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Coping strategies and academic performance of working high school students in San Jose West District

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Abstract

This study intends to determine whether the demographic profile and the coping strategies significantly relate to the working students' academic performance level using the mixed method approach. There were 206 respondents randomly selected among the 320 working students from public secondary schools in San Jose West District for school year 2021-2022. The qualitative data gathered from the interview underwent thematic analysis, while the quantitative data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using WarpPLS version 7. Based on the results of the interview, eight coping strategies were extracted as the main themes from the respondents' narratives. These became the bases for constructing the survey questionnaire related to coping strategies of working students namely, escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem-solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support, and time management. The findings presented that the working students often used their preferred coping strategies. They also had satisfactory academic performance in English and Mathematics, as well as very satisfactory performance in Filipino. Among the given profile variables of the working students, age, sex, and nature of work revealed a significant relationship with the academic performance while the academic performance was significantly related to only four indicators of coping strategies namely, escape-avoidance, grit, religiosity, and time management. With these results, it was recommended to establish a policy to monitor the progress of working students and to implement an intervention program in order to address any coping strategies that have a direct influence on their academic performance.

Keywords: working students, academic performance, coping strategies, mixed-method, San Jose West District

Coping strategies and academic performance of working high school students in San Jose West District

1. Introduction

Student employment is a common practice in most developing countries, like the Philippines. Majority of these children not only work for themselves, but also for their families. Traditionally, parents provide for their children's needs, including education. But in various parts of the world, many students are engaged in child labor while studying for practicality and survival (Reyes, 2020). In fact, child labor is a result of inter-generational poverty, as the parents of the working children earn and are used as laborers in their youth (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014). In spite of the financial assistance from the Philippine government, Philippine Statistics Authority (2021) reveals the total population of working children in 2020 was 872,000, with the age group from 15 to 17 accounting for 68.9% of the total working children. The agriculture sector continues to employ the greatest number of children, accounting to 47.4% in 2020 according to a survey conducted by the PSA (2021). On the contrary, several forms of child labor are not hazardous in some cases. They help provide children with skills and experiences as they work and study. These are the activities in which children assist their parents with household chores and throughout holidays and vacations, they help out in the family business (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014). Despite the fact that education is basically free, a chance to earn money while studying is a good opportunity for less fortunate students. Aside from financial reasons, some work for experience and independence. Smith (2016) found that financial requirements and a desire to develop practical knowledge and skills that will increase their employability are the primary factors of students' working behavior. Unfortunately, some appear to be struggling since working and studying simultaneously require students to balance their time between work and academics.

To embrace this challenge, working students must be exceptionally determined to deal with demanding situations. Otherwise, students will have lesser time to read because their study time has been reduced due to work-related responsibilities. Smith (2016) mentioned that students who work outside of school and for more than 15 hours per week are more likely to have low academic achievement. As a result, juggling multiple roles and demands poses significant challenges for working students. The struggle to balance demands and performance expectations can leave students physically, emotionally, and mentally exhausted. In this sense, individuals' coping mechanisms play a major role in overcoming or reducing stress. Some students use positive coping strategies like seeking social support, planful problem-solving, while others resort to maladaptive strategies like ignoring the problem, avoiding asking for help and using drugs as a form of escapism (Kimotho, 2018). With the use of appropriate coping strategies, this will benefit the students when dealing with unfavorable events and ensuring adaptation to new situations. In 2018, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results revealed that 15-year-old Filipino students underperformed in reading comprehension, science, and mathematics compared to their international counterparts (Mateo, 2019). As the quest for quality basic education continues, Filipino students performed poorly in the National Achievement Test (NAT) as well. Hence, the researcher of this study believes that the present study is timely, given that educators are truly concerned about their learners who are evidently underperforming academically, particularly, the working students.

Consequently, San Jose West District is not spared from this problem since its secondary schools serve students from the district's rural areas. Specifically, a high number of working students are mostly present in agriculture sector as there are students who engaged in household chores, family business, and farmwork. Thus, working high school students who struggle to manage work and study may have academic difficulties, eventually dropping out. In this regard, the researcher intends to determine the coping strategies and the academic performance level of the working students in San Jose West District. This attempts to find whether their coping strategies significantly relate to their academic performance. The result of the study is the basis for

the formulation of an intervention program for working students to help them improve their academic performance. The said program will aid teachers with a better understanding of their working students' situation – helping the latter achieve work-school balance.

Statement of the Problem - The study aimed to determine the coping strategies and academic performance of the working high school students in San Jose West District of Occidental Mindoro. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions: (1) What are the coping strategies of the working students? (2) What is the profile of the working students in terms of: age, sex, nature of students' work, number of working hours, working students', monthly income, parents' educational attainment and family's monthly income? (3) What is the level of preferred coping strategies of the working students in terms of: escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem-solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support and time management? (4) What is the academic performance level of the working students? (5) Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile and the academic performance level of the working students? (6) Is there a significant relationship between the coping strategies and the academic performance level of the working students? (7) What intervention program can be devised for the working students to achieve very satisfactory academic performance?

