



## PERCEIVED STRESS AND RESILIENCY OF TRAINERS AT PUERTO PRINCESA SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TRADES

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper ascertained the perceived level of stress and coping strategies of trainers at Puerto Princesa School of Arts and Trades to minimize stress in the workplace. A quantitative method was used to find trainers' sources of stress, perceived level of stress, coping strategies, and the relationship between the perceived level of stress and IPRC as an indicator of work performance. Data revealed that PPSAT trainers have similar or common stressors and perceived levels of stress. Their coping strategies differed in some aspects, showing uniqueness in dealing with different situations. More so, it was found that there is no significant relationship between the trainers' perceived level of stress and work performance.*

*Keywords: stress, coping strategies, resiliency, work performance*

### INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the societal problems today. It is a phenomenon that has an impact on people's lives. It affects a person's behavior and the people around him/her. Stress is defined by Eren (2008) as a physiological and psychological reaction of a person toward him/herself and the external environment as a result of being affected by the involved environment and working conditions. It is the effect of the transformations occurring in the person's environment.

Teachers as an agent of change are not exempted from experiencing stress. According to Mingoa (2017), many things in the life of teachers are challenging. They are more than an educator, they act as a counselor, mentor, external parent, role model, and so on. The different roles of a teacher brought them stressful moments, and this

stress has been linked to impairment of teaching quality, job dissatisfaction, physical and emotional ill-health, and teachers leaving the profession [Ganotice *et al.*, (2015) as cited by Kyriacou (2001)]. When a teacher is in a stressful environment, her/ his efficiency might decrease and this might be negatively reflected upon the students, co-workers, families, and even the whole society (Bantug, 2009 & Turna, 2014).

Significantly, teachers' stress stems from the societal expectations of what education can do and the variety of specific tasks which teachers perform to meet these expectations (Pettegrew *et al.*, 2014). According to research by Goksoy and Argon (2014), teachers' stress originates from social relations, school environment, bureaucratic structure, and the profession. According to findings obtained from the research conducted by Kaya and Aydin (2016), issues that teachers have gone

through stress most are originated from school administration (constant supervision, lack of encouragement, etc.), teaching profession (exhausting and boring nature of the profession, low social status, etc.) and school facilities (lack of resources, lack of technological facilities, etc.). According to Kaya et.al (2016), as cited by Turna (2014), different stressed teachers demotivate students, time pressure because of unrealistic deadlines to beat, work overload, poor management, being evaluated by others, and uncomfortable working conditions. According to Mingoa (2017), the factors that cause stress to elementary and high school teachers in Metro Manila are work-related (too much paperwork, large classes, further studies, non-teaching duties, incompetent superiors), personal (relationships, age-related, etc.) and economics (insufficient salary, high cost of living). These factors may not have the same impact on every teacher.

Furthermore, teachers cope with stress by employing different strategies. Being able to manage the stress they become more resilient. Being resilient in the job enables them to stay positive in the workplace despite different stressors. Resilience is the capacity to recover from adversity and grow stronger from overcoming negative circumstances (Fred Luthans, 2002; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Teachers practice different coping strategies to manage stress in life. According to Kaya et al (2016), as cited by Pehlivan (1994), physical and breathing exercises, meditation, relaxation, biological feedback, social support, good nutrition, participation in social, cultural, and sports activities, massage, praying, and worshipping can minimize stress. On the other hand, Mingoa (2017) found out that passive entertainment like watching television, going to movies, and window shopping at malls are the most common strategies among teachers.

An undesirable level of stress affects among teachers might lead to poor physical, mental and emotional state of teachers and possibly affect teacher performance, teacher-student relationship, and/or consequently, student performance as well (Mingoa, 2017). Thus, Puerto Princesa School of Arts and Trades (PPSAT) as the only government vocational institution in Palawan is trying its best to create a stress-free

environment where trainers work harmoniously for its success and development.

