

Problems and Coping Mechanism among Students and Teaching Personnel in Trece Martires City College

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ABSTRACT

Coping in the midst of pandemic may be a new phenomenon especially in the case of teachers and students in the tertiary education. There is a need to understand this phenomenon to better improve ways by which people in the academe could overcome the challenges brought about by the global crisis. This study aimed to identify problems experienced by students and teaching personnel of Trece Martires City College most especially at this time of pandemic. Thus, this study was conducted to investigate the problems and, likewise, the coping mechanism employed by the respondents. Using the survey-questionnaire based from Madhuleena Roy Chowdhury's study (2019), 298 students and 36 teaching personnel of TMCC were surveyed. Data gathered were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and ranking. Results show that most of the student-respondents were female, were in the appropriate age to attend college, and belong to a family whose income is P10,000 and below. Meanwhile, most of the faculty-respondents were female, belong to a diverse age range, belong to a family whose income is P12,000.00 to P49,999.00, and were Bachelor's Degree holders. Results also revealed that health and safety problems were perceived to be the most challenging problem among both the student-respondents and teacher-respondents. In terms of coping mechanism in a pandemic situation, both groups of respondents reported that they mostly employ the coping mechanism of thinking and acting positively, followed by being more religious for the students and for teaching personnel, soliciting advice from family and friends.

1. Introduction

The educational sector is one of those heavily affected by the recent changes brought about by the pandemic [1], [2]. The stakeholders, the teachers and students are possibly the ones to receive the biggest blow [3]. It is plausible that they might be challenged in terms of coping in response to psychological, physiological or environmental stresses [4], [5], [6]. Some of the possible sources of their stress include problems on financial, health and safety, and the mode of learning for students and mode of teaching for the teaching personnel [7].

Meanwhile, coping strategies or mechanism are the behaviors, thoughts and emotions that one can use to adjust to the changes that occur in our lives [8]. There are many coping mechanism or styles that people use, and some may prove more effective than others, depending on the nature of the stressful situation at this time of pandemic. In the Philippine context, Filipinos keep on receiving compliments about how resilient they are because they are all able to cope with very stressful situations such as calamity and poverty [9]. The country was even ranked as the 20th happiest

country in the world according to the Happy Planet Index despite socio-economic difficulties [10].

This study is anchored on Richard Lazarus's Theory which states that stress is experienced when a person perceives that the "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize" [11]. This is called the 'transactional model of stress and coping'.

This institutional research is conducted to identify specific problems of the students and teaching personnel of Trece Martires City College during this time of pandemic and determine what is the topmost among these problems and determine their coping mechanism, and prepare as well a development plan that could serve as guide for students and teaching personnel.

In the Coping Theory of Madhuleena Roy Chowdhury, BA (2019), there are many different ways of adapting to a stressful situation [12]. Coping is the conscious and unconscious efforts we put in to solving problems and reduce stress [13]. It is the mind's built-in troubleshoot program that aims to restore its optimum functioning state.

The study on “Stress and Coping Strategies among Distance Education Students at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana” showed result where ‘academic workload’, ‘high frequency of examinations’, ‘financial problems’, ‘family/marriage problems’ were the major causes of stress among the students. One popular measure of coping is the Jalowiec Coping Scale [14].

Filipino Teachers’ Stress Levels and Coping Strategies [15], made a compilation of stressors and coping strategies. It was intended to help teachers and would-be teachers to brace up for factors that could cause stress in their workplace and possibly affect classroom performance especially the teacher-student relationship. An article on Youth and Education made by Dr. Michael Tan of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City mentioned his observations on how Filipinos cope with stress.

2. Research Method

This study used survey method using descriptive design that captures the problems and coping strategies or mechanism at these difficult times. The research design determined the use to know the strategies on how to cope with the situation in this pandemic situation among students and teaching personnel of Trece Martires City College, school year 2020-2021. Survey data gathering include the socio-economic demographic characteristics, problems and the coping strategies of TMCC third year students and teaching personnel.

The researchers used the Researchers-made survey questionnaire as the main instrument for the data collection. The survey statement prepared by the researchers was presented to the adviser/council members for comments, suggestions and recommendations. After having consultation with the members, the different suggestions and recommendations were incorporated in the revised questionnaire as final instrument, ready for distribution to the respondents through online (google form) and actual distribution to some teaching personnel. Permission to conduct the study was asked from the school authorities to allow the researchers to distribute survey-questionnaire to the respondents.

