

## STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE: EXAMINING THE STRESS LEVEL, STRESSORS AND MANAGEMENT STYLES AMONG SECONDARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

### ESTRESSE NO TRABALHO: EXAMINANDO O NÍVEL DE ESTRESSE, ESTRESSORES E ESTILOS DE GESTÃO ENTRE PROFESSORES DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA SECUNDÁRIA

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#### RESUMO

Este estudo centra-se no stress ocupacional e no estilo de gestão do stress dos professores de Educação Física Secundária. Utilizou-se o método descritivo de pesquisa e a técnica de amostragem aleatória simples na seleção dos respondentes do estudo. 119 professores de Educação Física Secundária de Marinduque foram utilizados como entrevistados. O questionário da pesquisa serviu como instrumento na coleta dos dados necessários. Porcentagem, mediana, média, teste U de Mann-Whitney e teste de Kruskal-Wallis foram as ferramentas estatísticas empregadas na computação dos dados. Os resultados revelaram que o nível de estresse ocupacional da maioria dos entrevistados foi considerado moderado nos aspectos físicos, emocionais e sociais devido às cargas diárias excessivas de trabalho e outras responsabilidades atribuídas, instalações escolares e equipamentos esportivos limitados, tempo inadequado alocado para as aulas, dificuldades de aprendizagem dos alunos e situação financeira insatisfeita (grau salarial). Quando se trata de estilos de gestão do estresse, a maioria dos entrevistados costuma comer, caminhar, ouvir música e conversar, para aliviar o efeito do estresse. Os dados revelam que há diferença significativa no nível de estresse ocupacional em termos de indicador social quando agrupado por faixa salarial e indicador emocional quando agrupado por carga horária e especialização por disciplina. Da mesma forma, também há diferença significativa nos estilos de enfrentamento quando agrupados por idade e faixa salarial. Além da formulação de políticas e diretrizes para promover um ambiente favorável ao trabalho, foi concebido e sugerido um programa de bem-estar para professores como intervenção para professores.

**Palavras-chave:** estresse, estilos de gerenciamento de estresse, professores de educação física secundária.

#### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the occupational stress and stress management style of Secondary Physical Education teachers. The descriptive method of research was employed and simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents of the study. 119 Secondary Physical Education teachers in Marinduque were utilized as respondents. Survey questionnaire served as an instrument in gathering the necessary data. Percentage, median, mean, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis test were the statistical tools employed in computing the data. Results revealed that majority of the respondent's level of occupational stress was found moderate on the physical, emotional and social aspects due to excessive daily workloads and other assigned responsibilities, limited school facilities and sports equipment, inadequate time allotted for classes, students' learning disabilities and unsatisfied financial status (salary grade). When it comes to stress management styles, most of the respondents often engage in eating, walking, listening to music and talking, to relieve the effect of stress. The data reveals that there is a significant difference on the level of occupational stress in terms of social indicator when grouped according to salary grade and emotional indicator when group according to workload and subject specialization. Likewise, there is also a significant difference on the coping styles when group according to age and salary grade. Aside from policy and guidelines formulation to promote work-friendly environment, a proposed wellness program for teachers was designed and suggested as intervention for teachers.

**Keywords:** stress, stress management styles, secondary physical education teachers.

#### Introduction

Teaching is one noble profession that takes a special role to impart knowledge, skill, and wisdom to the students. It is a challenging and considered a stressful job<sup>1</sup>. Teachers had been facing occupational stress based on a survey, and it had been ranked as the second toughest job among 26 occupations observed in a study. It was said that over half of the teachers'



population considered leaving their profession due to stress. In 2010, 81.2% of the teachers surveyed by the National Teachers expressed that they experienced stress, anxiety, or depression at work<sup>2</sup>. Physical Education (PE) teachers were among those groups of teachers who have been experiencing stress<sup>3-5</sup>. PE teachers, which also considered the important human resources of the school and basic pillars of education, were facing a very challenging career that requires exceptional skills. They had various tasks to perform such as preparation, teaching, coaching, training, assessment, administrative, and other unclassified tasks. The aforementioned workloads of PE teachers were becoming heavier, harder, and more challenging<sup>4</sup>. And despite their dedication, PE teachers begin to suffer from a lack of support, appreciation, salary, working condition, career development, and public respect. This could intensify circumstances that might cause them to suffer from more stressful jobs.

Lawver and Smith<sup>6</sup> stated that stress affects classroom performance, work satisfaction, and retention of teachers. Too much stress could lead to poor physical, mental and emotional health of teachers and can also affect teacher performance, teacher-student relationships, and/or eventually student performance as well. Stress could gradually change the characteristics and personality of a child, as does any adult, to which teachers find it difficult to ignore. Moreover, it could gradually erode the teacher's enthusiasm and commitment to teaching in classroom environments, undermine their capacity to meet the needs of students, and ultimately result in burnout<sup>7</sup>. Today, issue of stress among PE teacher's performance is becoming a global problem that has no boundaries particularly for those in a sporting discipline<sup>8</sup>. Along with this the researcher who has teaching PE and coaching several sports competitions for many years has been experienced and has witnessed the various effect of stress from colleagues. Management and regulation are some of the most relevant and powerful principles for maintaining and enhancing human capital in any organization<sup>9</sup>. However, it was found that the Division of Marinduque, Philippines does not yet have study on the level of stress and management style of physical education teachers. Further, the Department of Education was not specific about offering any stress-reduction measures, thus the importance of assessing the stress level and management style to minimize exposure to stress, particularly to the physical education teachers is highly needed.