Considering the nature of the work of PPSAT trainers which is prone to stressors, there is a need to employ proper stress management. Stress management refers to a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress especially chronic stress usually improving everyday functioning (Stress Management, 2014). Stress management provides ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well-being (Stress, 2013). It starts with identifying the sources of stress and the coping strategies employed by the affected individuals.

The researcher observed that some PPSAT trainers have been complaining about their health conditions and some manifested behavior that might affect the delivery of training such as being forgetful, pessimistic, avoiding others, and inability to focus. The mentioned observations are the different symptoms of stress that need to address to eliminate or at least minimize the adverse effects of prolonged exposure to stress. Some researches focus on coping strategies in the workplace, but the information is still limited. In this sense, the researcher believes that it is imperative to conduct a study that would identify the different factors that cause stress to PPSAT trainers and how they cope to improve stressful situations.

Given the aforesaid issues, the researcher explored the factors that may cause trainers' stress, specifically, inquired about the different stressors under school matters (students' behaviors, working environment, workload, and school facilities and equipment), financial matters (ability to make ends meet and pay loans) and family matters (house works and family members challenges). Work performance is reflected in Individual Performance Commitment Rating (IPCR). Also, the researcher analyzed the relationship between the perceived level of stress and work performance and surveyed the coping strategies they applied, the recommendation they can give to the institution, and the things that keep them in the teaching position. A compilation of stressors and coping strategies would help trainers and future trainers in managing their stress and would give an idea to the administrator as to what

to focus on to lessen the work-related stress of trainers.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to evaluate the Perceived Stress and Resiliency of Trainers at Puerto Princesa School of Arts and Trades.

Specifically, it sought to: 1) evaluate the profile of PPSAT Trainers; 2) determine the symptoms of stress experienced by PPSAT Trainers; 3) analyze the factors that cause stress to PPSAT trainers.

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the Quantitative method to identify the factors that cause stress to PPSAT trainers, their strategies in coping with stress, and the relation of their level of perceived stress to their work performance. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the PPSAT Vocational School Administrator to conduct this research among trainers as a source of data. Similarly, ethical issues (such as risk-benefit analysis, confidentiality, and informed consent) were taken into account in this study.

The study employed 27 out of 29 trainers of PPSAT as respondents. A survey questionnaire was used as a data-gathering tool. Some of the parts in this questionnaire were adapted from other sources, while others were developed by the researcher. Part I dealt on the symptoms of stress, the factors that cause stress to trainers, and their coping strategies. Part II focused on resiliency, the reason that keeps trainers stay in the teaching position and part III is on the level of perceived stress. A Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) of Sheldon Cohen was used to determine the level of perceived stress. The work performance of the trainers was based on their latest IPCR which was accomplished in the PPSAT Human Resource Office with the consent of trainers and the Vocational School Administrator. Additionally, the researcher used Microsoft Office Excel and Sofa Stats in getting the frequencies, mean, percentage, and correlation of the necessary data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following sections describe the respondents' profile, perceived level of stress, stressors, coping strategies, and the relationship between the perceived level of stress and their work performance. The section discusses the significant result of the study. At the end of the discussion, recommendations were offered.

### 1. Demographic Profile of PPSAT Trainers

#### 1.1. Age of PPSAT Trainers

**Table 1**  
*Age of PPSAT Trainers (N=27)*

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean
<b>A. Age</b>			
29-36	7	25.9	46
37-44	4	14.8	
45-52	5	18.5	
53-60	10	37	
61-68	1	3.7	
Total		100%	

Table 1 exhibits the age of the respondents. The majority of them (10 or 37%) are in the age range from 53-60; seven (7) or 25.9% are aged 29-36, and only one (1) is in the age range from 61-68. Hence, the respondents of this study are seniors and close to retirement; it indicates that the institution offers a positive working environment. Also, PPSAT trainers found teaching as a rewarding profession.