Significance of the Study - The researcher believes that the study will benefit the following: To the working students, through the recommended intervention program, they will be helped ease the pressure of achieving the desired academic performance. To the teachers, they will be able to understand more the situation of their working students. They will even help them adapt to varying academic activities and challenges. Teachers can provide assistance via preventive measures in improving academic performance of working students. To the parents, they will be reminded of their significant roles since home is the first non-formal school. They are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. To the Alumni, they will be prompted to secure a legacy of support and to encourage more volunteers to participate in their initiative projects and programs for the working students at their alma mater. To the school administrators, this will encourage them to reassess and improve educational practices in any form of instruction. This will guide them to look into their internal stakeholders' different situations and cater to their needs. To the DepEd sub-office and employers, this can pave the way for the organization to respond to the changing and challenging demands of local schools as well as the developmental needs of learners, particularly the disadvantaged and underprivileged students. To continue providing relevant and responsive basic education curriculum for all, the organization has to further improve the quality and efficiency of government services and performance. To the Municipal Social Welfare Development (MSWD), this will encourage the organization to strengthen the implementation of comprehensive programs and policies for working students, including educational assistance to support disadvantaged and underprivileged individuals. To the Public Employment Service Office (PESO), this will provide additional information for the office to intensify and expand its programs, as well as to maintain the welfare and rights of laborers, including children. This will include the child laborer profiling in order to assess their needs and those of their families in order to provide necessary services and assistance as a strategic response, allowing the beneficiaries to continue their education. Lastly, to the future researchers, they will have an opportunity to investigate further and construct deeper research regarding this study. This will serve as reference to those who are interested in dealing with the variables excluded from this study.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study - The study was conducted only among the secondary schools of San Jose West District: Mapaya National High School, Mangarin National High School, and San Jose National Agricultural and Industrial High School (SJNAIHS) with the aim of determining the working students' profile together with their coping strategies and investigating its significant relationship with their academic performance level. Respondents of the study consisted of working JHS and SHS students of the said secondary schools. Seven profile variables were studied, such as age, sex, nature of students' work, number of working hours, working students' monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and family's monthly income, while the coping strategies were in terms of escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem-solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support, and time management. The academic performance was determined using the

final grades in the core subjects namely, Filipino, English, and Mathematics. The study did not include Science because it was not one of the required subjects taken by SHS students during the said semester. The study covered the school year 2021-2022.

2. Methodology

Research Design **-** This study used a mixed method of research design, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data for better understanding of the research problem. The qualitative phase was conducted with the participants using an interview guide prepared by the researcher. Inferring the coping strategies of working students from their responses using thematic analysis, a survey questionnaire was formulated for the quantitative phase of data collection. The primary aim of the study was to determine the coping strategies and the academic performance level of the working students in San Jose West District of Occidental Mindoro.

Respondents of the Study **-** The respondents of this study were randomly selected the 206-working student-respondents out of 320 students of public junior and senior high schools in San Jose West District for school year 2021-2022. To determine the sample size of the respondents, the researcher used Raosoft's Sample Size calculations formula. In the qualitative phase of the study, fifteen working students were randomly selected as participants from Mapaya National High School. The results on the demographic profile of the respondents were based on the actual responses of 206 sample working students at public secondary schools in San Jose West District of Occidental Mindoro. Out of 206 respondents, there are 86 or 41.7% belonging to 13 - 15 years old, 95 or 46.1% are 16 - 18 years old, 18 or 8.7% are 19 - 21 years old, and the remaining 7 or 3.4% belong to 22 years old and above. The results imply that majority of the working students belong to the group between middle and late adolescence. It is also worth noting that there are adults, despite their age, who continue to study while working. In 2020, the total population of working children was 872,000 or 2.8% with the age group from 15 to 17 accounting for 68.9%. The results imply that majority of the working students belong to the group between middle and late adolescence. It is also worth noting that there are adults, despite their age, who continue to study while working. In 2020, the total population of working children was 872,000 or 2.8% with the age group from 15 to 17 accounting for 68.9% (PSA, 2021). The likelihood of children working was higher for older age groups (15 to 17 years) than for younger age groups (PSA, 2021). Based on the results, 131 or 63.6% of the respondents performed farming, followed by 13 or 6.3% who belonged to construction, while 10 or 4.9% did both farming and sales.

