made by Rowicki (1999) that when communication flows effectively, the organization will run smoothly.

Teachers' empowerment in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi exhibited an average extent of practice with a total mean score of 3.58. It implies that administrators should not limit a teacher's freedom in making decisions and involvement in school activities for them to grow professionally. The findings of this study support the observation made by Boglera and Somechb (2004) that when teachers experience greater opportunities for professional growth, they feel empowered at school.

Students' achievement in public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi showed low achievement with a mean score of 11.38. It implies that students are weak in all the subject areas tested; hence, school administrators and teachers should provide remediation on the said subjects to improve students' academic achievement. The findings of this study support the observation made by Quinn (2002) that administrators should be assertive instructional leaders who promote high expectations for students by continuously focusing on instruction and emphasizing the importance of academics and student achievement.

Meanwhile, with a p-value of 0.004 which is less than the alpha level (p-value<.05), it manifested that there is a significant influence of administrators' leadership styles on teachers' empowerment. It implies that administrators' leadership style is reflected in the teachers' performance. In other words, if an administrator performs well, it can greatly empower or influence teachers. On the contrary, if the administrator does not perform well, it also affects the performance of the teachers. The findings of this study support the observation made by Sharma (2011) that if administrators have good leadership qualities, they will have a good leadership which in many ways can greatly influence teacher performance and student performance as well.

With a p-value of 0.795 which is greater than the alpha level (p-value<.05), it manifested that there is no significant influence on administrators' leadership styles on students' achievement. It implies that administrators do not influence students' achievement because they limit their leadership to the selected few. The findings of this study support the observation made by Rautiola (2009) that the direct effects of school leaders on student achievement are indeterminable. School leadership appears to have a more indirect impact on a student's success.

With a p-value of 0.001 which is less than the alpha level (p-value<.05), it manifested that there is a significant influence of the administrators' communication skills on teachers' empowerment. The result implies that administrators' healthy and open communication towards teachers is the result of his good communication skills. In contrast, if administrators do not possess good communication skills toward teachers, it would result in miscommunication and disorganization. The findings of this study support the observation made by Ärlestig (2008) that communication places a great factor in determining teacher performance. The way administrators communicate, directly affect the school teachers.

With a p-value of 0.028 which is less than the alpha level (p-value<.05), it manifested that there is a significant influence of administrators' communication skills on students' achievement. It implies that administrators' communication skills have a great influence on students' achievement. If administrators stay connected with the students, the latter will be encouraged to improve their academic performance. The findings of this study support the observation made by Bolman (2010) that spending time with students, getting to know them, listening to what they have to say and considering their feelings and goals creates a positive learning environment.

With a p-value of 0.958 which is greater than the alpha level (p-value<.05), it manifested that there is no significant influence on teachers' empowerment on students' achievement. It implies that teachers do not influence students to perform well because they were not given full autonomy to perform their task. Some contributing factors that affect their relationship like teachers meets their classes irregularly; seldom were they involved in decision making because they're not given a chance to choose their schedule. Some of them handled subjects not in line with their course while others were seldom sent to attend seminars/trainings to upgrade their teaching strategies. The findings of the study support the observation made by Squire-Kelly (2012), that there is no correlation between teacher empowerment and student achievement because teachers were not involved in decision making and that they were not given autonomy to make a decision.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, administrators from public secondary schools in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines manifested an average extent of practice in terms of leadership styles and communication skills. Teachers also manifested an average extent of practice in terms of teacher empowerment. Moreover, in terms of students' achievement, public secondary students of Bongao, Tawi-Tawi showed low achievement in English (Language), Reading, Science and Mathematics, respectively.

Furthermore, administrators' leadership styles significantly influence teachers' empowerment but do not significantly influence students' achievement. Meanwhile, administrators' communication skills significantly influence teachers' empowerment and students' achievement. However, teachers' empowerment does not significantly influence students' achievement. Thus, the research findings support the idea that administrators' leadership styles influence teachers' empowerment while administrators' communication skills influence both teachers' empowerment and students' achievement in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines. Hence, school administrators should better understand their crucial role in influencing their teachers and students to perform well that leads to the development of the whole school system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended that school administrators must be flexible and use leadership styles that meet the needs of the teachers and students. Also, they must improve their communication skills and provide two-way communication with teachers and students to create a healthy and positive learning environment. They should offer teachers more opportunities to participate in decision making and encouraged them to grow professionally. Also, they should provide students with more avenues to heighten their academic achievement. Moreover, they should regularly visit teachers and students in their class to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place in their school.