#### 1.2. Sex and Length of Service of PPSAT Trainers

There are more male trainers (25 or 55%) than females (12 or 44.4%) at PPSAT and the majority of them (11 or 40.7%) are with a length of service that ranges from 9-15 years. Three (3) of them have a length of service of 2-8 years, three (3) have 23-29 years and three (3) have 30-36 years. PPSAT is composed of trainers with an almost equal number of Males and Females, it indicates that it is not a gender-dominated school. The length of service of trainers implies that they

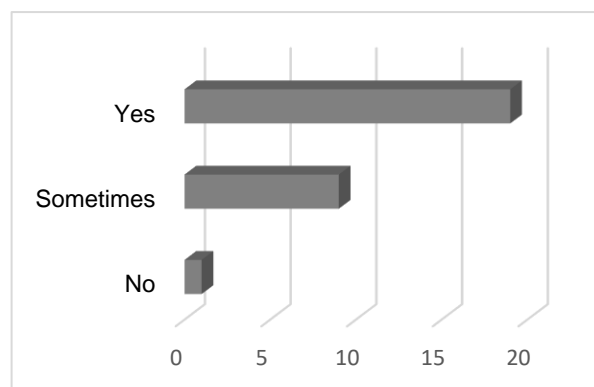
are not new to the nature of their job and each of them has something to offer to PPSAT.

**Table 2**

*Sex and Length of Service of PPSAT Trainers (N=27)*

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>A. Sex</b>		
Males	15	55.5
Females	12	44.4
Total		100%
<b>B. Length of Service</b>		
3	3	11.1
2-8 years	11	40.7
9-15 years	7	25.9
16-22 years	3	11.1
23-29 years	3	11.1
30-36 years	Total	100%

## 2. Level of Stress of PPSAT Trainers



*Figure 1. Level of Stress of of PPSAT Trainers*

More than half (17 or 63%) of PPSAT trainers admitted that they are stressed, nine (9) or 33% got stressed sometimes and only one (1 or 4%) had no stress. The result indicates that PPSAT trainers are stressed due to different factors. According to Turna (2014), if the teacher is in a stressful environment, his/her efficiency may decrease and this might negatively affect the students and even the entire society. Hence, the stress concerns at PPSAT must be addressed to prevent future problems that may affect trainers' work performance.

## 3. Trainers' Rating on their Stress Level

**Table 3**

*Trainers' Rating on their Stress Level*

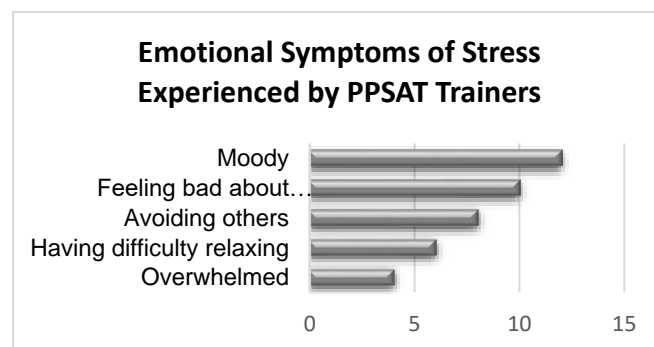
Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-2	2	7.4
3-4	0	0
5-6	15	55.5
7-8	10	37
9-10	0	0
Total		100%

Majority (15 or 55.5%) of PPSAT trainers rated their level of stress from 5-6, ten (10) or 37% rated 7-8 and only two (2) rated 1-2. Since 25 or 92.5% of trainers rated their level of stress as almost 50% and up, it implies that they already spotted different signs and symptoms of stress in their everyday life. They are all aware that they are stressed due to their health conditions.

## 4. Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

Stress has marked effects on emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral well-being. According to the doctors of Mayo Clinic, one of the known hospitals in the United States, the different symptoms manifested can affect the body, thoughts and feelings, and behavior. Therefore, it is imperative to recognize common stress symptoms to give an individual a jump on how to manage them.

Below are the different symptoms being experienced by PPSAT trainers:



*Figure 2. Emotional Symptoms of Stress Experience by PPSAT Trainers*

Figure 2 illustrates that 12 (44%) of trainers are moody, ten (10), or 37% are feeling bad about themselves, and four (4), or 14.8% are feeling overwhelmed. PPSAT trainers experience different emotional symptoms of stress and this can affect workplace performance and family life if not given attention. And having the ability to identify and deal with emotions appropriately can increase a person's tolerance to stress and help him or her recover from adversity (Segal et al., 2018).

