



## Research Article

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# Teacher-Education Students' Stress Experience, Coping Strategies, and Pre-Teaching Performance: A Case in a Public Higher Education Institution in the Province of Cebu, Philippines

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## Abstract

*This paper examined teacher-education students' stress experience and strategies to cope with the demands related to their pre-teaching evaluation performance. It employed a quantitative research design (descriptive-correlation) through the use of two standardized survey questionnaires, the Stress Survey Questionnaire (SSQ) and Student's Coping Scale (SCS), in collecting the needed data for inferential analysis. The respondents of this research were 135 teacher-education students of a public higher education institution in the province of Cebu, Philippines. The respondents were solicited via a purposive random sampling technique. This paper found that most teacher-education students had a very satisfactory performance relative to their pre-teaching performance evaluation. Differing from the existing literature, the respondents experienced a moderate level of stress while fairly utilizing unhealthy means to cope with the demand in school. Results further revealed that the stress experienced by respondents relates to their coping strategies. In contrast, both stress experienced and coping strategies do not relate to the pre-teaching performance of the respondents. Based on the findings and conclusion, this paper proposed an intervention plan for adoption.*

**Keywords:** Teacher-Education, Stress Management, Pre-teaching Performance, Students' wellbeing

## 1. Introduction

Stress is increasingly becoming prevalent in the lives of people nowadays (Bamuhair et al., 2015). Undeniably, everybody is not immune to experiencing stress regardless of ones' status in life. Such can happen to any member at home, any employee or employer in the company, or any student in school. Teacher-education students are more likely to experience stress in school because of the demands that higher education requires from them. At the same time, the burden of responsibility becomes more remarkable as demands for a teaching-related career are highly expected. While inevitably, the school could be a stress source because of teachers' requirements from the subject, exams that students need to pass, conflict with their peers, and the course's demand. Stress in college students can arise from different issues, including relationships, academics, and financial concerns (Folkman, as cited in Beall, 2015).

Prolonged exposure to stress might lead to physical and psychological problems. Stress can be described by situations wherein the environmental demands are beyond the capability of an individual for an effective response which has potential physical and psychological adverse effects (Fisher, as cited in Beall, 2015). Besides, these situations are inevitable because every individual is constantly confronted with challenges in life. According to U.S. Statistics data, 77% of the people experience physical symptoms caused by stress, while 48% claimed that their experience of stress had increased over the past five years. Moreover, in an online poll conducted by Cable News Network (CNN) Philippines in 2017, 23 percent of Filipinos experience stress mainly because of their job or school. For students who share pressure in school, their academic performance could be affected because students need to adjust to these demands to cope with these situations. Therefore, failure to adapt to stressful situations will have adverse effects on students' performance in school.

Effective use of coping strategies can reduce stress and improve students' quality of life participating in this situation (Porj et al., 2011). Thus, there is a need to cope with stress to avoid its adverse effects on the person experiencing stress. Coping is a term used to describe an individual's responses when one encounters stressful situations that can be treated as physical or psychological strategies that can be developed, utilized, or removed. Coping, prompted by a given stressor, is directed toward these internal or external situations that surpass the individual's adaptive capabilities (Hirsch et al., 2015). Similarly, when students can cope with the stressors, they will perform their school activities and tasks with fewer problems. Thus, they could maintain good performance in school.

Moreover, students of government-owned educational institutions, colleges, and universities are more likely to suffer stress because of the demands these schools are requiring from the students. Only students who are qualified particularly academically are allowed to enroll here. Therefore, every student enrolled public higher education institution has to maintain good performance to avail the privileges provided by the school continuously. Failure to meet the standards set will be grounds for their disqualification on enrollment. That is why students here have to develop coping strategies to meet the demands set by their teachers and school and other stressful activities that they have to overcome. Stressful activities for students are the exams, term papers, organizational activities, deadlines, and the like (Agolla & Ongori, 2009), which students in college usually encounter. Most of the students in the Philippines are in their late adolescence, in which they experience a unique cluster of stressors that may have a substantial contribution to their ability to cope up with the demands of college life (Dussellier et al., 2005; Dy, 2015; Garrett, 2001). Adolescence is a stage wherein individuals are more exposed to the adverse effects of Stress (Suldo et al., 2008). With stressful encounters, students may develop coping strategies to survive the life of being a student. Failure to adapt to these internal and external struggles in school would bring adverse effects to the student's physical and psychological wellbeing and more likely to their academic performance.