In connection with this, San Jose West District is located in the agricultural lands, where the majority of working students do farm. According to the findings of the Philippine Statistics Authority (2021), the agriculture sector continues to employ most children, accounting for 47.4% in 2020, 43.4% in the services sector, and 9.1% in the industrial sector. On the other hand, working has advantages that certain students may use to boost their academic performance. It can aid in the development of soft skills like communication, problem-solving, adaptability, accountability, organization, and functioning under pressure that are helpful in a variety of contexts (Darolia, 2014). Furthermore, 6 or 2.9% had 1 – 4 working hours while 148 or 71.8% worked 5 – 8 hours a day. In addition, 47 or 22.8% worked 9 – 12 hours and the remaining 5 or 2.4% performed more than 12 hours a day. Working 5-8 hours a day consumes the study time of most working students. According to studies, students' physical and mental health may suffer if they work part-time jobs and study full-time (Abenoja et al., 2019). With these, Peteros (2021) revealed that working students have limited time to complete schoolwork due to other responsibilities outside of school and must even complete up the housework rather than socialize with friends. Furthermore, it is more common among employed full-time students to frequently miss classes, arrive late, and sleep in class. Some students do not finish their work on time, seek for extensions, turn in shoddy work, or flunk their classes. Experts concur that students who work more than 15 to 20 hours a week typically perform less academically, which can result in them dropping out entirely (Smith, 2016). Additionally, Maquiling (2018) argued that working long hours can restrict possibilities to make friends and find solace that fosters intellectual and emotional developments. On the other side, work time can help students manage their time more effectively

by giving their schedule a structure, while extracurricular activities can enhance academic lectures by adding real-world relevance (Darolia, 2014). Furthermore, 25 or 12.1% get P3,001 - P4,000, 28 or 13.6% gather P4,001 - P5,000, and 9 or 4.4% acquire P4,001 - P5,000 gross monthly income. The remaining 21 or 10.2% obtain above P6,000 a month. Majority of the working students were motivated by financial needs, experience, and independence.

Chantrea et al. (2017) discovered that working students' ultimate goal was to become financially independent and to improve their skills. As an advantage, they gained experience in a real-world working environment and even agreed that their academic performance improved. As mentioned by Delprato & Akyeampong (2019), only a few studies discovered that work and learning can be partially significant if they involve learning-by-doing. There are 22 or 10.7% respondents who stated that their fathers received bachelor's degree, 93 or 45.1% reported that their fathers reached high school level, and 87 or 42.2% of their fathers took elementary level. While 4 or 1.9% was found to have no formal education. It reveals that only 22 respondents' fathers earned a college degree, since most of them attained elementary and high school levels only. The findings of Chiu et al. (2016) found that the scholastic achievement of the students was significantly affected by the fathers' educational background. Pörtner (2016) added that boys who have more educated fathers spend more time in school and less time working. Moreover, statistically significant increases in the number of hours spent in school by girls are associated with their fathers having completed basic school. Moreover, 25 or 12.1% of their mothers had bachelor's degree while majority (110 or 53.4%) were in the high school level. Also, 67 or 32.5% disclosed that their mothers achieved elementary level and 4 or 1.9% of their mothers had no formal education. Unable to finish education, majority of the mothers progressed in high school level only. This outcome manifests the previous study of Pörtner (2016) in relation to school participation rates of the students, mothers have completed primary school with slightly more than 54% or higher than fathers, who only have 41%. With the exception of mothers with 3-5 years of education, whose sons work more than sons of mothers with no education, m others' education has no statistically significant impact on how much time their sons spend working. While daughters spend more time in school and less time on housework as the mother's education advances. Based on the findings, majority of working students' families made less than P5,000 each month, which suggests that their income was insufficient. This evidence supports the claim of Reyes (2020) that working students demonstrated maturity, responsibility, and discipline to make it work as they saw the reality of life and their situation.

Research Instrument **-** The researcher used an interview guide for the qualitative phase regarding the coping strategies to learning used by the working students while a survey questionnaire patterned after other studies was used for the quantitative phase. The survey questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part identified the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, parents' educational attainment, family's monthly income, nature of students' work, number of working hours, working students' monthly income, and final grades in the core subjects for school year 2021-2022. The second part determined the coping strategies in terms of escape avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem solving, positive reappraisal, resilience, seeking social support, and time management. The scale used to measure seeking social support, escape-avoidance, and planful problem solving was adapted from Ways of Coping (Revised) developed by Folkman & Lazarus (1985) which is originally a 66-item instrument that includes other identified coping strategies. It is one of the most commonly used coping scales, according to Kato's (2015) research article. The questionnaire on resilience was adapted from Dela Cruz (2018) which was patterned after the Resilience Scale developed by Wagnild & Young (1993) wherein the instrument originally had 25 items.

Likewise, the scale to measure religiosity was adapted from Dela Cruz (2018) patterned after the Santa Clara Strength of Religious Faith Questionnaire developed by Plante & Boccaccini (1997) which was originally a 10-item instrument. The respondent's grit was measured using the Grit-S consisted of eight items developed by Duckworth & Quinn (2009) adapted from the original 12-item Grit Scale (Grit-O; Duckworth et al., 2007). On the other hand, a researcher-made questionnaire for time management and leisure was used. It was created specifically based on the responses of the students in the interview. All of the questions were translated to Filipino, the local's native language. This was for students' easier comprehension of the questionnaire. The

respondents' perceptions of the variables under investigation were evaluated using a five-point Likert Scale. The respondents were asked to rate each item in terms of their preferred coping strategies. The responses were keyed as: 1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Sometimes, 4 – Often, 5 – Always. The results obtained from the questionnaire were used to analyze the working students' profile variables together with their coping strategies and to investigate its significant relationship with their academic performance in school year 2021-2022.