Upon the approval of the proposal, the survey questionnaires for the teaching personnel in google form were sent to the Group Chat of the faculty members of TMCC. Meanwhile, survey questionnaires for students were sent to the Group Chat of the third-year students through a google

form also. The researchers requested their respective advisers to send it to them. They were given ample time to answer the survey-questionnaire.

To determine the socio-economic/demographic profile of the respondents, frequency counts and percentages were used. Meanwhile, to determine the problems they

encountered in the time of pandemic, weighted mean and ranking were computed. Similarly, the weighted mean and ranking were determined regarding their coping mechanism.

3. Result and Discussion

The Student-Respondents’ Socio-economic demographic Profile shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Student-Respondents’

Variables	Category	Total	Frequency (%)
Sex	Male	95	31.88
	Female	202	67.79
	Unidentified	1	0.34
Civil Status	Single	285	95.64
	Married	13	5.36
Age	16-20	135	45.30
	21-25	134	44.97
	26-30	13	4.36
	31-35	7	2.35
	36-40	4	1.34
	41-45	2	0.67
	46-50	2	0.67
	Unidentified	1	0.34
Family Monthly Income	Low (< 10,000)	214	71.61
	Average (10,001-49,999)	82	27.52
	High (>50,000)	2	0.67

As to sex of the student-respondents, it can be gleaned from Table 1, 202 out of 298 or 67.79% of the student-respondents are female while 95 of them or 31.88% are male. Meanwhile, one of them or 0.34% did not specify his/her sex. Clearly, most of the student-respondents are female.

As to the age, frequency and percentage distribution of student-respondents were made. Based on the data, 135 out of 298 or 45.30% of the student-respondents belong to the age group 16-20 while almost an identical number, 134 of them or 44.97

belong to the age group 21-25. Meanwhile, 13 or 4.36% of them belong to age group 26-30; 7 or 2.35% belong to the age group 31-35; 2 or 0.67% belong to age groups 36-40 and 41-45 respectively while one of them or 0.34% did not specify to which age group does he/she belong. Results suggest that most of the respondents are in the right age for college students.

With regards to civil status, the frequency and percentage distribution of student-respondents were applied. Based on the data in Table 1, 285 out of 298 or 95.64% of the student-respondents are single while only 13 of them or 4.36% are married. Results suggest that most of the respondents are single. Relative to the monthly family income, the table shows the frequency and percentage distribution of student-respondents.

As can be gleaned from the table, 214 out of 298 or 71.81% of the student-respondents belong to the low income group while 82 of them or 27.52% belong to the average income group. Meanwhile, two of them or 0.67% did not specify their monthly family income. None of them belongs the high income group. Clearly,

most of the student-respondents belong to a family whose income is P10,000.00 shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The frequency and percentage distribution of faculty-respondents in terms of sex

Variables	Category	Total	Frequency (%)
Sex	Male	12	33.33
	Female	24	66.67
Civil Status	Single	25	69.44
	Married	11	30.56
Age	21-25	9	25.00
	26-30	8	22.22
	31-35	6	16.67
	36-40	4	11.11
	41-45	3	8.33
	46-50	3	8.33
	51-55	1	2.78
	56-60	0	0.00
	61-65	2	5.56
Family Monthly Income	Low (< 10,000)	0	0.00
	Average (10,001-49,999)	33	91.67
	High (>50,000)	3	8.33
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	16	44.44
	Master's Degree	11	30.56
	Doctoral Degree	7	19.44
	Unspecified	2	5.56
Course	College of Criminology	17	47.22
	College of Education	7	19.44
	College of Government	7	19.44
	College of Management	4	11.11
	College of Office	1	2.78

As can be gleaned from the table above, 24 out of 36 or 66.67% of the faculty-respondents are female while 12 of them or 33.33% are male. Clearly, most of the faculty-respondents are female. The Table also shows the frequency and percentage distribution of faculty-respondents in terms of age.