For several years, there have been numerous studies that were conducted in relation to occupational stress of teachers in the Physical Education field. These factors were identified as internal, external and job-related tasks<sup>10</sup>. Internal factors may include relation with other colleagues, conflicts, relation with the management, violence in school or in the sports field, and even students' behavior<sup>11,12</sup>. Furthermore, external factors are salary, social recognition, and reform process<sup>13</sup>. For job-related tasks, these may be concerning planning of activities, overpopulated classes, inadequate resources and workload<sup>14</sup>. These stressors may be considered as physical, emotional, behavioral and social indicators that can affect teachers' performance. Despite all of these occupational stressors, the stress management styles of teachers come to place. Teachers employ various stress management styles to maintain their well-being and effectiveness in the classroom. Common strategies include engaging in regular physical activity, practicing mindfulness and relaxation techniques, and seeking social support from colleagues and friends<sup>15,16</sup>. Many teachers also emphasize the importance of work-life balance, dedicating time to hobbies and personal interests outside of work<sup>17,18</sup>. Additionally, professional development opportunities focused on stress management and self-care are increasingly popular, helping PE teachers develop resilience and maintain a positive outlook despite the challenges of their demanding roles<sup>19</sup>. On the one hand, such studies were internationally conducted. Thus, this necessitates a comparable study to be conducted in the local context of the Philippines in order to determine if the findings of other scholars from other parts of the globe can also be observed.



Therefore, this research study is anchored on the stress appraisal theory/transactional theory of psychological stress and coping of Folkman<sup>20</sup>. This theory stated that stress results when demands (pressure) exceed our resources or capabilities. Stressors were demands made by both internal and external environments that upset the balance of an individual, thus affecting both physical and psychological well-being and requiring action to restore balance. An appraisal is a process of evaluating a situation for her well-being (primary appraisal) and interpreting whether there is anything she could do to cope with possible benefits or threats (secondary appraisal). Primary appraisal is the motivational significance of the situation[20]. Thus, appraisal or assessment is very important for the success of an academic institution.

The research was conducted in the division of Marinduque comprising nine districts namely Boac North, Boac South, Mogpog, Gasan, Buenavista, Sta. North, Sta. Cruz South, Sta. Cruz East, and Torrijos where the chosen respondents are employed. Knowing that stress is unavoidable and often present among the teachers most especially for Music Arts Physical Education and Health (MAPEH) teachers whom who usually also take charge of the training and coaching of the school athletes, then it was very important to undertake the said study.

Specifically, this study aims to determine the occupational stress, stressors and management styles of Secondary Physical Education teachers; and if there any significant difference on the level of occupational stress and stress management styles of the respondents in terms of profile. Finally, the findings of the study could serve as a guide for designing an intervention program that help teachers better handle their stress and prevents them from experiencing its negative effects. Moreover, this would help school administrators develop a wellness program that would be included in their annual plan to ensure the safety of the teachers.

## Methods

### *Research Design*

The researcher used a descriptive method of research in this study. A descriptive method of research is a fact-finding study with an accurate and adequate interpretation of the findings. The descriptive method appraises carefully the worthiness of the present study<sup>21</sup>. This method was utilized to gather information and find out occupational stress level and stress management styles of secondary physical education teachers.

Using survey questionnaire, a quantitative research approach was applied to determine the occupational stress level, stressors, and management styles of secondary teachers Marinduque. Given the fact that Music Arts Physical Education and Health (MAPEH) teachers have four teaching preparations, in addition to several tasks such as; coaching, training, administrative, and other unclassified tasks, stress is really evident. Thus, it was very important to have an appraisal of their stress level for possible intervention programs which was missing on the province.

With the total population 170 Secondary PE teachers from the nine (9) districts of Marinduque, 119 teachers were identified as the respondents. The number of respondents was determined using Slovin's Formula. The researcher used simple random sampling using the fishbowl method to select the final participants who will answer the questionnaire.

### *Sample*

Majority of the respondents were female and relatively young ranging from 21-35 years old. Somewhat half of them are married while the other half are single, for most of them have been teaching for 1-5 years. When it comes to salary grade, most of the teachers have salary grade 11 which is the entry level for the teachers and has a workload of 30 hours per week and more. Most of them are college graduate and specialized in MAPEH and with only 1 doctorate graduate.



### Instrument

The survey instrument was divided into three sections to gather the data concerning profile, occupational stress, stressors, and stress management styles among physical education teachers in Marinduque. The survey instrument was validated by three research experts related to the field. Some revisions were also made with the help of a psychologist. After the initial validation of the questionnaire, a pilot testing was carried out for further testing of the survey instrument. Thirty (30) secondary PE teachers from the Division of Marinduque who were not included as respondents in the actual study participated in the pilot testing.