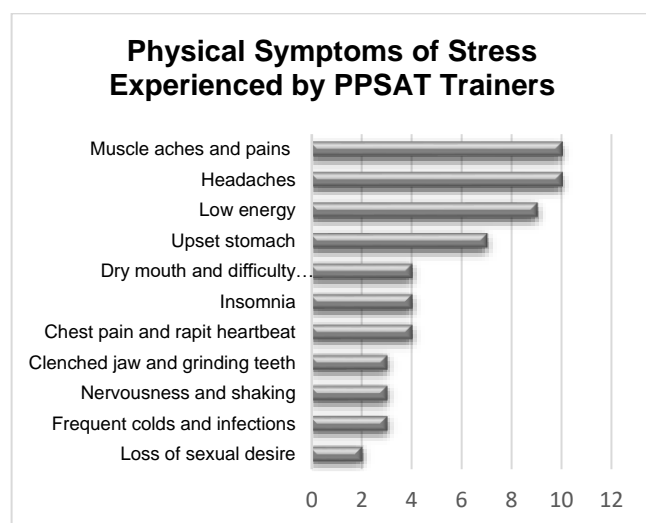


Figure 3. Physical Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

The figure 3 above reflects that most trainers (10 or 37%) experience aches, pains, and muscles, and headaches, nine (9) or 33.3% of them have low energy, and only two (2) or 7.4% experience loss of sexual desire. When a person is stressed out too frequently or for too long, or when negative feelings overwhelm his or her ability to cope, then problems may arise. The continuous activation of the nervous system – experiencing the “stress response” – causes wear and tear on the body. Furthermore, the ability of a person to fight off illness is reduced, and musculoskeletal system, cardiovascular, endocrine system, gastrointestinal and reproductive is also affected (Segal et al., 2018).

The result shows that PPSAT Trainers experience different physical symptoms of stress and these symptoms can lead to serious health problems if not taken seriously.

### Cognitive Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

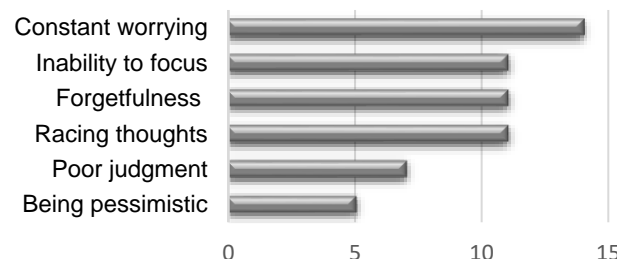


Figure 4. Cognitive Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

Figure 4 displays that most trainers (14 or 51.8%) experience constant worrying, 11 (eleven) or 40.7% of them experience the inability to focus, forgetfulness, and racing thoughts, and five (5) or 18.5% are pessimistic. These cognitive symptoms being experienced by PPSAT trainers may affect their work performance as well as their relationship with their colleagues and trainees. According to Segal (2018), stress can rewire the brain and leave a person more vulnerable. Therefore, prompt action is a must to eliminate or at least minimize the above-mentioned cognitive symptoms.

### Behavioral Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

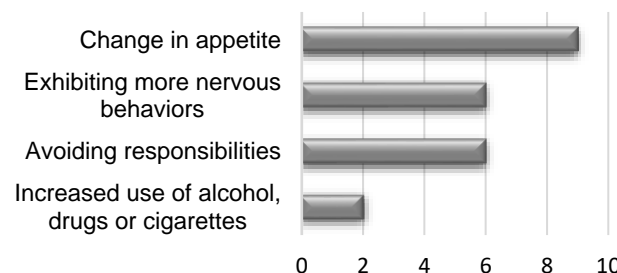


Figure 5. Behavioral Symptoms of Stress Experienced by PPSAT Trainers

Figure 5 demonstrates that majority of trainers (9 or 33%) experience change in appetite, 6 (six) or 22% exhibit more nervous behaviors and avoid responsibilities, and only two (2) or 7% increase the use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes.

