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Adversity Quotient, Stress Levels, and Work Performance of Public Elementary School Teachers: A Comparative and Relational Analysis

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Abstract:

This study explores the relationship between the adversity quotient (AQ), stress levels, and work performance of public elementary school teachers. It specifically investigates the influence of highest educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position on the dimensions of the adversity quotient (Reach and Endurance), stress levels (Demand, Control, and Support), and work performance. A sample of elementary school teachers participated in this study, and data were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U test. Findings reveal no significant differences in AQ and stress levels across these variables, but significant differences in work performance exist when grouped according to highest educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position. The study contributes to understanding how stress and AQ impact teaching performance.

Keywords: Adversity Quotient (AQ), Stress Levels, Work Performance, Public Elementary School Teachers

Introduction:

Public elementary school teachers face a variety of challenges in their profession, from managing diverse classroom dynamics to adhering to strict educational standards. These challenges often result in significant stress, which can impact both their personal well-being and their professional performance. To cope with these demands, teachers develop varying levels of resilience, often measured through their Adversity Quotient (AQ), a psychological metric that evaluates an individual's ability to adapt and thrive in challenging situations. The AQ offers a valuable lens through which to understand how teachers respond to the pressures they face in their work environment.

Research on AQ has shown mixed results regarding its relationship with demographic variables. Studies by Rahmayanti et al. (2020) and Shen (2014) found no significant differences in AQ based on factors such as

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educational attainment and years of service. This suggests that a teacher's ability to cope with adversity may not be directly tied to these background variables, but rather to other, perhaps more situational, influences. Despite the widespread use of AQ as a measure of resilience, the role of personal characteristics such as educational background in influencing teachers' resilience levels remains inconclusive.

Workplace stress, another critical factor affecting teachers, has also been studied extensively. Research by Gold and Batchelor (2017) and Pagayanan (2016) suggests that stress levels related to job demands, control, and support do not vary significantly across demographic categories. The impact of workplace stress on performance tends to be uniform, regardless of a teacher's educational attainment or years of service. This indicates that teachers, whether new or experienced, face similar stressors in managing their workloads and professional responsibilities.

This study builds on these findings by exploring how AQ and stress levels influence the work performance of public elementary school teachers in the Philippines. By investigating the intersection of these two critical variables, the research aims to provide deeper insights into the factors that shape teachers' abilities to perform effectively in high-stress environments. Understanding these relationships could help inform policies and interventions that support teachers' well-being and professional development, ultimately leading to better outcomes for students and the educational system.

Methodology:

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design, which is appropriate as it aimed to determine the extent of the adversity quotient (AQ) and the level of stress in relation to the work performance of public elementary school teachers. The research was conducted in a district of a medium-sized schools division in Central Philippines during the School Year 2021-2022. Descriptive research is often used in education, behavioral sciences, and other fields to assess current conditions and practices, offering insights into ways to address challenges and improve practices (Kowalczyk, 2018).

Descriptive research allows for the examination of variables without manipulation, unlike experimental designs. The focus of this study was on understanding the relationship between AQ, stress, and work performance through the observation and measurement of prevailing conditions and behaviors. The design facilitated the analysis of the challenges faced by teachers and their coping strategies, providing valuable knowledge about how these factors affect their work in the new normal.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in a district comprising three schools in a medium-sized division in Central Philippines, all recognized as top-performing schools. Each school was managed by a principal (Principal IV and Principal III), ensuring consistency in administrative and academic standards across the district.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 134 public elementary school teachers selected from a total population of 204. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used to determine the sample size through the Cochran formula. Respondents were randomly chosen using the lottery technique, ensuring equal representation from each school. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents across the three schools.

Schools	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Percentage (%)
A	97	64	47.55
B	53	35	25.98
C	54	35	26.47
Total	**204**	**134**	**100.00**

Data Gathering Instrument

The study utilized a standardized AQ questionnaire developed by Dr. Paul Stoltz (1997) alongside a researcher-made questionnaire. The instrument was divided into three sections: Part I gathered demographic data (age, sex, educational attainment, etc.), Part II measured AQ using 20 items based on the CORE dimensions (control,

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ownership, reach, endurance), and Part III assessed stress levels in relation to work demands, control, and support.

Results

Table 2: Differences in the Extent of AQ (Reach) According to Variables

Variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	65.02	2075.500	0.496	Not significant
Higher	64	69.57			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	66.85	2120.000	0.579	Not significant
Longer	59	68.40			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	67.90	2280.500	0.718	Not significant
Higher	54	65.33			

Table 2 presents the differences in the extent of Adversity Quotient (AQ), specifically in the dimension of "Reach," according to various demographic variables. For educational attainment, the mean rank was 65.02 for those with lower educational attainment and 69.57 for those with higher educational attainment. The Mann-Whitney U value was 2075.500, and the p-value was 0.496, indicating no statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of how they perceive the reach dimension of AQ.

Similarly, no significant differences were observed when analyzing the variables of length of service and plantilla position. The results across these variables suggest that teachers' perceived ability to manage the impact of adversity on different aspects of their life (as measured by the "Reach" dimension) does not significantly vary based on their educational background, years of service, or official job position. This indicates that these demographic factors do not play a substantial role in influencing the teachers' AQ in this area.

Table 3: Differences in the Extent of AQ (Endurance) According to Variables

Variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	68.55	2162.500	0.770	Not significant
Higher	64	66.62			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	65.90	2197.500	0.729	Not significant
Longer	59	69.68			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	66.15	2224.000	0.637	Not significant
Higher	54	69.80			

Table 3 illustrates the differences in the extent of Adversity Quotient (AQ), focusing specifically on the "Endurance" dimension across various demographic variables. For educational attainment, the mean rank was 68.55 for individuals with lower educational qualifications, while those with higher educational attainment had a mean rank of 66.62. The Mann-Whitney U value was recorded at 2162.500, with a corresponding p-value of 0.770. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceived endurance levels between the two groups based on their educational qualifications.