The validity and reliability of the survey items were confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. All items in the questionnaire passed the reliability using the post hoc test analysis. The obtained value of Cronbach's alpha for occupational stress was 0.893 at a significant level of 0.001. Thus, the reliability of the questionnaire items was verified.

### Statistical analysis

To gather the data needed for this study, the researcher utilized a self-administered survey instrument, which was distributed to 119 secondary Physical Education teachers in the nine (9) districts of Marinduque.

First, to determine the data distribution of each construct being measured in the present study, a normality test was performed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ( $n \geq 50$ ). As can be seen in Table 1, the constructs are equally distributed in terms of normality. Hence, the present study determined that a non-parametric test can be used. Since the participants for the study is relatively small, such tests may be performed<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, non-parametric tests are usually distribution-free tests in nature and are based on fewer assumptions<sup>23</sup>. Meanwhile, a reliability test was also performed. As presented in Table 2, the Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value is ranging from .68 to .89. Therefore, the instruments are deemed reliable.

After the data collection, the data were tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as; percentage to describe the proportions of the population of the respondents' profile; median to determine occupational stress, stressors, and stress management styles of the PE teachers; and mean to compute the average median score for each indicator. In addition, inferential statistics were also used such as; Mann-Whitney U test or Wilcoxon rank-sum test a non-parametric test was used to compare if there is a significant difference between the responses of demographic types with two groups; while Kruskal Wallis test or H-test was utilized to compare 3 or more independent groups in the data. It was also used to identify if there were significant differences in the responses for each data set for each demographic type.

**Table 1.** Test of Normality and Reliability Test

Construct	Mean $\pm$ SD	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
		Statistic	df	Sig.	
PI	2.80 $\pm$ .66	.075	119	.100	.68
EI	3.00 $\pm$ .70	.094	119	.012	.78
BI	2.40 $\pm$ .85	.098	119	.007	.86
SI	3.00 $\pm$ .86	.103	119	.960	.87
OS	3.57 $\pm$ .64	.055	119	.200*	.89
SMS	3.33 $\pm$ .67	.078	119	.073	.79

**Note:** Kolmogorov-Smirnov is used for  $n \geq 50$ . The assumption for the test is  $p$ -value should be higher than  $p > .05$  to accept the null hypothesis. Legend: PI- Physical Indicators, EI- Emotional Indicators, BI- Behavioral Indicators, SI- Social Indicators, OS- Occupational Stressors, SMS- Stress Management Style.

**Source:** Authors



### Ethical Statement

Highest Ethical considerations were strictly followed in the conduct of the study. The data gathering was conducted the use of paper and pencil method. In the questionnaire provided, the purpose of the study, inclusion criteria, instruments to be used, and the components/variables which will only be measured in the entire conduct of the study are presented. Additionally, the researchers provided the benefits of the study to the institution, community, and its contribution to scientific knowledge. The questionnaire underlined that participating in the study is voluntary, and respondents can choose to withdraw at any moment. The respondents were similarly advised of the potential minor hazards associated with their involvement in the research, including the experience of unease when responding to personal and/or sensitive survey inquiries. In addition, respondents were informed that there is no monetary compensation associated with providing information for the study. The respondents were additionally informed regarding the information that would be gathered through the questionnaire which will then be transferred to an Excel file for evaluation. The protected password for this data was disclosed, with only the researchers granted personal access to it. Additionally, they were informed that the aforementioned data would be stored on a USB drive for a duration of three (6) months, after which it would be irrevocably removed from the system. Additionally, respondents were notified that the data that were obtained would no longer be used in any subsequent or secondary research. Withdrawal of respondents' participation in the study will not have any adverse effects on their relationships with the involved researchers or research organizations, nor will it affect their contributions to any future services or current programs. In order to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, their identities and names were withheld throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the study's findings. Due to the aforementioned conditions, respondents were at any moment permitted to withdraw from the study or request a debriefing. All respondents' information were securely protected in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 of the Philippines<sup>24</sup>.

### Results

Table 1 presents the levels of occupational stresses of secondary P.E. teachers. As revealed in the table, the respondents expressed a 'moderate' level of Occupational Stress (2.80). Likewise, they experience 'moderate' level of stress in physical (2.80), emotional (3.00), and social (3.00) aspects except in behavioral (2.40) with mild level of stress.