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Level of Self – Efficacy and Resilience among Adolescent Mothers

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ABSTRACT

Early parenthood is associated with challenging life trajectories following the transition to parenthood. Compared to adult mothers, young women who become mothers are less likely to be successful in educational, economic and occupational attainment, and more likely to be single parents living in poverty and to have been victims of abuse. The study aimed to

assess the level of self-efficacy and resilience among adolescent mothers and to know and understand the risks and challenges that an adolescent mother had encountered and how she socially adjusts to such adversities by understanding the level of her self-efficacy and resilience. A descriptive-quantitative research design was used. Purposive sampling was utilized. The three-part questionnaire was used in the study: demographic questionnaire, Adversity Response Profile, and General Self-Efficacy Scale. Ethical considerations were observed. The level of resilience of the adolescent mothers based on the adversity response profile is moderately low, and level of self-efficacy of the adolescent mothers is moderate. The level of self-efficacy is moderate despite the fact that resilience is moderately low. Even though the situation is difficult, that can be augmented by maximizing one's potential to overcome adversity.

KEYWORDS

Social sciences, adolescent mothers, self-efficacy, resilience, descriptive design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, and International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), international (2014), the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) last 2013 showed that one in ten young Filipino women age 15-19 has begun childbearing: 8 percent are already mothers. And another 2 percent are pregnant with their first child. Moreover, the United Nation Population Fund stated that teenage Filipino, who gives birth before age 20, belongs to the low-class society.

Motherhood is one of the most important roles of a woman around the world. It is a kind of work that has no salary but carries a huge responsibility. It is considered as time demanding job that needs financial and emotional support coming from the family. Teenage motherhood occurs in a very critical stage of a teenager's life where they must assume the role of a mother and at the same time their role as a teenager.

According to Cherry (2016), resilient people are able to utilize their skills and strengths to cope and recover from problems and challenges. The term resilience is reserved for unpredicted or markedly successful adaptations to

negative life events, trauma, stress and other forms of risk (Green, 2002). On the other hand, Albert Bandura defines self-efficacy as judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations (Bandura, 1982).

Adolescent parenthood is one challenge that can have a considerable impact on a young person's life and is associated with a number of adversities (Robertson, 2010). There were a lot of factors why teenage pregnancy is rampant nowadays. To mention a few here are some of the reasons: lack of sexual education, lack of attention and affection from family, a feeling of not being loved and cared for, and peer pressure.

If people's capacity for intelligent, self-directed regulation is strong enough, then regardless of inclinations, past experiences or personal traits, they usually can do the adaptive or right thing in most situations (Lieberman, 2007).

The gathered data was used to improve the quality of life of these young parents and to help ease the burdens they experience through the proposed action plans that can be expanded from other support groups like the government, non-government organizations and other private sectors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher assessed the level of self-efficacy and resilience among teenage mother in San Nicolas, Labangon, Cebu City and explored their lived experiences as a young parent to comprehend their role, their self-concept and their capability in solving their own problems.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive-quantitative design. This design seeks to describe the current status of a variable or phenomenon (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007).

The researcher collected the data from thirty (30) teenage mothers. Purposive sampling was utilized in selecting the respondents. The inclusion criteria for purposive sampling were as follows: respondents are residing in San Nicolas, Labangon, Cebu City, ages 15 to 19 years old, with a child or currently pregnant and is living or not living with their partners.

Data were gathered using a standardized questionnaire developed by Paul Stoltz and Schwarzer and Jerusalem. The questionnaire is divided into three (3) parts. The first part is the respondent's demographic data which composed of the respondent's age, highest educational attainment, if they are presently attending school, living with husband or live-in partner and lastly if they have support from their partner. The second part was the Adversity Response Profile by Paul Stoltz (2004) that measured the adolescent mother's resilience regarding different adversities in life. And lastly, the third part was the General Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. which measured adolescent mother's self-efficacy or a belief of her capability in achieving something.