In this context, the study examined teacher-education students' stress experience and strategies to cope with the demands related to their pre-teaching performance. Findings of this case investigation served as the basis for a proposed intervention plan to address the teacher-education

students' concerns regarding situations that would cause them to experience stressful situations.

## 2. Framework of the Study

The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) explained the relationship between a person and his environment. Once a person encounters a stressor, he will undergo an appraisal of the stressor to determine whether the stressor is uncomfortable, influenced by different personal and circumstantial factors, including once capacities, skills and abilities, constraints, resources, and norms. Stress coping is the process of cognitive appraisal to determine whether the person perceives that they can act effectively on the challenges brought by the stressor (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). This process can be problem-focused coping or emotion-focused coping. When an individual encounters this challenge, one will primarily appraise the situation, whether threatening or non-threatening, and consequently appraise whether they have the resources to respond or cope effectively with the challenge. For example, suppose one feels incapability to respond effectively. In that case, the person will resort to an emotion-focused coping response such as wishful thinking, distancing, or be optimistic about things. On the other hand, if an individual believes that he can respond to the situation effectively, one will more likely develop a problem-focused coping response such as analyzing how to solve the problem given one's resources. The person could determine one's coping strategies, which may vary from optimistic to denial situations. Similarly, teacher-education students could encounter stressful situations in school. However, the impact of these stressors varies from one student to another. The gravity of the stressors depends on how the students evaluate the stressful situations and how they assess their coping capabilities. Other than that, students have different backgrounds and encounters in school that will also be significant in handling similar cases. Teacher-education students have different skills and perceptions about the situations they will encounter in school, so that some problems may be stressful to some but not to others. Stress level is relative to the person experiencing unfavorable circumstances because this could arise depending upon the individual assessment of the situation. Teacher-education students are expected to encounter these stressful situations like their academic requirements (e.g., exams, projects, papers and reports, peer relationships, expectations from the school, and the challenges of living alone). All these are possible stressors of the teacher-education students that they could encounter. The impact of these stressors depends on how important these things in their life. When teacher-education students encounter stressful situations, they react differently. These reactions are based on their assessment of the challenges brought about by the stressors. They would take these situations as challenges in their life as a student and work hard to overcome these situations. They tend to believe that they have the resources to respond effectively to what the situation requires from them. However, some teacher-education students would engage in adverse reactions to situations like withdrawing, denial, harming themselves, blaming, and the like. These are those who believe that they cannot handle the situation anymore. Thus, they would resort to such actions.

The activities that teacher-education students deal with in school could have made them vulnerable to stress. Constant exposure to stress would have adverse effects on the students, especially on their performance in school. If these situations are not minimized nor prevented, more harmful effects could affect these students. That is why it is the responsibility of the school to monitor the conditions of the teacher-education students so that untoward situations can be prevented since schools are the agencies that will mold the students' personalities. It is a fact that there are several instances that students quit schooling, failed in the subjects, and engaged in destructive activities because of too much stress and pressure in school. When these issues are left unresolved, such occurrences will continue to prevail. In this connection, this study aimed to conceptualize which could address the concern. This proposed plan mainly would target capacitating the teacher-education students to deal with stressful situations in school positively.