**Table 1.** Respondents' Level of Occupational Stress (N = 119)

	Median	Verbal Interpretation
<b>Physical Indicator</b>		
Travel from home to school	3.00	Moderate
Transfer from one classroom to another	2.00	Mild
Physical education activities	3.00	Moderate
Attending meetings and seminars	3.00	Moderate
Excessive daily workloads and other assigned responsibilities	3.00	Moderate
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Emotional Indicators</b>		
Remembering things	3.00	Moderate
Due dates and target period	3.00	Moderate
Other people do not understand me	3.00	Moderate
Unfavorable behavior of colleagues	3.00	Moderate
Untoward behavior of the students	3.00	Moderate
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>		



	Median	Verbal Interpretation
Cold treatment of superior	2.00	Mild
Gossip	2.00	Mild
Instruction ignored by the students	3.00	Moderate
Ignored by colleagues	2.00	Mild
Clashed of individual differences	3.00	Moderate
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>Mild</b>
<b>Social Indicators</b>		
When superior is around	3.00	Moderate
When there is classroom observation	3.00	Moderate
Have argument with colleagues	3.00	Moderate
Lack of support from colleagues and administration	3.00	Moderate
While in front of the crowd.	3.00	Moderate
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Source: Authors

As shown in table 2, six of the items had median scores of 4.00 which mean that the respondents were agreeing that they considered the items to have an effect on their stress levels. These included the following: “excessive daily workloads and other assigned responsibilities”, “limited school facilities and sports equipment to meet the needs for teaching and learning”, “inadequate time allotted for PE classes”, “students’ learning disabilities (e.g. poor physical ability/skills, attitude problem, lack of motivation in P.E subject, and alike)”, “too much paperwork to comply”, and “unsatisfied financial status (salary grade)”. Overall, the mean score of the respondents’ level of agreement to the occupational stressors was 3.57 (agree). This indicated a positive agreement from the P.E. teachers

**Table 2.** Occupational Stressors

Occupational Stressors	Median	Verbal Interpretation
1. Excessive daily workloads and other assigned responsibilities	4.00	Agree
2. Problems with administration not appreciating physical teachers work (lack of appreciation/appraisal)	3.00	Moderately Agree
3. Physical education curriculum was too much idealistic	3.00	Moderately Agree
4. Limited school facilities and sports equipment to meet the needs for teaching and learning.	4.00	Agree
5. Inadequate time allotted for PE classes	4.00	Agree
6. Students’ learning disabilities (e.g. poor physical ability/skills, attitude problem, lack of motivation in P.E subject, and alike)	4.00	Agree
7. Lack of opportunity for professional advancement.	3.00	Moderately Agree
8. Large class size	3.00	Moderately Agree
9. Lack of support from colleagues and administrative to the P.E. program.	3.00	Moderately Agree
10. Insufficient knowledge and skills in teaching physical education	3.00	Moderately Agree
11. No or limited available textbooks to be used for instruction	3.00	Moderately Agree
12. Too much paper works to comply.	4.00	Agree
13. Unsatisfied financial status (Salary Grade)	4.00	Agree
14. Lack for clear rules and policies of the school to support teachers and students teaching and learning	3.00	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Authors



Table 3 reveals that among the stress management styles, “listening to music”, “positive mind conditioning” “eating”, “talking” and “walking” were often practiced by the respondents to cope up with stress. A median score of 4.00 (equivalent to “often”) described the frequency of stress management styles of the respondents.

**Table 3.** Respondents’ Stress Management Style

Stress Management Style	Median	Verbal Interpretation
Power Nap	3.00	Sometimes
Team Building	2.00	Rarely
Watching television	3.00	Sometimes
Listening to music	4.00	Often
Massage therapy	2.00	Rarely
Intimate activity for married couples	2.00	Rarely
Positive mind conditioning	4.00	Often
Unwind activities	3.00	Sometimes
Eating	4.00	Often
Talking	4.00	Often
Walking	4.00	Often
Writing/ drawing/reading	3.00	Sometimes
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>

Source: Authors

Table 4 shows that there were significant differences on the Respondents’ Level of Occupational Stress specifically in social indicator (0.0360) in terms of monthly income, while emotional indicator in terms of workload (0.0033) and field of specialization (0.0299). While on the contrary, there were no significant differences on the respondents’ level of occupational stress in all indicators in terms of sex, age, and highest educational attainment.

**Table 4.** Significant Difference in the Respondents’ Level of Occupational Stress

Monthly Income	Kruskal Wallis Chi-Square	Computed p-value	Remarks
Physical Indicator	3.2700	0.3520	NS
Emotional Indicator	3.0110	0.3900	NS
Behavioral Indicator	7.6430	0.0540)	NS
Social Indicator	8.5480	0.0360	$p < 0.05$
Work Load	Kruskal Wallis Chi-Square	Computed p-value	Remarks
Physical Indicator	5.4461	0.2445	NS
Emotional Indicator	15.7940	0.0033	$p < 0.05$
Behavioral Indicator	7.4995	0.1117	NS
Social Behavior	5.3953	0.2491	NS
Field of Specialization	Kruskal Wallis Chi-Square	Computed p-value	Remarks
Physical Indicator	17.5825	0.0918	NS
Emotional Indicator	21.3498	0.0299	$p < 0.05$
Behavioral Indicator	18.9846	0.0614	NS
Social Behavior	17.7266	0.0881	NS

Note: Significance is at  $p < .05$ ; NS- Not significant.

Source: Authors

As shown in table 5, there were significant differences on the stress management styles in terms of age (0.0040) and monthly income (0.0060).