Privacy and confidentiality are the prime ethical considerations of this study. The informants were duly debriefed and educated that all their responses and identity are to remain private. Only the researcher knows the ID code used by the research respondents. Consent to participate is acquired before the data gathering.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Profile of the Adolescent Mothers

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
15 years old	2	6.7
17 years old	1	3.3
18 years old	11	36.7
19 years old	16	53.3
Education Attainment		
Elementary Level	4	13.3
Elementary Graduate	1	3.3
High School Level	16	53.3
High School Graduate	6	20.0
College Level	3	10.0
Are you presently attending school?		
Yes	3	10.5
No	27	90.0

Living with husband/ live-in partner?		
Yes	26	86.7
No	4	13.3
With Partner's Support		
Yes	28	93.3
No	2	6.7

Most of the adolescent mothers taken in this study are 18 (36.7%) and 19 (53.3%) years old. This is the considered legal age based on the Philippine Constitution. The 53.3% (16) of them have attained up to high school level of schooling, 90.0% (26) is presently not attending school, 86.7 % (26) is living with partner .93.3% (28) is receiving support from partner ; this means that 2 of the total 4 adolescent mothers are not living with their partner and still receives support from them. To sum this all up, it is known that adolescent stage are prone to vulnerability and they still need parents to support and guide them. It was expected that most of them are in the high school level of schooling and are presently not in school obviously because some just gave birth and others don't have anybody to help them watch their child but herself. In the Philippine setting, it is also common that when an adolescent becomes pregnant, both parties usually decide to live together. Adolescent mothers must strive to balance two competing roles: the adolescent role and the parental role. As adolescents, they require a great amount of time for education and social life. And this contributes, in large part, to their growth and development (Steinberg, 2011).

Table 2. Mean Level of Resilience of Adolescent Mothers in the Adversity Response Profile

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
You suffer a financial setback.	3.43	Moderate
You are overlooked for a promotion.	2.93	Low
You are criticized for a big project that you just completed.	3.13	Moderately Low
You accidentally delete a very important file.	3.57	Moderate
The high-priority project you are working on got cancelled.	3.30	Moderate Low

Someone you respect ignores your attempt to discuss an important issue.	3.43	Moderate
People respond unfavorably to your latest ideas.	3.50	Moderate
You are unable to take a much needed vacation.	2.93	Low
You hit every red light on your way to an important document.	3.43	Moderate
After extensive searching, you cannot find an important document.	3.33	Moderately Low
Your workplace is understaffed.	3.13	Moderately Low
You miss an important appointment.	3.53	Moderate
Your personal and work obligations are out of balance.	3.37	Moderate
You never seem to have enough money.	3.87	Moderate
You are not exercising regularly when you know you should be.	3.00	Moderately Low
Your organization is not meeting its project goals.	3.13	Moderately Low
1our computer crashed for the third time this week.	2.63	Low
The meeting you are in is a total waste of time.	2.80	Low
You lost something that is important to you.	2.77	Low
Your boss adamantly disagrees with your decision.	3.27	Moderately Low
Grand Mean	3.23	Moderately Low

*1.00-1.75 Low, 1.76-2.50 Mild, 2.51-3.25 Moderate, 3.25-4.00 High

The level of resilience of the adolescent mothers based on the adversity response profile is moderately low with a weighted mean of 3.23. This means that adolescent mothers have less ability to overcome adversities. This could affect the emotional and psychological state of the post-partum teenage mother. Adolescents often have fewer life experiences than adult women, making them less able to cope with the life changes as they become a mother. Nonjudgmental and developmentally appropriate interactions are essential for the nurse to do to the care of adolescent mothers. Those who lack this resilience may instead become overwhelmed dwelling on problems and use unhealthy coping mechanisms. Disappointment or failure might drive them to unhealthy, destructive, or even dangerous behaviors. These

individuals are slower to recover from setbacks and may experience more psychological distress as a result (Cherry 2016).

Table 3. Level of Self-efficacy of Adolescent Mothers According to the General Self-Efficacy Scale

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.	2.57	Moderate
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.	2.23	Mild
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish events.	2.67	Moderate
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.	2.93	Moderate
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.	2.53	Moderate
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.	2.60	Moderate
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my copying abilities.	3.07	Moderate
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.	2.63	Moderate
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.	2.70	Moderate
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.	2.90	Moderate
Grand Mean	2.68	Moderate