Based on the Table, 9 out of 36 or 25% of the faculty-respondents belong to the age group 21-25 while almost an identical number, 8 of them or 22.22% belong to the age group 26-30. Meanwhile, 6 or 16.67% of them belong to age group 31-35; 4 or 11.11% belong to the age group 36-40; 3 or 8.33% belong to age groups 41-45 and 46-50 respectively; one of them or 2.78% belongs to age group 51-55; none belongs to the age group 56-60 while two or 5.56% belong to the age group 61-65. Results suggest that faculty members in Trece Martires City College are diverse in terms of age. On the civil status of faculty-respondents, frequency and percentage distribution of faculty-respondents were presented.

Based on the data in Table 2 as 25 out of 36 or 69.44% of the faculty-respondents are single while only 11 of

them or 30.56% are married. Results suggest that most of the faculty-respondents are single. The table also shows the frequency and percentage distribution of faculty-respondents in terms of monthly family income.

As can be gleaned from the above table, out of 36 or 88.89% of the faculty-respondents belong to the average income group while 3 of them or 8.33% belong to the highest income group. Meanwhile, one of them or 2.78% belongs to low income group. Clearly, most of the faculty-respondents belong to a family whose income is 10,001 to 49,999. The table also shows the frequency and percentage distribution of faculty-respondents in terms of educational attainment.

As can be gleaned from Table above, 16 out of 36 or 44.44% of the faculty-respondents have only Bachelor's Degree while 11 or 30.56% have Masteral Degree or at least with Masteral Degree units. Meanwhile, 7 of them or 19.44% have Doctoral Degree or at least have Doctoral Degree units; 2 of them or 5.56% did not specify their educational attainment. Evidently, most of the faculty-respondents are Bachelor's Degree holders.

Table 3. The weighted means a of the problems encountered by the student-respondents in the pandemic situation.

Item	Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Never	Total	Frequency (%)	Weighted Mean	Virtual Interpretation
A. Financial Problems								
1. Head of the family has no work	17	39	135	109	300	100.00	1.89	Sometimes
2. Low family income cannot support the family's needs	14	48	173	57	297	99.66	2.06	Sometimes
2.1 Food	31	23	124	122	300	100.00	1.89	Sometimes
2.2 Transportation	18	36	155	84	293	98.32	1.93	Sometimes
2.3 Health	28	34	137	97	296	99.33	1.96	Sometimes
2.4 Education	26	33	143	94	296	99.33	1.96	Sometimes
2.4.1 Internet	52	64	139	42	297	99.66	2.42	Sometimes
2.4.2 Gadget	23	71	251	49	295	98.99	2.21	Sometimes
2.4.3 Module	17	43	143	87	295	98.99	1.95	Sometimes
Average Weighted Mean							2.03	
Verbal Interpretation								Sometimes
B. Safety and Health Problems								
1. Fear of Covid 19	162	66	47	27	302	101.34	3.24	Most of the time
2. Personal hygiene and sanitation	139	44	6	50	301	101.01	2.93	Most of the time
3. Risk of contamination of the virus outside	80	63	106	60	309	103.69	2.62	Most of the time
Average Weighted Mean							2.93	
Verbal Interpretation								Most of the time
C. Problems of the mode of learning								
1. Lack of technical know-how on the utilizations of computer and social media	19	61	179	39	309	100.67	2.21	Sometimes
2. Availability of internet and gadget	46	79	152	21	309	100.67	2.52	Most of the time
3. Cannot easily adjust to the now trend of teaching and learning modality	18	66	152	21	309	100.67	2.21	Sometimes
4. Exiting socio-economic problem	15	64	205	14	296	99.33	2.26	Sometimes
Average Weighted Mean							2.33	
Verbal Interpretation								Sometimes

Table 3 shows the weighted means a of the problems encountered by the student-respondents in the pandemic situation. General experience of the students as presented in the table, safety and health problems is the number one perceived problem with a weighted mean of 2.93 interpreted as most of the time. It is followed by problems on the mode of learning which has a weighted mean of 2.33 interpreted as sometimes. Financial problems ranked least perceived problem among student-respondents wherein the weighted mean is 2.03 which is also interpreted as sometimes. Results suggest that students do not face much problems when it comes to mode of learning and financial aspect. This could be explained somehow by the fact that Trece Martires City College offers flexible mode of learning or asynchronous mode wherein students do not need to be always online in attending their classes which could be a problem especially to those students who have the

gadgets and internet connectivity at home. In addition, students are also given an option to choose a modular mode of learning wherein they are just given modules for them to use to learn on their own. Likewise, since the students are already in the tertiary education, independent learning is already expected of them and maybe they are very much aware of this; thus, they really take responsibility to their own learning. Also, since they are doing homeschooling, they do not need to think about their allowance going to school. This could explain why they do not consider financial matters much of a problem. Evidently, they are most concerned with regard to their health and safety given that we are in a middle of a global pandemic and that cure to this disease is yet to be discovered.