**Table 5.** Significant Difference in the Stress Management Styles

Indicator	Kruskal Wallis Chi-Square	Computed p-value	Remarks
Age	10.0262	0.0400	$p < 0.05$



Monthly Income	12.5700	0.0060	$p < 0.05$
Length of Service	8.8537	0.0649	NS
Work Load	9.1999	0.0563	NS
Field of Specialization	13.0299	0.2914	NS

Note: Significance is at  $p < .05$ ; NS- Not significant.

Source: Authors

## Discussion

An interesting finding of this paper was the stress caused by having excessive workloads and other assigned responsibilities<sup>25</sup>. It is obvious, that there is an alarming increase in workloads can induce stress among employees<sup>26</sup>. This, however, can also lead to professional burnout. Although the secondary P.E. teachers only expressed that they only experience moderate stress in terms of workloads, it is remained to advise schools not to overburden teachers with workloads and other tasks to prevent further occupational stress and burnouts.

Nowadays, everyone is aware that because of rapid globalization and industrialization, almost every employee in every organization including schools needed to be more flexible and be able to work under pressure and tight workflow. However, because teaching in a class would involve a teacher/student ratio, it would imply that the more students the teachers have, the more responsibilities and workloads the teachers would have. Moreover, additional tasks would also increase the workload of teachers.

Workload and job stress are directly related. This means that the more workload the teachers have, the more stressed out they would be<sup>27</sup>. Thus, schools needed to be more aware of this kind of scenario to prevent occupational physical stress and burnouts among teachers.

On stress and emotional competence, the finding was consistent with the study of Rey et al.<sup>28</sup>. It was found out that many teachers were dissatisfied and leave their jobs because of the emotion-related stresses they experience in an educational setting. Although the emotional stress level was only moderate for secondary P.E. teachers in Marinduque, if emotional stress will not be addressed, teachers could have lower levels of engagement and stronger motivations to leave their profession<sup>29</sup>.

Moreover, it was determined that time pressure and workloads (such as due dates and target period) could provoke high levels of work stress<sup>29</sup>. Teachers feel pressure to complete all the tasks on the specified deadline<sup>30</sup>. That is why they often consider working beyond working hours just to hit target due dates. Further, Skaalvik and Skaalvik[29] also added that the uncontrolled behavior of students was also an added factor of emotional stress. Hence, the promotion of social empathy and motivation to increase the emotional satisfaction of teachers is suggested, by this means decreasing their emotional occupational stresses will follow<sup>31</sup>.

The results also showed that teachers feel relatively more stressed when their instructions are being ignored by their students and when they clash against other people because of individual differences. Interestingly, the results were somehow related to the previous findings in the emotional stresses. Note that it was previously found out that teachers are more emotionally stressed when students practice uncontrolled behavior. That could also explain why teachers are also stressed out when their instructions are being ignored by their students. However, the effect of such behavioral stress could result in negligence of responsibilities and withdrawing from others, which could later affect their jobs<sup>32,33</sup>. Aydin and Kaya<sup>34</sup> also added that the clash of individual differences between other colleagues could also affect their behavioral stress level at work.

Thus, secondary P.E. teachers needed to establish a good relationship with their students and co-workers. Teachers are trained to manage their classes properly. However, there are times that it is difficult to discipline students and that teachers may feel behaviorally stressed out because of that. It is still best-advised to teachers to participate in training that aims to promote



student discipline. Additionally, teachers should also establish strong interpersonal connections with their colleagues. Some activities such as team-building could be a great help. Teachers should also be aware that it is important to engage with their co-workers regularly so that the organizational dynamics in school will be better, thereby promoting peace and better behavioral wellbeing for the teachers.

Social stress is mostly observed when people position is around them such as doing classroom observations, monitoring, or just simply being around at a time<sup>35</sup>. This study confirmed this previous finding. Perhaps, this observation is common since fear is a usual feeling especially when you know that you are being evaluated for something that you are doing.

Additionally, social stress could also be a result of social conflicts. Again, previous findings of this study noted that conflicts with co-workers are stress factors for teachers. For instance, teachers would feel more emotionally stressed when not being understood or having experienced an unfavorable behavior by their colleagues. Also, they could feel behavioral stress when having a clash against other coworkers<sup>34</sup>. Similarly, the teacher would feel social stress when they argue with their colleagues and experience a lack of support from them and the administrators.

A similar finding was confirmed in the study of Hatti et al<sup>36</sup>. Occupational stress was found to be moderate for most of the 160 teachers evaluated in government and private schools in India. Among the occupational stresses that received the lowest mean scores were related to behavior, emotional, and physical aspects of stress. However, the study of Hatti et al<sup>36</sup> did not include the social aspect in evaluating the occupational stresses of the teachers.

Similarly, Hassan and Hassan<sup>37</sup> also expressed that the work stress of teachers in primary and secondary schools in Malaysia was at a moderate level. However, even so, the study suggested that the schools including the teachers should find ways on how to improve the wellbeing of the teachers and be motivated to perform better in school by addressing the occupational stress aspects such as physical, emotional, behavioral, and social stresses.