The level of self-efficacy of the adolescent mothers as measured using the General Self-Efficacy Scale is generally moderate. This means that in general the adolescent mothers having a moderate level of self-efficacy may believe in themselves that they have the capability and skill to do a task or a change. Among other indicators, "If someone opposes me, "I can find the means and ways to get what I want" shows the lowest weighted mean of 2.23 which indicates mild level of self-efficacy in this area. Adolescent mothers having a moderate level of self-efficacy indicates that they have confidence and belief in themselves that they can overcome adversities. It was stated that higher levels of social support were positively associated with high self-efficacy. Since the majority (93.3%) of our respondents receives support from partners, it could be a determinant why adolescent mothers in this study

have a moderate level of self-efficacy. Since the respondents in this study only have a moderate level of self-efficacy, it is the nurses' responsibility to enhance it by giving health education such as teaching how to enhance perception regarding confidence in facing different life challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that not all adolescent mothers who believe that they can overcome something can overcome it when they are presently facing adversity in life. The present findings highlight the fact that facing major adversity is not mandatory to develop resilience. The day to day life hassle is enough to boost resilience in adolescent mothers which serves as a resource of their self-efficacy. Whether the level of self-efficacy is moderate and level of resilience is low, a moderate self-efficacy could still give a positive outcome to adolescent mothers who have low resilience to adversities. Even if they continue to fail because of having low resilience, a moderate self-efficacy could be the one to keep her from not giving up in facing adversities in life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Motivational Practices Towards Employees Retention in the Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the motivational practices towards employee retention in the Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) industry in Dumaguete City, Philippines involving BPO respondents. The study used the descriptive-correlation method. It utilized the survey questionnaire in determining the motivational practices the BPO industry in Dumaguete City has employed toward their employees to sustain workers' retention. The findings indicate that majority of the respondents have been in their adulthood stage, single, and are mostly female categorized as Generation Y workers who have been enticed to work as call center agents in the different BPO companies in the city. In conclusion, the motivational practices employed by the BPO companies toward their employees considered to be millennial in Dumaguete City have an impact on employee retention in the company and have a significant relationship between the extent of company effort and extent of impact on employee retention in terms of

organizational strategies, organizational cultures, organizational benefits, and overall variables has been established. As a recommendation, an effective formulation of engagement and retention strategies be done to reduce attrition common to Generation Y employees in the BPO Industry.

KEYWORDS

Business and management, motivational practices, employee retention, BPO, descriptive – correlational design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) has become one of the means to reach in today's business mantra of faster, cheaper, and better. Relative to this, Krstic and Kahrovic (2015) assert that outsourcing business has become an important tool over the past decade whereby more and more large and small companies are turning to it as a growing method or strategy aiming to control overhead costs, retraining payroll, and better access to outside knowledge.

In the Philippines, the Business Process Outsourcing sector seems to be on an ecstatic ride because of the whirlpool of opportunities it readily provides. It has emerged rapidly as a business phenomenon thereby generating 1.2 million direct jobs and US$22 billion in revenues in the country in 2015 (IT-BPO Industry, 2016).

Though work opportunities abound in the BPO industry, it has met enormous challenges confronting its very existence just like other business organizations. One of the major issues and a major problem in the business process outsourcing sector is the high turnout of employee attrition. This employee attrition in the BPOs has terrible effects on the organization because the high attrition costs considerably increase the costs to the organization. So, the industry has to battle the amount of disruption due to the unforeseen exits. The more the people leave in an organization, the more it drains the company's resources like recruitment expenses, training and orientation resources and time. More so, the high attrition rate additionally affects the productivity of the organization.

Viewed from mentioned above, the industry has always been actively finding effective ways and strategies to reduce the prevalence of its high

attrition rate. In this vein, promoting the motivation of workers gets the lens then because it is widely recognized in the human resource literature that it leads to a higher quality of human resources and optimum performance resulting to higher productivity (Opu, 2008). In other words, when workers feel productive in their workplaces, then they would like to grow with the company. Thus, it is highly thought that one key factor that helps to reduce the rate of attrition is when people feel motivated with their work.

It is for these reasons that this study was undertaken to investigate the motivational practices the BPO Industry in Dumaguete City has employed toward their employees in the hope of maximizing employee retention in their respective organizations. The study's results could be used as a basis for formulating employee retention strategies in the BPO industry.

FRAMEWORK

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, Herzberg's Two Factor theory and McClelland's Needs theory served as the foundation of the present study. It is highly believed that these motivational theories have provided a better understanding of their relations to the extent of motivational practices affecting employee's retention in the IT- BPO industry, specifically in Dumaguete City.