The survey questionnaire underwent expert validity wherein the researcher asked the assistance of the Graduate School research experts of the Divine Word College of San Jose. In addition, the researcher also sought help from the Filipino master teacher in translating questions from English to Filipino. It was validated based on the content and appropriateness of the items intended to be measured in the study. The method used to test the reliability of items in the questionnaire that was administered once to a group of thirty respondents was the split-half method. They were excluded from the final administration of the questionnaire. The coping strategies of working students comprised eight indicators and these were escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support and time management. Each was described in eight statements and underwent reliability analysis using the Spearman-Brown coefficient of equal length measure with the following results shown below. The computed coefficients ranging from 0.71 to 0.89 registered a generally high reliability of the instrument and were then allowed administration to the respondents.

Table 1

Reliability Results of the Instruments

Components	Reliability Coefficient	Interpretation
Escape-Avoidance	0.89	High Reliability
Grit	0.81	High Reliability
Leisure	0.72	High Reliability
Planful Problem Solving	0.71	High Reliability
Religiosity	0.88	High Reliability
Resilience	0.71	High Reliability
Seeking Social Support	0.80	High Reliability
Time Management	0.77	High Reliability

Data Gathering Procedure **-** The researcher sought permission from the principals of secondary schools in San Jose West District. Upon their approval, the researcher explained to the respondents the purpose of the study before the process began. After its completion, the researcher retrieved the instrument from the respondents to make sure that all items were completely answered. For the qualitative data, the researcher used an interview guide and gathered the responses through personal interview. The data gathered were organized, summarized, analyzed, and interpreted with the guidance of her adviser and her statistician.

Statistical Treatment of the Data **-** For the descriptive problems on the working students' demographic profile and preferred coping strategies, frequencies, percentages, and weighted means were computed. Processing was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. To answer the two inferential problems involving the possible relationship between the demographic profile and the academic performance, and between the preferred coping strategies and the academic performance, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using WarpPLS version 7 was used. This is a multivariate statistical analysis technique used to analyze structural relationships between and among latent variables.

Ethical Considerations **-** The study complied with the research guidelines provided by the Graduate School of Divine Word College of San Jose. The purpose of the study and the voluntary participation of the respondents were explained first before administering the questionnaire. The respondents' confidentiality of information/answers and their anonymity were maintained throughout the data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings. It was ensured that all data and results collected would solely be used for the purpose of the study. The American Psychological Association (APA) was used by the researcher to give credit to other research studies used as references. On the other hand, previous studies and sources that were used as bases for this study were properly cited and acknowledged as well. This study only seeks to contribute to the education

sector and poses no risk to anyone involved in its conduct.

3. Results and Discussions

Figure 1. Final Thematic Map of Coping Strategies

Figure 1 illustrates the coping strategies of working students as a result of the interview with 15 working students from Mapaya National High School. Using the thematic analysis, the themes were extracted after having gathered the data, transcribed, analyzed, and coded. Based on the results, eight coping strategies were extracted as the main themes from the respondents' narratives. These became the bases for constructing the survey questionnaire related to coping strategies of working students namely, escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem-solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support, and time management.

Table 2

Summary of Working Students' Mean Preferred Coping Strategies

Coping Strategies	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Escape-Avoidance	2.67	Sometimes
Grit	4.47	Often
Leisure	3.71	Often
Planful Problem-Solving	3.78	Often
Religiosity	4.41	Often
Resilience	3.88	Often
Seeking Social Support	3.72	Often
Time Management	4.04	Often
Overall Mean	3.84	Often

Legend: 4.50-5.00 – Always; 3.50-4.49 – Often; 2.50-3.49 – Sometimes; 1.50-2.49 – Rarely; 1.00-1.49 – Never

The summary of results in Table 2 shows the working students' mean preferred coping strategies with an overall mean of 3.84. Moreover, the data show that among the eight coping strategies, the respondents got the highest mean in grit (4.47) while the lowest mean was in escape-avoidance (2.67). This indicates that working students preferred to use positive coping strategies, specifically grit, because accepting and dealing with demanding situations require a high level of determination. While the other coping strategies are more common for working students to use, escape-avoidance as a maladaptive strategy is the least common. Urban & Urban (2020) found support in the finding that grit does not directly influence perceived stress, instead individuals with greater grit employ more effective coping strategies, leading to decreased perceived stress. Moreover, results implied that those who avoid more are said to be less happy because they feel less in control of their lives and are less mentally healthy (Dijkstra & Homan, 2016). While Tan & Pang (2012) discussed that the association between achievement motivation and environmental mastery was found to be mediated by escape-avoidance coping, which did not differ significantly across male and female students.

Coping strategies describe how a person reacts to stress. These are specific behavioral and psychological efforts that people use to manage and resolve stress caused by unfavorable events (Khanapurkar et al. 2017). From the book of Stephenson & DeLongis (2020) they expounded that coping strategies can be combined, with one type of coping aiding or preventing the use or efficiency of another as no single coping strategy is ideal for all situations. While problem-focused coping can lower the amount of psychological and behavioral issues, avoidance coping strategies that focus on emotions might increase substance misuse, health-harming behaviors, and suicide attempts (Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2019).