Although the findings of this study showed that the occupational stress levels of secondary P.E. teachers are still mild to moderate, this study would still suggest, based on the findings, that schools should focus on providing training for secondary P.E. teachers to manage and discipline their classes more properly as many factors related to these contribute to their occupational stress. It should also be understood that secondary P.E. teachers are usually exposed to both indoor and outdoor class activities and that it is quite relatively more difficult to manage a large number of students. Thus, physical, emotional, behavioral, and social conditioning would be appropriate for them. Moreover, schools should also provide more team building activities to keep the school organization more intact and to offer opportunities to secondary P.E. teachers to be close with one other.

### *Occupational Stressors*

In the previous finding of this study, it was already discussed that excessive daily workload was one of the occupational stressors of the teachers<sup>25</sup>. Cieřliński and Szum<sup>5</sup> mentioned that aside from teaching, P.E. teachers are usually given various responsibilities related to sports such as serving as a coach for school's sports teams and manage different sports events on- and off-campus. Thus, the work of P.E. teachers, especially in public secondary schools has become more complicated. Secondary P.E. teachers usually from public schools are often assigned to organize school intramurals, District Meet, and Provincial Meet. These sports events could take a lot of time from teachers since these would require a large number of efforts and preparation to execute properly. However, teachers would often take the extra mile to work on both of their classes and these sports events.

Another occupational stressor of secondary P.E. teachers was the lack of available



physical education facilities/equipment. This was confirmed by this study. Secondary P.E. teachers from would require specific facilities and equipment to enable the activities that they designed for their lessons. Such resources are important in achieving the goal of the educational curriculum not only to enhance the students' capacity but also to improve the teaching performance of secondary P.E. teachers. Aside from sports-related tasks, secondary P.E. teachers were required to do paperwork and other clerical works<sup>38</sup>. The abundance of documents that they need to comply with would also mean that they need to finish it on a specific deadline<sup>30</sup>, thus, indicating time<sup>29</sup>. Based on the previous findings of this current study, these occupational stressors could also cause physical and emotional stress to the teachers. However, in the case of secondary P.E. teachers, they would gain a lot of occupational stress related to doing paperwork because the population of secondary students there is quite growing.

Despite the excessive workload and other stressors, the salary of the secondary P.E. teachers remained low. Based on the profile of the respondents, as seen in the previous chapter, the majority of the secondary P.E. teachers have only been receiving a salary equivalent to the minimum salary of a public-school teacher. This, however, was considered an occupational stressor by the respondents. Indeed, occupational stressors could affect even the performances of secondary P.E. teachers. This study suggested that schools need to focus on providing enough facilities for physical education classes as well as just enough workload for the teachers. Again, it is best not to overburden the teachers so that they could maximize their performance not only in class but in the entire school as well. Also, schools should motivate secondary P.E. teachers to finish at least a master's degree to increase their salaries as most of them only have at most a bachelor's degree. Occupational stressors related to finances could also ease the teachers through appropriate incentives and honorarium for added workload including participating in sports events as facilitators or coaches.

### *Teachers' Stress Management Styles*

Stress management aims to control the impact of stress from occurring in an individual. Secondary P.E. teachers could do this by selecting and assessing the stress management styles that could help them cope up with stress and promote their well-being. Based on the results of this study, the secondary P.E. teachers often focused on secondary individual stress management styles related to relaxation (e.g., listening to music), mindfulness training (e.g., positive mind conditioning), health promotion (e.g., walking), interpersonal skill training (e.g., talking), and other emotion regulation strategy such as eating. Relaxation is a way of releasing physical and mental tension. It can be done by doing some physical and mental activities that will calm your emotions. One way of relaxing is by listening to music. Linnemann et al<sup>39</sup> agreed that music listening can reduce stress in daily life. It was found out that people who listen to music after a stressor becomes more easily relieved from stress than people who do not utilize music interventions in stress management. However, listening to music as a stress management style is yet to be clinically proven although some clinical populations benefit from music therapy. As this current study showed, listening to music seemed to help secondary P.E. teachers to manage their stress properly.

Negative thoughts can also be released by positive mind conditioning. People who are experiencing a high frequency of positive state of mind seemed to have a lower correspondence with stress<sup>40</sup>. It gives people the needed break to restore their resources and alter perceptions of being stressed. Thus, it was evident that secondary P.E. teachers always practice optimism at work regardless of how too stressful the situation could be. This study also found out that emotion regulation strategy such as eating was often practiced by the secondary P.E. teachers. Emotional eating is very prevalent among young people. It was confirmed in the study of Debeuf et al<sup>41</sup> the role of stress in emotional eating. If not regulated, emotional eating could lead to overweight and obesity, which is now a growing problem in a country such as Belgium.



Teachers also considered eating out as part of their stress management strategies as food could give them gastronomical pleasure and energy<sup>35</sup>. However, since it is practiced often by the secondary P.E. teachers in Marinduque, although emotional eating could give them stress relief, it is still best advised to maintain a proper diet and good health. On the other hand, Agyapong et al<sup>35</sup> also stated that, when teachers go out to eat, they often invite their colleagues with them. This would provide them the opportunity to talk and walk with others, thereby, in some way, it could help them promote health and interpersonal skill training as stress management.