In 1943, Abraham Maslow developed a theory that was known as Human Motivation (Dias, 2012) which focused on the psychological needs of employees' (Pursuit of Happiness, 2016). Maslow (1943) affirmed that there are five (5) levels of human needs which are known as the hierarchy of needs. This theory emphasizes that as one level is satisfied, it will no longer be a motivator. In other words, people start from the bottom of the hierarchy and work their way up. Maslow's hierarchy of needs consists of the following: self-actualization needs, esteem needs, social needs, safety needs, and physiological needs.

Moreover, Frederick Herzberg's theory is closely linked to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs believing in a Two Factor Theory (also known as Motivation-Hygiene Theory) (Theories of Motivation, 2016). This theory states that two factors that affect how motivated or satisfied an employee is at work. Furthermore, effective motivator factors do not only lead to job satisfaction, but also for better performance at work. Herzberg (1968) suggested that businesses should motivate employees by adopting a

democratic approach to management and by improving the nature and content of the actual job through a certain method.

Furthermore, McClelland (2018) expounds on his acquired-needs theory that an individual's specific needs are acquired over time and are shaped by one's life experiences. He labeled three (3) types of motivational needs. These three needs influence a person's motivation and effectiveness in certain job functions. An achievement motivated person seeks achievement, attainment of realistic but challenging goals, and advancement in the job. An authority motivated person, on the other hand, produces a need to be influential, effective and to make an impact. There is also motivation and need towards increasing personal status and prestige. And lastly, an affiliation motivated person needs friendly relationships and is motivated towards interaction with other people. They tend to conform to the norms of their work group.

The major motivation of this study was adopted from the two-factor, or motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, 1968). The motivator and hygiene factors were categorized into three sets of independent variables: organizational strategies factors, organizational culture factors, and benefits factors (AlKandari & Hammad, 2009). Organizational Strategies include Achievement, Recognition, and Advancement; organizational cultures include the company policy & administration, interpersonal relation, and job security; and benefits factors include salary, compensation, and benefits.

METHODOLOGY

The study used the quantitative descriptive method. It utilized the researcher-made survey questionnaire in determining the impact of organizational strategies to employees' retention in the BPO industry and was administered to 366 respondents who are employees of the BPO companies of Dumaguete. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part I was the profile of the respondents comprising the name of the company, job level management, gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, job status, job position, and length of service and Part II concentrated on the employee's motivation and retention, which were used to assess the extent of company's effort in providing motivation to its employees and extent of impact to employee's retention in terms organizational strategies factors.

After the data was collected, survey results were tabulated and analyzed with the aid of Microsoft Excel Data Analysis version 2013.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents

Majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket 21-30 followed by below 20. The remaining small portions are in 41-50 and 51 years old age bracket. Female respondents dominate in the research population constituting a percentage of 63 compared to male respondents with 37% only. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the respondents are single, while 17% are married and the smallest percentage is taken by those who are widow/widower. Majority of the respondents are bachelor's degree holder. Many of the respondents hold a permanent status while the remaining portions are in contractual and temporary statuses. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the respondents belong to the lower level job management while 4% are in senior level management. Majority of the respondents are call center agents of the company. A good number of the respondents have a working experience of 5 years and below in the company and/or in the industry.

Extent of Company Effort

Table 1. The Extent of the Company's Effort concerning of Organizational Strategies

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Achievement	0.65	3.27	Very High
Recognition	0.66	3.25	High
Advancement	0.66	3.32	Very High
Overall	0.66	3.29	Very High

Table 1 gives the result of the extent of company effort in providing organizational strategies. As seen on the table above, the overall weighted mean of the extent of company effort regarding organizational strategies is 3.29 which is interpreted as very high. It has been observed that among the three subfactors, recognition was rated high only. This implies that the organizational strategies factor which includes achievement, recognition, and advancement have been provided in the company, although companies might consider in strengthening its recognition process.

Table 2. The Extent of the Company's Effort concerning the Organizational Culture

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Company Policy & Administration	0.64	3.32	Very High
Interpersonal Relation	0.68	3.27	Very High
Job Security	0.62	3.38	Very High
Overall	0.65	3.32	Very High

Table 2 presents the extent of company effort in providing organizational cultures to its respondents. This reveals the extent of company effort regarding organizational cultures. The data confers the extent of the company's efforts as used in Organizational Cultures obtaining a rating of very high with an overall weighted mean of 3.32. This indicates that the company has observed these motivational practices in their institution.