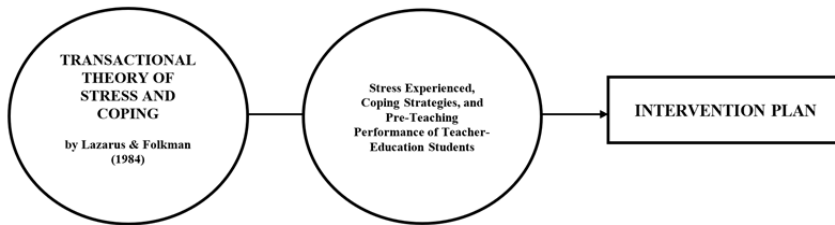


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

### 3. Review of Related Literature

According to Bello and Gumarao (2016), when students experience too much academic pressure beyond their capability, the struggle towards success academically will become challenging, resulting in anxiety and depression and may lead to poor academic performance. Bansal (as cited in Waghachavare et al., 2013) defined stress as the internal biological balance which can be manifested as eustress or as distress. Eustress is a good or positive form of stress which motivates a person to continue working. However, distress occurs when the stress is already too much to cope with or bear within, which tension begins to arise because the challenge is no longer enjoyable and seems to be of no end. This kind of stress is very common to people, which would lead to poor decision-making. A distressed person manifests negative behavior, leading to depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidal tendencies when excessive stress is consistent with a person (Arria et al., 2009; Bansal, 2006). Kyriacou (2002) discussed that stress is a state of thinking, feeling, and acting as a reaction to circumstances that triggered the situation. In adolescents' lives, they will encounter overwhelming daily stressors in this developmental stage of their life compared to the earlier setting, such as friendships, romantic relationships, parent conflicts, school pressures, and the transition to adulthood. Students' interaction with the environmental stressors would result in academic stress, the students' cognitive appraisal, and coping mechanisms with different stressors (Lee & Larson, 2000; Lou & Chi, 2000). Redhwan et al. (2009) cited Selye, who defined stress as a non-specific physiological reaction to external or internal demands. Hence, the person's emotional response and perception of the stressor causes stress and not the stressor. College students often encountered stressful situations, which may differ from one another. The pressure on having a good performance in school, homework, unpleasant surroundings, relationship with family and friends, eating and sleeping habits, and loneliness are the everyday stressors of college students. With these stressors that college students may encounter in their life, they must respond to these stressors effectively to avoid adverse effects on their physical and psychological wellbeing. The ability to handle such stressors can be described as coping strategies that could be beneficial or harmful.

In the study of Kumari and Jain (2014), it was found that there was a correlation between examination stress and anxiety of college students. Waghachavare et al. (2013) revealed that there was a significant relationship between stress and the field of education. They concluded that students from all the fields were exposed to stress, wherein the educational factors were one of the significant stressors. According to the study of Nayereh (2011) found out that these stressors were associated with their performance triggering moderate to high stress in school. Moreover, students maturely faced these situations even though they were more likely to withdraw when facing these problems. The study of Zia-ur-Rehman and Sharif (2014) found that stress affected the students' academic performance and further identified that course load and social support were the two main stressors. Similarly, in the study of Saqib and Rehman (2018), which investigated the type of stress that the students experience and evaluate the effects of stress on students' performance, they found that stress has a significant impact on students' performance wherein the teachers and parents are the critical

factors of stress.

According to Hirsch et al. (2015), to define coping resources required to handle stressful situations, a process called cognitive evaluation can be utilized. This process involves evaluating the stress level that the case may provide by assessing one's perception of the situation, social orientation, and the coping strategies available. An individual will overcome or adapt by effectively handling the circumstance via developing coping strategies. However, if the method does not work, a reappraisal and a shift of coping strategies may be applied until the problem is solved, or an individual will be exhausted (Pacheco, 2008; Andolhe et al., 2009). Suppose a person is aware of the strategies he is using and can assess the situation. In that case, he will be able to adjust the plan in the context of the problem to implement the best approach (Kristensen et al., 2010). On the contrary, if a person uses negative coping strategies, he may not adapt and assess the situation to modify the techniques needed to handle the situation. Consequently, withdrawal from the condition may happen, manifested by indifference and lack of interest in participating in academic activities. (Monteiro et al., 2007; Shaban et al., 2012).

In addition, Park and Adler (2003) explained that the word "coping" has two meanings concerning stress used to illustrate how an individual handles stress. Also, the term coping could mean the struggle to overcome the conditions that could bring harm, threat, or challenge when an instant reaction is not readily available. Coping resources is also defined as the characteristics, skills, and abilities that are utilized to identify what coping strategies would fit into the situation, which are aspects that are readily available before the encounter of stressful situations to minimize its harmful effects (Matheny et al., 1993; Matheny et al., 2003). Many types of research have examined the coping behaviors of adolescents who encounter stressful situations; however, few have identified the coping strategies applied by the adolescents on their daily stress, such as stress from academic demands (Compas et al., 2001).