Table 3

Level of Academic Performance of Working Students

Academic Performance	Adjective Rating	Filipino		English		Mathematics	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
90 – 100	Outstanding	50	24.3	47	22.8	28	13.6
85 – 89	Very Satisfactory	79	38.3	71	34.5	66	32.0
80 – 84	Satisfactory	75	36.4	85	41.3	106	51.5
75 – 79	Fairly Satisfactory	2	1.0	3	1.5	6	2.9
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectation	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	206	100.0	206	100.0	206	100.0

Table 3 denotes the level of academic performance of working students. Out of 206 respondents, 79 or 38.3% obtained 85 – 89 as very satisfactory in Filipino, 85 or 41.3% got 80 – 84 as satisfactory in English, and 106 or 51.5% with 80 – 84 as satisfactory in Mathematics. Working students were capable of receiving very satisfactory academic performance in Filipino and achieved satisfactory academic results in English and Mathematics, despite the challenges of juggling work and school. This shows that even if they developed their communication abilities as they learned new things and got experience in the workplace, they still did not have as much time to read as full-time students did. Although practical information and skills can be learned on the job, it is still quite difficult for individuals to thrive in arithmetic, too. Despite their schoolwork-pressure circumstances, working students had a strong academic achievement. The majority of participants received an average GPA with no failing grades. None of them were identified as dropout candidates (Frigillano et al., 2015). Academic performance is used to determine success in educational institutions (Bell, 2018). If students are internally driven toward their studies, they do well in those by using their skills with changing techniques that aid in academics and performance levels (Abid et al., 2016). Taken as a whole, students' performance provides the school with the feedback it requires to improve its goals, values, and policies (Reyteran, 2014). Thus, teachers have always used grades to assess how students performed in the classroom (Ortilla, 2018).

The structural model above illustrates the hypothesized relationship between the profile variables, namely: age, sex, nature of work (NATUREWK), number of working hours (WKHOUR), students' income (STUDINC), education of father and mother (EDUCF, EDUCM), family income (FAMINC) and the working students' academic performance (ACADPERF) in Filipino, English and Mathematics. Also hypothesized is the relationship between the working students preferred coping strategies in terms of escape-avoidance (ESCAPE), grit, leisure, planful problem solving (PROBSOLV), religiosity (RELIG), resilience (RESIL), seeking social support (SOCSUP), time management (TIMEMGT) and the working students' academic performance (ACADPERF) in Filipino, English and Mathematics. Eight indicators compromised the coping strategies variable. Also displayed in the model are the beta-coefficients (β) rounded off to two decimal places and the corresponding *p*-values as the result of the structural equation modelling using the partial least squares method that was provided by the statistical software, WarpPLS version 7.0. All results were anchored in the 0.05 *p*-values or significance levels that signified the strength of the relationship between the latent variables aforementioned.

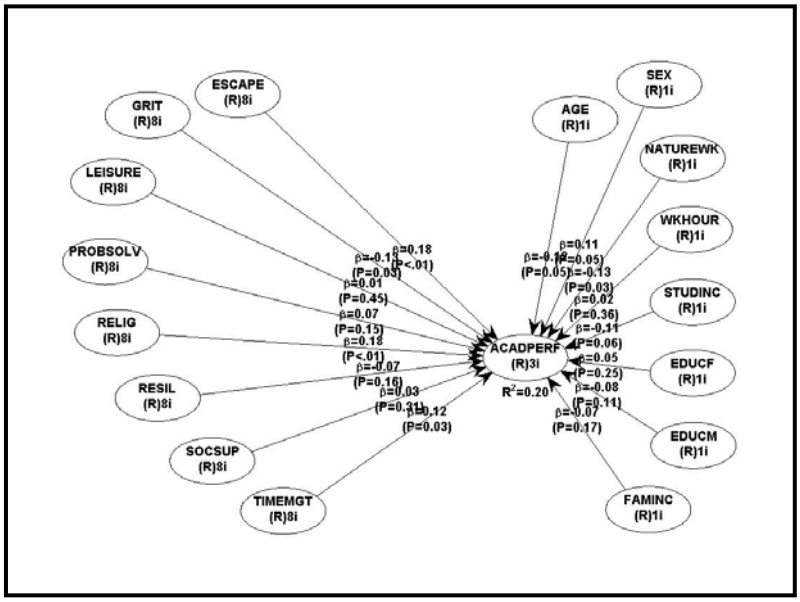

Figure 2. Structural Model

Table 4

Path Coefficients, p-values and Effect Sizes for Ho1

Paths	Beta Coefficients (β)	p-values	Interpretation*
AGE→ACADPERF	-0.116	0.045	Significant
SEX→ACADPERF	0.113	0.050	Significant
NATUREWK→ACADPERF	-0.132	0.027	Significant
WKHOUR→ACADPERF	0.024	0.363	Not Significant
STUDINC→ACADPERF	-0.109	0.056	Not Significant
EDUCF→ACADPERF	0.046	0.254	Not Significant
EDUCM→ACADPERF	-0.085	0.109	Not Significant
FAMINC→ACADPERF	-0.066	0.170	Not Significant