Further, stress management styles such as “team-building”, “massage therapy” and “intimate activity for married couples” received a median score of 2.00, which means that the respondents rarely do these indicators. There are many ways to manage occupational stress. Secondary P.E. teachers must be aware of the effective ways that could relieve them from stress regardless of what type of stressors. Ultimately, the study found out that secondary P.E. teachers in Marinduque only experience moderate to a mild level of occupational stress. Thus, it could be assumed that whatever stress management strategies that the teachers were practicing seemed to be effective.

### *Significant Difference in the Respondents' Level of Occupational Stress*

#### *In terms of sex*

Gender norms are often considered a social construct creating various conflicts in society and individuals<sup>42</sup>. This topic is often associated with many global problems, including health<sup>43</sup>. Interestingly, in this study, male and female groups' perceptions of occupational stresses were not significantly different. Both gender groups rated “Level of Occupational Stress, Occupational Stressors, and Stress Management Style” similarly. The chances of getting a massive difference between these two gender groups' responses from this study's sample were relatively narrow. Thus, this study confirmed that sex could not explain their occupational stress and stress management strategies of the secondary P.E. teachers in Marinduque. However, other studies found that women were more stressed than men. Females experience higher levels of stress compared to men, and that their coping mechanisms were not as effective as men's<sup>44,45</sup>. In the United States, study showed that females are more likely to express anger, depression, and anxiety than males because of stress<sup>45</sup>. Mayor<sup>44</sup> also confirmed the negative association of men with stress-related impacts such as anxiety, tiredness, and depression.

#### *In terms of age*

There were no significant differences between the level of stress and occupational stressors of different age groups. This could indicate that everyone, regardless of age, might have similar level of stress, but there could be some significant differences in how they manage stress. This finding supported the claims of Archer, et al<sup>46</sup> that physical stress and well-being has no significant relationship with age. Regardless of age, when a person is weak or ill, they are prone to stress. On the other hand, stress is usually associated with the age of a person<sup>47</sup>. Although many studies have been published investigating the relationship between stress and age, there is still no sufficient clear evidence to this claim. The literature remains inconsistent.

#### *In terms of monthly income*

In secondary public schools such as in Marinduque, the monthly income refers to the salary grade of the teachers. The salary grade of the teachers also depends on their position/ranking in their schools. Thus, it means, the higher the monthly income, the higher the position/ranking of the teachers. This is also an indication that the expectations from the teachers with higher ranks are higher compared to those with lower ranks. These include work performance and the way they manage work under pressure. Financial problems could induce stress. Thus, having a lower salary could indicate that a person is relatively more stressed. In



other countries, a study revealed that about 50% of selected working adults have low wages making them more stressed at work<sup>48</sup>, teachers are no exception to this. Teachers with lower salaries are more prone to stress<sup>49</sup>. However, increasing one's wage would require time and effort from teachers. Usman<sup>50</sup> found out that financial problems were associated with teachers' poor behavior in Pakistan and that about 20% of the teachers were financially challenged. One of the study's recommendations is that academic institutions should improve Pakistani teachers' financial rewards (salary) to be motivated at work and lessen their occupational stress.

#### In terms of length of service

Elahi and Apoorva<sup>51</sup> considered the length of service as a predictor of stress. Employees who served longer in the company are commonly given higher responsibilities and complicated tasks. However, the longer that they are exposed to their jobs, the more likely they become stress. Prolonged exposure to the employee's interpersonal relationship at the workplace, satisfaction or dissatisfaction at the job, conflict against some people at the workplace, insufficient education to improve performance as training and coaching could cause stress and burnout among more tenured employees<sup>52</sup>. Teachers who have long years of service in schools are more stressed than younger teachers, according to Carr<sup>53</sup>. High levels of responsibility for their subordinates could give them frequent worries about their health and physical symptoms, leading to stress at work.

The results of this study validated these claims. Occupational stressors are prone to tenure secondary P.E. teachers. Perhaps, they are more exposed to the stressors associated with their jobs. Earlier in this section, it has been mentioned that "excessive daily workloads and other assigned responsibilities," "limited school facilities and sports equipment to meet the needs for teaching and learning," "inadequate time allotted for PE classes," "students' learning disabilities (e.g., poor physical ability/skills, attitude problem, lack of motivation in P.E subject, and alike)," "too much paperwork to comply," and "unsatisfied financial status (salary grade)" were the occupational stressors that the teachers most likely to experience. Thus, it could be assumed that the teachers could identify and compare the challenges related to these occupational stressors as they are more exposed to them because of their length of service in school. Additionally, their confidence to agree that they experience these occupational stressors was higher compared to the new teachers.