Moreover, Suldo et al. (2008) posited that adolescents' coping behaviors to handle stress might help explain why some adolescents effectively cope when they experience stress. However, studies on stress and coping strategies linked to mental health outcomes found out that these variables influence one another. For example, the perceived stress can predict depression, while anger coping strategies utilized to handle stress can intensify it. However, adaptive coping strategies can significantly reduce the perceived Stress (Galaif et al., 2003). Besides, perceived stress is related to harmful effects like substance abuse and psychopathology (Schmeelk-Cone & Zimmerman, 2003). Therefore, coping strategies that will increase the perceived stress will also contribute to changes in adolescents to be experiencing mental problems.

Several studies found that social support coping strategies aided college students in improving their academic performance by acquiring guidance from their teachers (Welsh, 2010). It could also be done by having someone talk to, like their peer or friends, express their emotions (Nattasuda et al., 2013), and have a person to rely on (Paul, 2012). Coping strategies can assist college students in improving their performance in school (Kadhiravan & Kumar, 2012). Enhance attendance, interaction, persistence even when they encounter obstructions or failure, support a more robust individual who can have an advantageous learning experience. Academic coping strategies facilitated college students to perform academically through educational coping strategies such as approach, avoidance, and social support (Sullivan, 2010). Similarly, Sami et al. (2011) assessed stress and coping strategies medical students. Results revealed that 46% felt pressure, wherein worries of the future and financial difficulties were the most common stressors. Furthermore, smoking, worries of the future, self-blame, lack of emotional support, and lack of acceptance were significant predictors of stress. On the other hand, they used active coping, religious coping, reframing, planning, and acceptance to cope with stress. Shaunessy and Suldo (2010) explored the stress and coping of gifted and high-achieving students. They found that talented students and their classmates not identified as professionals experience the same stress level and cope with positive stress reframing, time and task management, avoiding tasks, and seeking social support. Students differ concerning anger coping, humor, and problem-solving approaches. Hirsch et al. (2015) found that escape was the most common coping

strategy used by these students, wherein the negative coping strategies were associated with their academic dissatisfaction. Moreover, students who are satisfied academically used positive coping while those who were not happy used negative coping strategies to focus on their emotions. Kuncharin and Mohamad (2014) evaluated the effectiveness of coping strategies used by college students. Results revealed the percentage of the respondents who agreed on the effectiveness of the coping strategies used to cope with their academic performance.

#### 4. Objectives of the Study

This study examined the experience of stress and strategies to cope with the demands related to the pre-teaching performance of the teacher-education students of a public higher education institution in the province of Cebu, Philippines. It identified the: 1) Level of pre-teaching performance of the respondents; 2) Level of stress experienced by the respondents; 4) Extent of utilization of the coping strategies of the respondents; 3) Significant relationship between the respondents' stress experience and coping strategies; 4) Significant relationship between the respondents' pre-teaching performance and stress experience, and 5) Significant relationship between the respondents' pre-teaching performance and coping strategies.

#### 5. Methodology

This research was conducted in one of the well-performing public higher education institutions in the province of Cebu, the Philippines, that offered varying teacher-education programs like Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED). The respondents of this research were 135 teacher-education students in their senior years of academic life (36 third-year students and 99 fourth-year students). Out of the 135 respondents, 120 or 88.89 percent are female respondents, while 15 or 11.11 percent are male. In general, the average age of the respondents is 21.6 years old. The respondents were solicited via a purposive random sampling technique. Further, this study employed a quantitative research design (descriptive-correlation) through the use of two standardized survey questionnaires, the Stress Survey Questionnaire (SSQ) and Student's Coping Scale (SCS), in collecting the needed data for inferential analysis. SSQ by Barreca and Hepler, as cited by Pandey and Pandey (2014), has 20 indicators which were rated by the respondents using a five-point Likert scale, namely: 5 - Highly Stressed, 4 - Stressed, 3 - Moderately Stressed, 2 - Less Stressed, and 1 - Not Stressed. While SCS by Boujut et al. (2012) has 15 indicators in which the respondents were asked to rate themselves as to the frequency of usage on the coping strategies using the five-point Likert scale such as 5 - Highly Utilized, 4 - Utilized, 3 - Moderately Utilized, 2 - Less Utilized and 1 - Not Utilized. As to the pre-teaching performance evaluation of the respondents, the researcher asked for approval from the institution to get access to the data. The researchers made all the necessary steps to ensure ethical procedures and protocols are followed.