**Significant at p< 0.05

The statistical results as shown in Table 4 disclose the direct and significant relationship of the working students' profile with the level of their academic performance. Of the given profile variables, age, sex and nature of work revealed significant connection with academic performance at -0.116, 0.113 and -0.132, respectively. It should be noted that the negative *Beta* coefficients were recorded. This means that for every unit increase in the profile variable, the level of academic performance decreases by the 0.116 and 0.132 beta coefficient value for age and nature of work. The significant effect of these profile variables on the academic performance was supported by the *p*-values, 0.045 and 0.050 and 0.027. The structural model also registered a small percentage (R^2=0.195 or 20% rounded off) of the variability in the level of academic performance that can be attributed to the variability in their profile. The large percentage of the variability, approximately 80% come from other possible factors not included in the study. Notably, five profile variables did not correlate with their academic performance level. These findings suggest the acceptance of the null hypothesis that working students' academic performance was not significantly related to their profile except for age, sex and nature of work. This entails that working students' academic performance was primarily determined by their age, sex, and nature of work. Despite the fact that working students had busy schedules and had to work for financial freedom, still the variables such as number of working hours, students' monthly income, parents' educational attainment, and family's monthly income had no significant relationship with their academic performance level.

In connection with this, Rokicka's (2014) research found out that having a job at the age of 16 lowers the

chances of attending school at the age of 17 since the choice to enter the labor market also coincided with their decision to leave school. While Pörtner (2016) exposed that in response to mother's or father's absences, boys spend more time working on market-related activities while girls do domestic work and experience severe school time reductions similar to dropping out of school. Furthermore, the large proportion of working children is mostly in agriculture-based areas with vast agricultural farmlands and productive fishing waters, since most school children assist their farm working family members, since most school children assist their farm working family members (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014).

Table 5

Path Coefficients, p-values and Effect Sizes for Ho2

Paths	Beta Coefficients (β)	p-values	Interpretation*
ESCAPE→ACADPERF	0.180	0.004	Significant
GRIT→ACADPERF	-0.131	0.027	Significant
LEISURE→ACADPERF	0.009	0.446	Not Significant
PROBSOLV→ACADPERF	0.071	0.150	Not Significant
RELIG→ACADPERF	0.181	0.004	Significant
RESIL→ACADPERF	-0.070	0.156	Not Significant
SOCSUP→ACADPERF	0.034	0.312	Not Significant
TIMEMGT→ACADPERF	0.125	0.034	Significant

*Significant at p≤0.05

For the second hypothesis of no significant relationship between the coping strategies and the academic performance level of the working students, the results reveal that academic performance was significantly related to only four indicators of coping strategies. These were escape-avoidance (β=0.180, p=0.004), grit (β=-0.131, p=0.027), religiosity (β=0.181, p=0.004), and time management (β=0.125, p=0.034). The rest of the indicators of coping strategies garnered very low beta coefficients from 0.009 to 0.071 with p-values exceeding 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that working students used various coping strategies such as escape-avoidance, grit, religiosity, and time management in handling their academic performance. While the other variables such as leisure, planful problem-solving, resilience, and seeking social support had no significant relationship with their academic performance level. Because coping is a manner that includes both engagement and disengagement, working students preferred coping strategies describe how they handle challenges. From Lazarus (2020) definition, coping refers to the actions used to control demands that are perceived as being stressful or potentially detrimental to the person.

This applies the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (TTSC) founded by Folkman and Lazarus (1985) which posited that stress is a result of interactions between people and their environments. People constantly assess the stimuli in their environment, also known as the primary appraisal. This leads to the secondary appraisal where they choose and implement coping strategies when the circumstance is considered unpleasant. A possible reappraisal can be used to assure adaptability to a new scenario (Walinga, 2014; Janse, 2022). Overall, coping effectiveness is a matter of appropriateness and context. In the context of these outcomes, Mundia (2017) found out that if participants learned how to manage and use their emotions effectively, even those who did poorly but well on the escape-avoidance test, could improve their performance. The findings of Farhan & Rofi'ulmuiz (2021) showed that emotional intelligence and religiosity both positively influenced learning motivation, which favorably influenced learning achievement. Additionally, learning motivation influenced the relationship among religion, emotional intelligence, and academic success. A previous study demonstrated that grit is associated with a variety of desirable results, specifically higher academic achievement (Bowman et al. 2015). Regardless of sociocultural backgrounds, Lam & Zhou (2022) discussed that students' grit proved positive connections with academic achievement and these results may be useful to schools that consistently deal with students' non-cognitive development. Similar to how grit has been connected to successful academic outcomes, it has been found that grit is linked to increased hope and optimism about the capacity of Filipino high

school students to succeed (Datu et al., 2016).