#### In terms of workload

Perhaps, the workload was the most controversial topic to discuss most especially for teachers teaching Music Arts Physical Education (MAPEH) in Philippine schools. In the study of Mutereko and Chitakunye<sup>54</sup>, the author found out that the majority of teachers (46.2%) spent 61-80% of their working day in class with the learners. This would involve a long exposure to many large classes of student where different occupational stresses can exist<sup>7,55,56</sup>. Kokoroko and Sanda<sup>27</sup> found that employees with high levels of workload are vulnerable to high levels of stress. A similar finding was observed, employees with higher workloads are more stressed than those who have fewer workloads<sup>57</sup>. Thus, in the context of this study, it could be assumed that teachers with higher workloads were more emotionally stressed. This study could assume that the teachers tend to be more emotionally affected when they receive more workload aside from teaching such as; coaching and training a team, given an advisory class, or assigned as over-all in-charge during intramurals and other curricular activities. Thus, this would suggest that the schools consider giving more flexible due dates and target period and be more emotionally gentle to those teachers with higher workloads to reduce their occupational stress level.

#### In terms of field of specialization

The results could be interpreted that the emotional stress of the secondary P.E. teachers was



dependent on their field of specialization. However, there is still not much literature that could depict the effects of the field of specialization to stress. The knowledge gap regarding this concern is still broad and will require further investigation. However, a study attempted to compare the perceived stresses of groups with two different specializations fields where they compared the academic profession regarding stressor perceptions<sup>57</sup>. The descriptive analysis revealed that Chemistry students experience a higher level of perceived stress than psychology students between students taking Chemistry and Psychology. By far, this is one of the few studies that attempted to confirm that the field of specialization could potentially affect perceived stress. At some point, the study of Anitei et al<sup>57</sup> suggested that people working on a specialization related to natural sciences are more prone to stress. In the context of this study, by implying such findings, it could be assumed that secondary P.E. teachers who are more inclined to natural sciences tend to be more emotionally sensitive in terms of “remembering things,” “due dates and target period,” “other people do not understand me,” “unfavorable behavior of colleagues,” and “untoward behavior of the students.” Despite the attempt, it is not clear if specialization has a relationship with occupational stress. The authors did not imply that students taking natural science courses (e.g., Chemistry) will always have higher perceived stress than those taking behavioral science courses (e.g., Psychology)<sup>56</sup>.

#### In terms of educational attainment

Study reveals that the educational attainment of secondary Physical Education teachers does not have significant differences in relation to occupational stress. These findings contradicted to the study of Lunau<sup>58</sup>, that people in a more disadvantaged socioeconomic position tend to experience higher stress levels at work. People with lower educational attainment are often assigned to job positions that require increased efforts. However, these employees are not rewarded appropriately for wages, promotions, benefits, and personal development. Thus, these factors are leading them to stress. Similarly, in Europe, people with lower educational attainment are more exposed to more stressful work and that their low incomes exacerbate the problem<sup>58</sup>. Thus, educational qualification is an essential element of having a better chance in employment and career promotions<sup>59</sup>. Higher educational attainment is said to have better labor market advantages than those with lower education levels. These include having better occupational positions and higher salaries, which can help them provide more for their basic life necessities, including their daily food and household expenses, monthly liabilities, lifestyle, and Health.

Having a higher salary could indicate higher educational attainment for teachers because a graduate degree is often a requirement to qualify for promotion for a particular rank. It was also found out that secondary P.E. teachers with higher salaries would have better stress management styles, but they are more exposed to social stresses<sup>60</sup>. However, these results are not consistent with current findings of the study. The level of stress possibly not a matter of how educated a person is but a matter of financial security most especially for teachers in the Philippines.

## Conclusion

The aim of the study is to determine the level of occupational stress, stressors, and management styles of Physical Education teachers in secondary level. Further, significant differences will also be explored when grouped according to profile. One of the most important findings of the present study is that the secondary Physical education teachers are experiencing moderate level of occupational stress in the workplace. It is far from the usual perception that PE teachers less experience stress due to kind of activities and usually tagged as “PE Only” thinking that teaching PE is less effort compared to other subjects. It also reveals that teachers



are facing several occupational stressors, making the teaching experience more challenging and problematic. Remember the fact that in the Philippines PE teachers are assigned to handle Music, Arts, and Health in addition to PE subject, making the profession more complicated compared to other fields.

With no official major programs and interventions for teachers to lessen the stress, listening to music, positive mind conditioning, eating, talking, and walking are often done individually by teachers. Making the teaching into survival mode, where you have to find your own ways to cope up with the situation. The level social stress of the teachers was found significantly different when grouped according to salary grades and level of emotional stress when grouped according to workload and subject specialization. Similarly, on the management styles of the respondents, significantly teachers were also found to be different when grouped according to their age and salary grades.

Though the study is limited only to the secondary physical education teachers and only survey questionnaire was used, this study provided valuable findings where the school administration may use to develop appropriate interventions and school policies and guidelines that would promote stress free workplace and proper stress management styles among teachers to ensure their health. It is also recommended that the school must have a free wellness program for the teachers' welfare that is age appropriate and suited to their management styles. Furthermore, a guidelines or policy that will support professional and personal development is needed, while reducing workload or additional incentives and recognitions may also consider as a sort of motivation for the teachers. A follow-up qualitative research study through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion can also be done to provide deeper understanding on the teaching experiences, motivations, and challenges of Physical Education teachers in the Philippines.

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