Table 3. Extent of the Company's Effort concerning the Organizational Benefits

ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Salary	0.74	3.09	High
Compensation	0.70	3.38	Very High
Benefits	0.78	3.05	High
Overall	0.74	3.17	High

Table 3 gives the extent of company effort in providing organizational benefits to their employees. These data determine the extent of the company's effort in terms of organizational benefits. Data shows that the extent of company effort in terms of organizational benefits is rated high with an overall weighted mean of 3.17. This tells us that there is still more room for the company to fully satisfy its employees with regard to giving them benefits.

3.3 Extent of Impact on Employee Retention

Table 4. Extent of the Employee Retention concerning of the Organizational Strategies

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Achievement	0.55	3.35	Very High
Recognition	0.55	3.34	High
Advancement	0.57	3.36	Very High
Overall	0.56	3.36	Very High

Table 4 shows the extent of the impact of organizational strategies to employee retention. As observed in Table 12, the extent of employee retention regarding the organizational strategies is rated very high with an overall weighted mean of 3.36. This indicates that both achievement and advancement have a very high impact on employee retention while only high for recognition. Thus, based on the result, the company must strengthen its motivational practices on these factors.

Table 5. The Extent of the Employee Retention in concerning of the Organizational Cultures

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Company Policy & Administration	0.47	3.37	Very High
Interpersonal Relation	0.55	3.39	Very High
Job Security	0.68	3.45	Very High
Overall	0.57	3.40	Very High

Table 5 presents the extent of the employee retention regarding organizational cultures. This revealed that the respondents rate organizational culture as very high with an overall weighted mean of 3.40. As observed in the table, all the subfactors are rated very high which implies that organizational cultures are essential to employee retention in the BPO industry.

Table 6. The Extent of Employee Retention in terms of Organizational Benefits

ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS	Standard Deviation	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Salary	0.57	3.26	Very High
Compensation	0.58	3.30	Very High
Benefits	0.63	3.24	High
Overall	0.59	3.27	Very High

Table 6 presents the extent of employee retention concerning organizational benefits. As shown in Table, on the areas of salary and compensation, the respondents rate them very high with a weighted mean of 3.26 and 3.30 respectively. While in the area of benefits, respondents rate it 3.24 or high. These areas obtain an overall weighted mean of 3.27 or Very High. This infers that organizational benefits have a big impact on employee retention.

Test of Significant Relationship between the extent of company effort and extent of impact on employee retention

Table 7. Significant Relationship between the Extent of Company Effort and the Extent of Impact on Employee Retention

VARIABLES	r	Interpretation	Remarks	Decision
Organizational Strategies	0.97073	Very strong relationship	Significant	Reject H_{01}
Organizational Culture	0.755929	Strong Relationship	Significant	Reject H_{02}
Organizational Benefits	0.975417	Very Strong Relationship	Significant	Reject H_{03}
Overall	0.991468	Very Strong Relationship	Significant	Reject H_{04}

Table 7 presents the result for the test of the significant relationship between the company effort and extent of impact on employee retention. This data is necessary to establish whether there is a significant relationship between the two. As observed in Table 15, the extent of company effort and extent of impact on employee retention regarding organizational strategies indicate that there is a very strong negative relationship with the value of r

= -0.97073 between variables. The relationship is negative because as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the company's effort and extent of employee's retention in terms of organizational strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions are drawn: respondents are millennial, mostly female single workers who have high interest in working as call center agents in the different BPO companies, specifically in Dumaguete city. BPO companies have incorporated programs and provisions to develop skills and talents in their respective organization as an effort to motivate their employees, and the motivational practices have a greater impact on employee retention in the company. Further, there is a significant relationship between the extent of company effort, and the extent of impact on employee retention in terms of organizational strategies, organizational cultures, organizational benefits, and overall variables has been established.

Finally, the study revealed that despite very high assessments on company's efforts toward employees' retention, the respondents still seek more from the employer. It can now be strongly concluded that the preceding results coincide with the theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs advancing the notion that human beings can never be satisfied. The theory claims that as one level is satisfied, it will no longer be a motivator. In other words, people start from the bottom of the hierarchy and work their way up.

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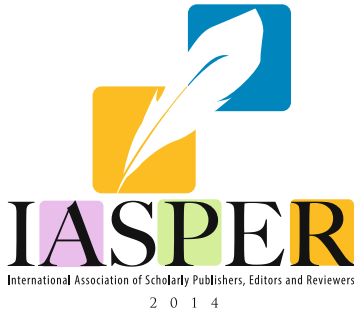
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