#### 6. Results and Discussion

##### 6.1 *Levels of teacher-education students' pre-teaching performance, stress experienced, and coping strategies' utilization*

As seen in Table 1, most respondents had a very satisfactory performance relative to their pre-teaching performance evaluation (113 or 83.70 percent of the 135 respondents). It is then followed by 13 or 9.63 percent of the respondents who had outstanding performance. However, seven or 5.19 percent of them had satisfactory performance, and two or 1.48 percent had a reasonably good performance. Nobody did meet the expectations of the standards of the school. It is noteworthy that most of the preservice teachers perform well in school. Such is expected from teacher-education students enrolled in a public education institution because they are considered government scholars.



They have to maintain good performance to continue to avail the privileges provided by the school, or else they are not allowed to continue to enroll in the school. However, teacher-education students cannot maintain their performance, putting themselves in danger of being removed from the school. With this setup, students who cannot adjust to the demands of the school could experience stress which possibly leads to adverse effects on their performance.

Further, Table 2 illustrates the level of stress experienced by the respondents. The statement "I feel there is too much to do with school homework" got the highest weighted mean among all the statements that underlined preservice teachers' experience of stress (3.64) based on table 2. The statement "I have no friends, that's why I feel lonely" has the lowest weighted mean of all the accounts (1.53). The overall weighted mean of 2.71 and a standard deviation of 1.040 implies that the respondents were moderately stressed in school. The presence of the different stressors in school did not affect too much to the respondents. Such could mean that they already have adjusted to the situations in school and with their college life. This study noted that these teacher-education students are in the final years of their academic degree, so their experience in the previous years in a school served as their learning experience in adjusting to the different school situations. Moreover, these respondents are already in their late adolescence, so they are expected to be more mature in handling stressful situations. In late adolescents' lives, they will encounter overwhelming daily stressors in this developmental stage of their life compared to the earlier setting, such as friendships, romantic relationships, parent conflicts, school pressures, and the transition to adulthood.

Meanwhile, as shown in Table 3, the statement "I eat things that give me pleasure." had the highest weighted mean of 3.44 with a standard deviation of 1.005, which means that the respondents utilized this coping strategy. While the statement "I smoke cigarettes." had the least weighted mean of 1.15 with a standard deviation of 0.580, which means that the respondents did not utilize this coping strategy. To sum up, the overall weighted mean of 2.80 and an overall standard deviation of 0.950 implies that the respondents moderately used coping strategies during stressful situations. The extent of teacher-education students' utilization of the coping strategy depends on the stress level in school. Some of these coping strategies could be beneficial to them, while others could harm them. Although in their final academic years, teacher-education students still need proper guidance as they encounter stressful situations to avoid the harmful effects of disadvantageous coping strategies like resorting to overeating. The respondents asked for advice from others and ate foods that give them pleasure whenever they encounter stressful situations. Moreover, they avoid drinking and smoking cigarettes when they are stressed. These unhealthy coping means must be discussed properly with the concerned students as they posed threat to the alarming cases of heart diseases which have affected Filipino families (Kahambing et al., 2019; Deguma et al., 2021). Generally, they moderately utilized the different coping strategies available to adjust to challenging conditions in school. According to Sullivan (2010), academic coping strategies facilitate college students to perform academically through educational coping strategies such as approach, avoidance, and social support.