Despite certain hindrances, working students appear to manage their time well when learning and working at the same time. Their education appears to be their top focus above all else (Frigillano et al., 2015). Also, the findings of Magulod (2019) discovered that students have a reasonable level of time management when studying. Thus, when students have good time management skills, they manifestly organize duties according to their academic priorities.

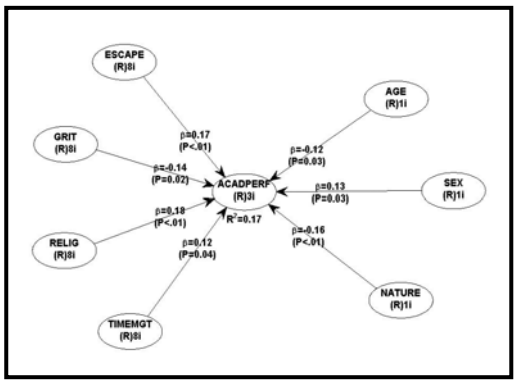

Figure 3. Emerging Model

Based on the structural equation analysis, a new model emerged showing direct links of three profile variables and coping strategy-indicators to the academic performance as presented in the figure above. Among the eight profile variables, only age, sex and nature of work were found to have a connection to the level of academic performance. Likewise, only four indicators under coping strategies were found to affect directly the working students' academic performance. Also presented in the emerging model was the small percentage of variability (R^2=0.17) in the profile and coping strategies can be attributed to the students' academic performance. This means that only 17% of the variability in the academic performance can be contributed to age, sex, nature of work, escape-avoidance, grit, religiosity and time management. Other factors can be considered in future researches to correlate with the students' academic performance. As working students' academic performance was determined by their age, sex, and nature of work, their manner of coping effectively was with the use of escape-avoidance, grit, religiosity, and time management. Due to the fact that selecting a preferred coping strategy requires one's perspective and experiences in dealing with and resolving the dilemma. By this, students can benefit from coping strategies to improve their academic performance. As a result, it is serious for students to develop appropriate coping strategies to deal with stressful situations (Caballes, 2019).

This applies the Attribution theory which was further established by Weiner (2013) and his colleagues. According to this theory, people strive to understand the reasons behind other people's actions by attempting to understand why they behave in a given way, which may involve attributing one or many causes to behavior. Weiner (2013) focused his attribution theory on achievement. Internal causes are attributed to the subject of the observation, and external causes are given to external circumstances. Whereas external causes of behavior are dependent on task difficulty and luck, internal attributions are focused on an individual's competence and effort. Students' levels of effort and coping strategies are also influenced by their beliefs about their own abilities and how much control they have over the results (Hsieh et al., 2012). Moreover, Tan & Pang (2012) emphasized the significance of using accomplishment goals as a framework to understand gender disparities in the types of coping mechanisms employed, as well as how these coping mechanisms affect how students respond to unfavorable feedback. It can be assumed that students will perform better academically if they can adjust and handle academic and personal challenges better (Yazon et al., 2018).

Thus, academically talented children tended to use less avoidance strategies and more approach coping

techniques like problem-solving (Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2019). The findings from the previous researches (Saxena et al., 2015; Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2019) clearly show that each coping mechanism dimension is positively and significantly related to the students' overall weighted average.

The standardized estimates (β) of the path in the emerging model for the two hypotheses are displayed in the table above. The statistical analysis result for the first hypothesis brought out three profile variables: age, sex and nature of work that directly related to the students' academic performance. The beta coefficients of -0.125 to -0.161 recorded low but are deemed significant as evidenced by the small effect sizes of 0.015 to 0.028. The standard error of the path coefficient 0f 0.068 was too low as well. The *p*-values also registered values from 0.009 to 0.034. This further support the significance of the relationship among age, sex, nature of work and the students' academic performance in Filipino, English and Mathematics. It can also be noted that the computed *beta* coefficients in the emerging model recorded slightly higher values than those of the path coefficients in the original structural modelling analysis

Table 6

Standardized Estimates of the Path in the Emerging Model

Hypotheses	Standardized Estimates (β)	p-value	Standard Error	Effect Size
Ho1				
AGE→ACADPERF	-0.125	0.034	0.068	0.015
SEX→ACADPERF	0.133	0.026	0.068	0.028
NATUREWK→ACADPERF	-0.161	0.009	0.068	0.026
Ho2				
ESCAPE→ACADPERF	0.167	0.007	0.068	0.031
GRIT→ACADPERF	-0.141	0.020	0.068	0.017
RELIG→ACADPERF	0.183	0.003	0.067	0.032
TIMEMGT→ACADPERF	0.123	0.036	0.068	0.018