These behavioral symptoms have an adverse effect on a health condition; knowing how to manage stress may combat these symptoms

PPSAT trainers experience stress symptoms differently. These symptoms in the 4 (four) aspects are linked. For example, a person may experience emotional stress at first, and if not treated promptly, may develop physical symptoms that will compromise a person's health condition. Therefore, symptoms in all aspects must be identified and given attention to prevent the negative effect of stress.

## 5. Factors that cause stress to PPSAT trainers

### 5.1. In terms of School Matters

**Table 3**

*Stressors under School Matters*

School Matters	Mean
Students' behavior	2.33
Working environment	2.75
Workload	1.88
School facilities and equipment	2.00
Others	4.00

Stress can affect different people in different ways, and the things that cause stress in one person might be completely different in another (Norwood, 2017). Table 3 shows that under school matters, PPSAT trainers ranked work overload as the number 1 that causes them stress. PPSATs programs are in demand in both school-based and community-based training. Thus, the institution is trying its best to cater the needs of the community. In this sense, trainers, as public servants, are rendering their service without minding the appropriate workload for them; they never refuse any assignments. And this culture triggers them to manifest stress.

The next stressor is the school facilities and equipment. Since the institution is implementing the Competency-based Training Approach, it is necessary to provide relevant and sufficient facilities and equipment that is in line with the competency standard of the industry. Trainers believe that limited resources during the training

may affect trainees' learning process. Trainers want to equip their trainees with the required knowledge, skills, and attitude in the workplace and it is a challenge for them to facilitate training with limited resources. This scenario brought them stress.

Another stressor under school matters is student behavior. PPSAT caters to clients from all walks of life. Trainers encounter diverse learners in every training session. Each trainee has a different personality, age, educational background, learning style, work experience, etc., with this, it is a challenge to trainers to employ teaching approaches, strategies, and techniques that would suit them. The different behaviors of trainees towards his/ her trainer, co-trainees, and learning brought stress to a trainer.

The working environment is also one of the stressors under school matters. Interpersonal conflict with a coworker or coworkers causes stressful situations for employees, which may negatively affect their organizational commitment and productivity (Panigrahi, 2017). Taking into account the various personalities of people in the workplace and emphasizing the importance of effective communication would go a long way toward preventing conflict among trainers and reducing stress within the institution.

Finally, trainers cited a lack of school supplies and materials as a source of stress in school-related matters. It is recommended that these concerns be communicated to management to serve as input in planning and budgeting.

### 5.2. In terms of Financial Matters

**Table 4**

*Stressors under Financial Matters*

Financial Matters	Mean
Ability to make ends meet	1.33
Ability to pay loan	1.45
Others	

Trainers ranked the ability to make ends meet as number 1 under financial matters and the ability to pay the loan as rank 2. It indicates that trainers should not only depend on their salary; they should look for other opportunities that would increase their income. Knowing how to manage

their finances would do to eliminate these stressors.

### 5.3. In terms of Family Matters

**Table 5**

*Stressors under Family Matters*

Family Matters	Mean
House chores	1.14
Challenges with family members	1.38
Others	1.67

The number one stressors of trainers under family matters are house works as number 1 stressors under family matters and disagreement with family members as rank 2. Trainers spent their whole day in school and are already tired of it. As a result, their patience with house chores and with family members is affected. These behaviors (easily get tired and irritated) are also symptoms coming from stress and may lead to family problems in the future.

## 6. Summary Factors that Cause Stress to PPSAT Trainers

**Table 6**

*Summary Factors that Cause Stress to PPSAT Trainers*

Factors Cause Stress	Mean
School Matters	1.04
Financial Matters	1.16
Family Matters	2.00

In general, out of the three factors that cause stress to PPSAT trainers, it is revealed that school matters ranked first, next is financial matters and the last is family matters. Trainers spend the majority of their waking hours at school; thus, it is imperative to address issues and concerns under school matters for it has an impact on other stressors like family matters.