**Table 1:** Pre-teaching Performance Evaluation Level of the Respondents

Level	<i>f</i>	%
Outstanding	13	9.63
Very Satisfactory	113	83.70
Satisfactory	7	5.19
Fairly Satisfactory	2	1.48
Did not meet the Expectations	--	--
<i>Total</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>100.00</i>

**Table 2: Stress Level of the Respondents**

	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	sd	Verbal Description
1	I cannot pay attention in class.	2.46	0.952	Less Stressed
2	I do not understand what my teacher teaches.	2.21	0.805	Less Stressed
3	I am not sure if I am able to do well in school.	2.59	0.925	Less Stressed
4	My attendance is poor.	1.63	0.835	Not Stressed
5	I am often late for class.	2.32	1.124	Less Stressed
6	I have too many assignments.	3.32	1.041	Moderately Stressed
7	I feel there is too much to do with school homework.	3.64	0.942	Stressed
8	I do not get enough pocket money.	3.54	1.125	Stressed
9	I do not have enough money to pay for my basic expenses.	3.24	1.173	Moderately Stressed
10	My parents control how much money I spend.	2.95	1.271	Moderately Stressed
11	I have trouble getting along with family members.	2.00	1.007	Less Stressed
12	I have no friends that's why I feel lonely.	1.53	0.879	Not Stressed
13	I feel insecure because of too much competition in getting good grades and a good job.	2.18	1.028	Less Stressed
14	I feel I am left with hardly any time for exercise.	2.63	1.035	Moderately Stressed
15	I have gained/lost weight.	3.26	1.099	Moderately Stressed
16	I am tired and sleeping more/less than normal.	3.37	1.157	Moderately Stressed
17	I feel sad/depressed.	2.80	1.171	Moderately Stressed
18	I feel nobody cares for me.	2.09	1.040	Less Stressed
19	I feel have I too much pressure because of my studies and examinations.	3.28	1.097	Moderately Stressed
20	I no longer do things once I very much liked to do.	3.10	1.088	Moderately Stressed
	<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.71</b>		
	<b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>		<b>1.040</b>	<b>Moderately Stressed</b>

Legend: 4.21 – 5.00 Highly Stressed; 3.41 – 4.20 Stressed; 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately Stressed; 1.81 – 2.60 Less Stressed; 1.00 – 1.80 Not Stressed

**Table 3: Extent of Utilization of the Coping Strategies by Respondents**

	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	sd	Verbal Description
1	I talk to my relatives about my worries.	2.81	1.059	Moderately Utilized
2	I ask for advice from others.	3.42	0.942	Utilized
3	I ask for help to overcome problems.	3.29	0.913	Moderately Utilized
4	I keep my problems to myself.	3.12	1.100	Moderately Utilized
5	I eat more than usual.	3.04	0.884	Moderately Utilized
6	I eat things that give me pleasure.	3.44	1.005	Utilized
7	I want to cry.	3.24	1.101	Moderately Utilized
8	I watch TV.	3.08	1.030	Moderately Utilized
9	I can think of anything else.	3.19	0.868	Moderately Utilized
10	I sleep more than usual.	2.67	0.962	Moderately Utilized
11	I feel the need to write.	2.93	0.916	Moderately Utilized
12	I drink with friends.	1.53	0.854	Not Utilized
13	I go out, have fun, I celebrate.	2.56	1.097	Less Utilized
14	I smoke cigarettes.	1.15	0.580	Not Utilized
15	I see friends to help me change my focus.	2.58	0.942	Less Utilized
	<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>		
	<b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>		<b>0.950</b>	<b>Moderately Utilized</b>

Legend: 4.21 – 5.00 Highly Stressed; 3.41 – 4.20 Stressed; 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately Stressed; 1.81 – 2.60 Less Stressed; 1.00 – 1.80 Not Stressed

### 6.2 Tests of Significant Relationships

As reflected in Table 4, the relationship was tested using Pearson r at 0.05 level of significance applying the two-tailed test. The computed value of r, which is 0.215, means that there is a negligible positive correlation between the stress and coping strategies of the respondents, with the calculated p-value of 0.012, which is lesser than the 0.05 level of significance (0.012 < 0.05), the null hypothesis is



rejected. These findings suggest that the stress level of the respondents is significantly related to the coping strategies they used when encountering these stressful situations. Moreover, as their stress level increases, their coping strategies also increases. This finding is in accord with Bello and Gumarao's (2016) study, which revealed that most of the respondents experience high stress and often utilized emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies.