Effect size coefficient **0.02 – small, 0.15 – medium, 0.30 – large

To answer the second hypothesis, four out of the eight indicators of coping strategies emerged as predictors of academic performance. Escape-avoidance yielded a low but significant coefficient of 0.167 (p=0.007), grit yielded -0.141 (p=0.020), religiosity recorded 0.183 (p=0.003), and time management recorded 0.123 (p=0.036), which were all of slightly higher values than the ones found in the structural modelling analysis. Considering the effect, sizes from 0.017 and 0.032 were small, still, this denotes significance. Furthermore, the probability of error registered very low with 0.067 and 0.068 for predicting academic performance. Hence, it suggests the acceptance of the first null hypothesis that working students' academic performance was not significantly related to their profile except for age, sex and nature of work. While in the second hypothesis, only four indicators of coping strategies had established significant relationship with working students' academic performance. Individuals both use positive and negative stress-coping strategies. Positive strategies demonstrate active engagement with stressors and are related with lower stress levels while negative strategies suggest disengagement and frequently result in higher stress levels (Asturias et al., 2021). Part of coping mechanism indicates personal views on how they directly confront and solve the problem being encountered. This is based on the outcome of the study of Yazon et al. (2018) whereas the students sometimes did something they did not think would work, took a big risk to solve a problem, and fought for what they wanted.

The type of stressor, the individual, and the circumstances all influence their effectiveness (Caballes, 2019). Meanwhile, Kimotho (2018) mentioned that things like individual preferences and disfavors, prior encounters, availability, cost, social recognition, and peer pressure had an impact on coping mechanisms. However, it can be ineffective or inadequate to some extent when stress levels remain high regardless of the use of more beneficial and maladaptive coping strategies by students (DeBerard & Masters, 2014).

The proposed intervention program for working students will assist them in selecting beneficial coping strategies to balance work and study, thus achieve the desired academic performance. Most of the activities are based on DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2018 (Implementing Guidelines on the Conduct of Remedial and Advancement Classes during Summer for the K to 12 Basic Education Program), DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2018 (Preventive Drug Education Program Policy for Curriculum and Instruction), and DepEd Order No. 105, s. 2010 (Reiterating the Constitutional Right of DepEd Personnel and Students to Free Exercise of Religion) which are executed by the teachers every school year. On the other hand, the proposed program in terms of grit and time management has not been practiced yet in the field and can be used by teachers and school administrator/s as one of their preventive measures to help their working students adapt to academic and work pressures.

Table 7

Proposed Intervention Program for Working Students

Areas	Objectives	Programs/ Activities	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Expected Outcomes
Academic Performance Age Sex Nature of Work	To improve academic performance and master the least mastered learning competencies	Remedial/ Enrichment Sessions for least mastered learning competencies	Teachers/ Students	Quarterly/ Yearly	Cope with academic challenges and achieve satisfactory grades.
Escape-Avoidance	To emphasize the adaptive coping strategies	School-based Drug Awareness and Prevention Program	PNP/ Teachers/ Students	Yearly	Initiate symposium on substance abuse and use adaptive coping strategies.
Grit	To increase the practice of determination	Grit Training-Workshop	Teachers/ Students	Yearly	Demonstrate higher level of self-determination.
Religiosity	To deepen spiritual beliefs and practices	Religious and Spiritual Programs	Religious Organization/ Teachers/ Students	Weekly/ Monthly	Testify to God's teachings.
Time Management	To make a to-do list daily	Time Management Skills Training	Teachers/ Students	Yearly	Practice proper time management.

4. Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the results of the study: Eight coping strategies of the working students were extracted as the main themes namely, escape-avoidance, grit, leisure, planful problem-solving, religiosity, resilience, seeking social support, and time management. Majority of the working students belonged to the group between middle and late adolescence. Males were more prevalent compared to girls. Farming was the main source of their income which consumed 5-8 hours of their day and earned P1,001 - P2,000 a month. Most of the working students' parents attained high school level only and they received a below P5,000 monthly income. The working students used the coping strategies often. Except for escape-avoidance, this maladaptive strategy was sometimes used. The working students had satisfactory level of academic performance in English and Mathematics, while very satisfactory was obtained in Filipino. There was a significant relationship between the demographic profile and the academic performance level of the working students in terms of age, sex, and nature of work. There was a significant relationship between the coping strategies and the academic performance level of the working students in terms of escape-avoidance, grit, religiosity, and time management.

Recommendations **-** Based on the findings and drawn conclusions, the following recommendations are made: The school should allocate a section exclusively for working students which is done by other schools. This is to ensure that they are well-monitored and provided with a well-deserved academic care. Likewise,

teachers are advised to consider their situation as they are coping with educational requirements periodically, since this has always been one of their dilemmas. School authorities and other internal stakeholders should conduct profiling of the working students to strengthen their programs and policies in order to strategically respond and support disadvantaged and underprivileged students. Working students should be encouraged to employ and explore more adaptive coping strategies over maladaptive coping strategies that will help them balance work and school. Teachers should be encouraged to attend trainings, seminars, or workshops that will equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and other creative teaching techniques to attain outstanding performance in Filipino, English, and Mathematics. The study recommended a variety of strategies, including verbal self-instruction, self-evaluation, and peer tutoring that can be used in the classroom to meet academic challenges and monitor one's own performance in the midst of self-adversity. Parents and working students should be informed of the other demographic factors that contribute to the attainment of the academic performance level through parent-teacher conference. The school administrator/s should establish a policy to monitor the progress of working students and implement an intervention program in light of coping strategies that have direct impact on their academic performance.

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