Majority of the trainers (16 or 59%) mentioned that they did not receive any support from their colleagues and administrators in managing their stress, 7 or 26% received support and 4 or 15% sometimes received support.

## 7. Perceived Level of Stress of PPSAT Trainers

**Table 7**

*Perceived Level of Stress (N 27)*

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	12	44
Moderate	15	56
High	0	0
Total		100

Legend: Low- 0-13 Moderate- 14-26 High- 27-40

Out of 27 trainers, more than half (15 or 55.5%) of them have a moderate stress level with a score that ranges from 14-26 points, and 12 or 44.4% have a low-stress level with a score ranging from 0-13 points. No one got a high level of stress. The result indicates that the stress that is experienced by PPSAT trainers can easily be managed since it is only on the level of low to moderate.

### 7.1. In terms of Gender

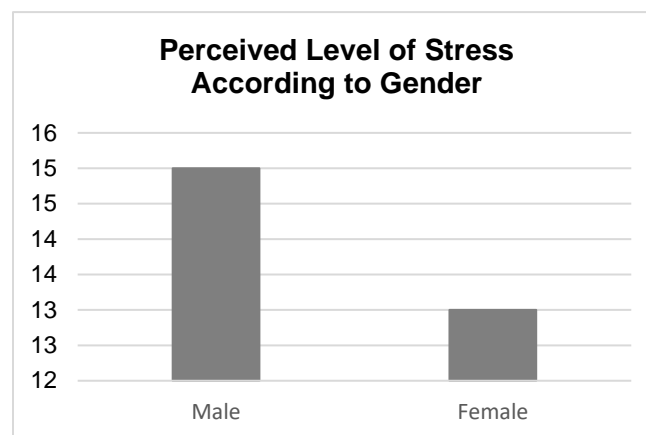


Figure 6. Perceived Level of Stress according to Gender

Figure 6 shows that Male trainers with the average score of 15 (Moderate Level) have a higher perceived level of stress compared to Female trainers with an average score of 13 (Low Level). It indicates that female trainers are more capable of handling their stress than male.

## 7.2. In terms of Age

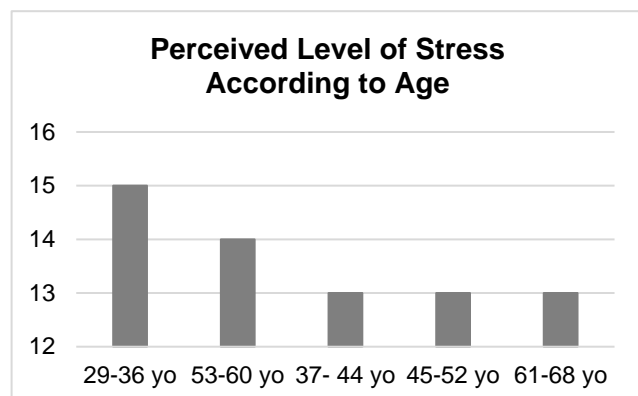


Figure 7. Perceived Level of Stress according to Age

Figure 7 illustrates that trainers with ages 29-36 years old have the highest perceived level of stress with a score of 15 which belongs to Moderate level, next are trainers aged 53-60 years old with a score of 14 (Low level) and trainers with the age of 37-44 years old, 45-52 years old and 61-68 have the lowest stress score of 13 which belongs to the low level. It implies that young trainers may find their job more stressful due to insufficient experience in the field. On the other hand, older trainers got the lowest perceived level of stress because they are already used to the nature of their job and they have enough experience in their specific field. The other reason is that the institution is giving more workload to young trainers as a way of giving them enough experience that they need to become equipped. And lastly, young trainers are more equipped with technology and it causes them stress. According to Murray and Rostis's study (as cited in Barley, Grobal, and Meyerson, 2011), email, cell phones, pagers, and other mobile devices cause stress because they make it easier for workers to spill into times and places formerly reserved for family and self.