As shown in Table 5, the relationship was tested using Pearson r at 0.05 level of significance with the two-tailed test. The computed value of r, which is - 0.116, signifies a negligible negative correlation between stress and the respondents' pre-teaching performance. This correlation implies that reducing the stress level of the students would increase their performance in school. This study further found that the computed p-value of 0.182 is more significant than the significance level of 0.05 (0.182 > 0.05). It is deduced that the stress level that the students experience in school could not be associated with the result of the respondents' pre-teaching performance. Whatever stressors that students encounter in school, these could not affect how they perform in their pre-teaching courses. Moreover, as reflected in Table 6, the test used Pearson r at 0.05 level of significance and two-tailed test. The r-value of - 0.151 denotes a slight negative correlation between the respondents' coping strategies and pre-teaching performance. It could suggest that the coping strategies utilized by the respondents are not significantly related to their pre-teaching performance.

Baghurst and Kelley (2014) defined stress as an unavoidable aspect of a college student's life with many different sources. Such is a tendency that people look at college entrance as the separation to start of adulthood. However, there is already a higher level of maturity of the students enabling them to handle the challenges of college life (Ferrante et al., 2002). Nevertheless, experts consider that age from 18 to 24 years old as late adolescence is troubled with separation from parents, living independently, self-reliance, gender identity, higher moral ascendancy, and definite career choice in life. No matter what perspective these students have taken, they enter into a significant transition period (Darling et al., 2007). These identified factors will contribute to the students feeling of exhaustion to cope with the responsibilities in college. Consequently, as they handle the challenge of increased academic, personal, social, and moral pressures in their lives, these stressors may contribute to their negative feelings towards themselves, such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, and the like (O'Donovan & Hughes, 2008). Albeit, some students can adapt to the incredible difficulties they encounter in their new stage of life even though others struggle with these intensifying stressful experiences.

**Table 4:** Test of Significant Relationship between Stress and Coping Strategies of the Respondents

Variables	N	Pearson r	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Stress and Coping Strategies	135	0.215*	0.012	Reject Ho	Significant

\*significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two - tailed)

**Table 5:** Test of Significant Relationship between Stress Experience and Pre-teaching Performance Evaluation

Variables	N	Pearson r	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Stress and Pre-teaching Performance	135	-0.116	0.182	Do not Reject Ho	Not Significant

\*significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two - tailed)

**Table 6:** Test of Significant Relationship between Coping Strategies and Pre-teaching Performance Evaluation

Variables	N	Pearson r	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Coping Strategies and Pre-teaching Performance	135	-0.151	0.080	Do not Reject Ho	Not Significant

\*significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed)

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study's findings purported that most teacher-education students had a very satisfactory performance relative to their pre-teaching performance evaluation. Differing from the existing literature, the respondents experienced a moderate level of stress while fairly utilizing unhealthy means to cope with the demand in school. Further, teacher-education students' stress experienced in school is relevant to the extent of coping strategies they apply to adjust to stressful situations. In contrast, both stress experienced and coping strategies do not relate to the pre-teaching performance of the respondents. Although such a performance was not affected by the identified stressors, it cannot be disregarded that stress could affect students. Increased exposure of the student to stress could influence their professional performance. Furthermore, the maturity of the students has been beneficial in adjusting to stressful situations because their experiences had accumulated different coping resources that are readily available to minimize the negative to stressful situations to their performance in school. Howbeit, proper guidance to these students, despite seniority of years, is still needed to develop healthy and positive coping strategies. Therefore, based on the findings, the study recommends that the proposed intervention plan be adopted. Such an intervention plan is geared to attain the following objectives: 1.) to understand the nature of stress among students; 2.) to enhance the students' capability in handling stressful situations in school, and 3.) to identify appropriate coping strategies that could be effectively used to maintain the overall wellbeing of the teacher-education students.

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