The Table 4 shows the weighted means and ranking of the problems encountered by the faculty-respondents.

Table 4. The Teaching Personnel's perception on the different problems

Item	Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Never	Total	Frequency (%)	Weighted Mean	Virtual Interpretation
A. Financial Problems								
1. Head of the family has no work	4	2	11	19	36	100.00	1.81	Sometimes
2. Low family income cannot support the family's needs	2	10	12	12	36	100.00	2.06	Sometimes
2.1 Food	1	3	12	20	36	100.00	1.58	Sometimes
2.2 Transportation	2	6	11	17	36	100.00	1.81	Sometimes
2.3 Health	2	4	21	9	36	100.00	1.97	Sometimes
2.4 Education	1	6	12	17	36	100.00	1.75	Sometimes
2.4.1 Internet	3	11	13	9	36	100.00	2.22	Sometimes
2.4.2 Gadget	3	8	11	24	36	100.00	2.00	Sometimes
2.4.3 Module	1	8	14	13	36	100.00	1.95	Sometimes
Average Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation								1.90 Sometimes
B. Safety and Health Problems								
1. Fear of Covid 19	17	13	5	1	36	100.00	3.28	Most of the time
2. Personal hygiene and sanitation	10	5	14	7	36	100.00	2.50	Most of the time
3. Risk of contamination of the virus outside	17	12	6	1	36	100.00	3.25	Most of the time
Average Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation								3.01 Most of the time
C. Problems of the mode of learning								
1. Adjusting to work from home	8	10	18	0	36	100.00	2.72	Most of the time
2. Preparing and adapting to online and modular system	5	14	16	1	36	100.00	2.64	Most of the time
3. Monitoring students' performance	6	11	16	2	35	97.22	2.53	Most of the time
4. Reporting to school might increase the risk to COVID 19 infection	13	11	9	3	36	100.00	2.94	Most of the time
5. Exiting socio-economic problem	6	17	8	5	36	100.00	2.67	Most of the time
Average Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation								2.70 Most of the time

As can be seen in Table 4, safety and health problems is the number one perceived problem among faculty-respondents with a weighted mean of 3.01 interpreted as most of the time. It is followed by problems with regard to mode of teaching which has a weighted mean of 2.70 also interpreted as most of the time. Financial problems ranked least perceived problem among faculty-respondents wherein the weighted mean is 1.90 which is interpreted as sometimes.

Results suggest that faculty members do not face much problems when it comes to financial aspect. Given that they still have work and source of income despite the crisis might be the reason behind this. While some business and services sectors had no choice but to shut down their operations, for the educational sector it is business as usual. CHED has decided to push through

with education despite the global crisis we are facing and so tertiary education is still very much alive in our country. This, of course, means faculty members in the High Education Institutions, still have a source of income. However, faculty members in the HEIs in the country are not trained enough to deliver instructions in the distance learning yet. It is the first time that most HEIs are adopting this mode of teaching; therefore, that teachers find this stressful and problematic is understandable.

Finally, it is interesting to note that health and safety concerns ranked most problematic to them just like to the students. Again, this is understandable given that the vaccine to cure COVID 19 is still unavailable. This suggests that people at the end of the day would always put their health and safety as their top most priority.

Table 5. The Students' coping mechanism during the pandemic

Item	Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Never	Total	Weighted Mean	Rank	Virtual Interpretation
1. I think and act I positively	102	118	77	3	300	3.08	1	Most of the time
2. I see the problem in a more positive perspective	67	101	122	7	297	2.76	3	Most of the time
3. I select advise from family and friends	62	90	128	18	298	2.66	5	Most of the time
4. I avoid going out	60	99	130	11	300	2.71	4	Most of the time
5. I smoke or take alcholic drink	2	11	62	222	297	1.30	10	Never
6. I am into planting	28	43	160	66	297	2.00	9	Sometimes
7. I spend any some working to overcome strees	38	77	159	27	304	2.44	7	Sometimes
8. I eat a kit and sleep longer hours	38	70	164	28	300	2.41	8	Sometimes
9. I watch films or need read books and magazines	54	78	154	11	294	2.56	6	Most of the time
10. I become more religious	91	116	98	8	303	3.61	2	Most of the time
Average Weighted Mean								2.50
Verbal Interpretation								Most of the time