## 8. Stress Coping Strategies Employed by PPSAT Trainers

PPSAT trainers handle their stress differently. The table above shows that trainers ranked watching television with a mean of 1.95 as their number 1 stress coping strategy.

Table 8

Coping Strategies of PPSAT Trainers (N 27)

Coping Strategies	Mean
Watching television	1.95
Window Shopping at malls	2.00
Going to movies	3.50
Doing deep breathing and relaxation exercises	2.78
Talking to colleagues	2.25
Professional advancement	3.60
Sparing time for hobbies	2.09
Engaging in social activities	3.78
Engaging in spiritual activities	3.00
Drinking liquors	-
Eating	3.17
Taking vacation	3.45
Others	4.00

Next is window shopping at malls, sparing time for hobbies like reading books, mountain climbing and cooking, and talking to colleagues that allows them to release their emotions, and no one resorted to drinking liquors. Engaging in different activities by PPSAT trainers to manage their stress is a good sign that they are aware of their stress and they are trying their best to handle it.

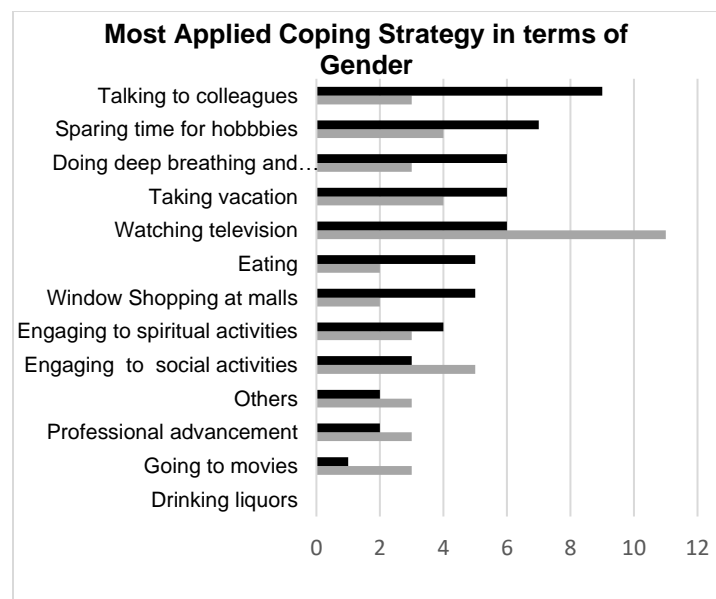


Figure 8. Most Applied Coping Strategy in terms of Gender

Most male trainers (11 or 40.7%) preferred watching television as their strategy for coping with stress while most females (9 or 33.3%) preferred talking to colleagues. Both of them did not resort to drinking liquors to get rid of stress. All of them revealed that their coping strategies are effective.

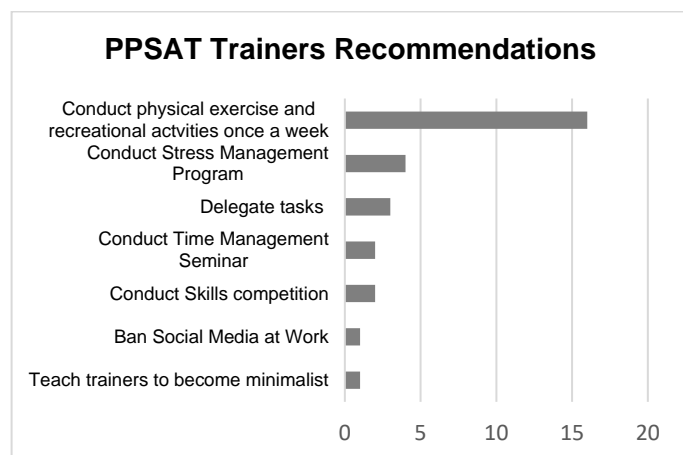


Figure 9. PPSAT Trainers Recommendations

The figure above presents that the majority of PPSAT trainers recommended the conduct of the physical exercise and recreational activities once a week. According to Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), exercise is essential for maintaining mental fitness and can reduce stress. Therefore, conducting various physical and recreational activities based on the interest of the trainers is suggested. Also, trainers suggested the conduct of a stress management program, delegate tasks among trainers, conduct time management seminars to prevent trainers from cramming, conduct of skills competitions, ban social media, and teach trainers to become minimalist.