Table 5 shows the weighted means and frequency of the coping strategies by the student-respondents at this time of pandemic. Out of the ten coping mechanism, thinking and acting positively, got the highest weighted mean of 34.23% (102); No. 2 is becoming more religious with weighted mean of 30.54% (91); No. 3 is seeing the problem in a more positive perspective which has 67 or 22.48%; No. 4 is soliciting advice

from family and friends; No. 5 is avoiding going out with 60 or 20.13%; No. 6 is indulging into planting which has 38 or 12.75%; for the place of No. 7, there is a tie between spending time to work and eating a lot and sleeping longer hours, both with 38 or 12.75%, No. 9 is indulging into planting with 28 or 9.40% and the last or No. 10 is smoking or taking alcoholic drinks with 2 responses only or 0.67%.

Table 6. The Teaching Personnel's coping mechanism

Item	Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Never	Total	Weighted Mean	Rank	Virtual Interpretation
1. I think and act I positively	26	8	2	0	36	3.67	1	Always
2. I see the problem in a more positive perspective	21	10	5	0	36	3.44	3	Most of the time
3. I select advise from family and friends	22	8	6	0	36	3.44	5	Most of the time
4. I avoid going out	8	15	13	0	36	2.86	4	Most of the time
5. I smoke or take alcholic drink	2	3	8	23	36	1.56	10	Sometimes
6. I am into planting	7	6	17	6	36	2.39	9	Sometimes
7. I spend any some working to overcome strees	8	17	10	1	36	2.89	7	Most of the time
8. I eat a kit and sleep longer hours	5	8	23	0	36	2.39	8	Sometimes
9. I watch films or need read books and magazines	7	11	18	0	36	2.69	6	Most of the time
10. I become more religious	14	15	7	0	36	3.19	2	Most of the time
Average Weighted Mean								2.50
Verbal Interpretation								Most of the time

Table 6 shows the weighted means and ranking of the coping mechanism of teaching personnel. Among the ten indicators of faculty's coping mechanism, No. 1 which is thinking and acting positively amidst problems got the highest responses of 26 which is 72.22%; No. 2 is soliciting advice from family and friends which has 22 or 61.11% while No. 3 is seeing the problem in a more positive perspective which has 22 or 61.11%; No. 4 is becoming more religious with 14 or 38.89%; For No. 5, there was a tie between avoid going out and spending time working with both 8 responses equivalent to 22.22 %; for rank No. 7, it is again a tie between indulging into planting and watching films or reading books and magazines with 7

each or 19.44% while rank 9 goes to eating a lot and sleeping longer hours with 5 responses or 13.89% while the last or No. 10 is smoking or taking alcoholic drinks which has 2 or 5.56%.

Generally speaking, it is evident that faculty members scored higher than the students in terms of employing coping strategies. It seems to suggest that faculty members being mature individuals already better employ ways to combat the stress they experience. However, it is important to note similarities with the students in terms of which coping strategies they employ the most and the least.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were derived. Most of the student-respondents were female. Results also suggest that most of them were in the right age for college students and that most of them were single. Finally, most of the student-respondents belong to a family whose income is 10,000 and below; Most of the faculty-respondents were female. Faculty members were diverse in terms of age. In addition, most of the faculty-respondents belong to a family whose income is 10,001 to 49,999 and that most of the faculty-respondents were Bachelor's Degree holders; Health and safety problems were perceived to be the most problematic among the student-respondents which is followed by the mode of learning and financial matters ranked no. 3 or being the least of a problem for the respondents; Similarly, faculty-respondents consider health and safety problems as the most problematic. This is, likewise, followed by the mode of teaching and still financial problems is their least concern; In terms of coping strategy, student-respondents reported that they mostly employ the mechanism of thinking and acting positively amidst problems or stress followed by being religious, while the least they can do is to smoke or take alcoholic drinks; In a similar manner, faculty-respondents reported thinking and acting positively over problems or stressors at this time of pandemic as their predominant coping mechanism which is followed by soliciting advice from family and friends; and the least they can do is also to smoke or take alcoholic drinks.

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