## 9. Resiliency

**Table 8**  
*PPSAT Trainers Motivations (N 27)*

Coping Strategies	Mean	Rank
Physiological Needs (food, shelter, salary, etc.)	1.56	1
Love and sense of belongingness	3.00	3
Safety and Security	3.33	4
Esteem	4.30	5
Self-actualization	2.74	2

PPSAT trainers stay in the teaching position because of Physiological needs, the most basic needs that are vital for survival. They also stay because of self-actualization. Next is Love and a sense of belongingness, safety and security, and Esteem.

## 10. Relationship of Trainers' Perceived Level of Stress to their Work Performance

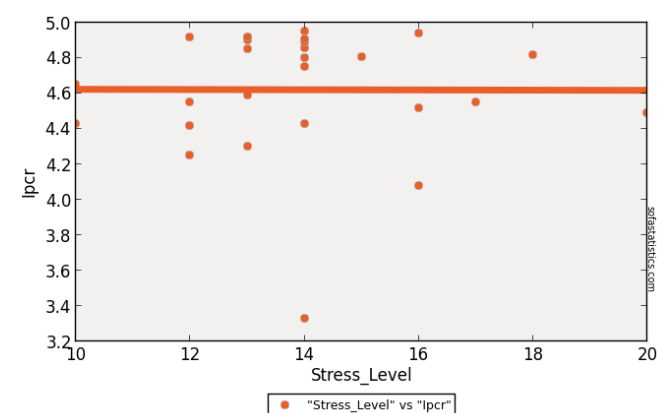


Figure 10. Relationship of Trainers' Perceived Level of Stress to their Work Performance

The analysis using Spearman's Rho revealed that there is no significant relationship between the perceived level of stress of PPSAT trainers and their work performance ( $\rho = 0.06$ ,  $P = 0.75$ ). The P value is greater than the value the required value of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; this means that the data does not present sufficient evidence that there is a correlation between PPSAT trainers' perceived stress level and IPCR.

In general, the study revealed that the majority of PPSAT trainers are seniors and close to retirement and have various length of service. More than half of them are stressed. They are experiencing cognitive physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms of stress. The school matter is the number one (1) factor that causes them stress. Majority of them have a moderate perceived stress level; male has a higher perceived level of stress than female and young trainers age 29-36 years old have the highest level of stress with a score of 15 that belongs to a moderate level. In coping with stress, it is found out that watching television is their number one coping strategy, next

is window shopping, sparing time for hobbies like reading books, mountain climbing, and cooking, and talking to colleagues. Most male trainers (11 or 40.7%) prefer watching television as their strategy for coping with stress while most females (9 or 33.3%) prefer talking to colleagues. They mentioned that their coping strategies are effective. The Physiological needs are the number one (1) reason that keeps them stay at PPSAT. And lastly, it was found that there is no significant relationship between the perceived level of stress of PPSAT trainers and their work performance.

## CONCLUSIONS

PPSAT trainers have similar or common stressors and perceived levels of stress. Their coping strategies differed in some aspects, showing their uniqueness in dealing with different situations. Furthermore, it was found that there is no significant relationship between the trainers' perceived level of stress and their IPCR as an indicator of their work performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

When organizations employ strategies that can bring out the best in people, they also reduce employees' stress. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are generated: PPSAT, through the Guidance Office, need to design and Institutionalize Stress Management Program. Next is to conduct Seminars on Financial and Time Management to reduce trainers' stressors and lessen their level of stress. A similar study with more respondents involved is recommended to verify the result of the study and to determine other stressors and better-coping strategies that may be input in the study of a stress management program.

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