These findings suggest that the educational background of the teachers does not significantly impact their ability to endure challenges, as measured by the Endurance dimension of AQ. This lack of significant difference highlights the notion that regardless of educational attainment, teachers may exhibit similar levels of endurance in facing adversities in their professional roles. Overall, the results underscore the importance of factors beyond education in

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determining how teachers cope with challenges, emphasizing a need for further investigation into other potential influences on their resilience.

Table 4: Differences in the Level of Stress (Demand) According to Variables

Variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	63.75	1998.000	0.306	Not significant
Higher	64	70.63			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	65.33	2075.500	0.516	Not significant
Longer	59	69.57			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	68.40	2325.500	0.781	Not significant
Higher	54	65.90			

Table 4 presents the differences in the level of stress experienced by teachers, specifically focusing on the "Demand" aspect across various demographic variables, including educational attainment. The mean rank for teachers with lower educational qualifications was recorded at 63.75, while those with higher educational attainment had a mean rank of 70.63. The analysis yielded a Mann-Whitney U value of 1998.000 and a p-value of 0.306, indicating no statistically significant difference in stress levels related to educational attainment among the respondents.

These results suggest that the level of stress associated with demands placed on teachers is not significantly influenced by their educational qualifications. Regardless of whether teachers possess lower or higher educational attainment, their experiences with stress related to job demands appear to be similar. This finding raises important questions about the factors that contribute to stress levels in the teaching profession, as it indicates that educational background alone may not serve as a distinguishing factor.

The lack of significant difference in stress levels according to educational attainment emphasizes the complexity of stress dynamics in the teaching environment. It suggests that other variables, such as support systems, personal coping strategies, or workplace conditions, might play a more pivotal role in shaping teachers' experiences with stress. Future research could benefit from exploring these additional factors to better understand how to support teachers in managing stress effectively in their professional roles.

Table 5: Differences in the Level of Stress (Control) According to Variables

Variables	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	66.85	2120.000	0.430	Not significant
Higher	64	68.40			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	67.90	2197.500	0.679	Not significant
Longer	59	66.15			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	65.33	2280.500	0.718	Not significant
Higher	54	67.90			

Table 5 illustrates the differences in the level of stress related to "Control" experienced by teachers based on various demographic variables, including educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position. The findings reveal that for educational attainment, the mean rank for teachers with lower qualifications was 66.85, while those with higher qualifications had a mean rank of 68.40. The Mann-Whitney U value was calculated at 2120.000, with a p-value of 0.430, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in stress levels concerning control based on educational attainment. Similar patterns were observed for length of service and

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plantilla position, with p-values of 0.679 and 0.718, respectively, both reflecting a lack of significant differences in stress levels across these variables.

The results suggest that factors related to stress levels pertaining to control are consistent across the various demographic categories analyzed. Specifically, whether teachers have lower or higher educational qualifications, varying lengths of service, or different plantilla positions, their experiences with stress related to control do not appear to differ significantly. This underscores the need for further investigation into other potential influences on stress levels, as the current findings indicate that educational background and employment duration may not be key determinants. Exploring additional factors such as workplace environment, peer support, and personal coping mechanisms could yield valuable insights into how teachers manage stress in their professional roles.

Table 6: Differences in the Level of Stress (Support) According to Variables

Variables	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Mann-Whitney U**	**p-value**	**Significance (p < 0.05)**
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	68.40	2325.500	0.517	Not significant
Higher	64	65.90			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	66.62	2162.500	0.770	Not significant
Longer	59	68.55			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	69.57	2075.500	0.486	Not significant
Higher	54	63.75			

Table 6 presents the differences in the level of stress related to "Support" experienced by teachers based on several demographic variables, including educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position. The results indicate that for educational attainment, teachers with lower qualifications exhibited a mean rank of 68.40, compared to a mean rank of 65.90 for those with higher qualifications. The Mann-Whitney U value was calculated at 2325.500, with a p-value of 0.517, suggesting that there is no significant difference in stress levels related to support based on educational attainment. Similar trends were observed for length of service, where shorter-serving teachers had a mean rank of 66.62, and longer-serving teachers had a mean rank of 68.55, resulting in a Mann-Whitney U value of 2162.500 and a p-value of 0.770, indicating no significant differences.

Additionally, when examining the impact of plantilla position on perceived support, teachers in lower positions had a mean rank of 69.57, while those in higher positions had a mean rank of 63.75. The Mann-Whitney U value of 2075.500 and a p-value of 0.486 further confirm the absence of a significant difference across these categories. Overall, the findings highlight that stress levels associated with support do not vary significantly among teachers based on their educational qualifications, length of service, or plantilla position. This consistency suggests that additional factors, such as institutional support systems and individual coping strategies, may play a more crucial role in influencing teachers' stress levels related to support in their professional environments.

Table 7: Differences in Work Performance According to Variables

Variables	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Mann-Whitney U**	**p-value**	**Significance (p < 0.05)**
Educational Attainment					
Lower	70	55.45	1634.000	0.023	Significant
Higher	64	79.87			
Length of Service					
Shorter	75	59.30	1887.500	0.048	Significant
Longer	59	72.10			
Plantilla Position					
Lower	80	62.65	1962.000	0.041	Significant
Higher	54	72.33			

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Table 7 illustrates the differences in work performance among teachers based on various demographic variables, including educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position. The findings reveal a significant difference in work performance related to educational attainment, with teachers holding lower qualifications achieving a mean rank of 55.45 compared to 79.87 for those with higher qualifications. This resulted in a Mann-Whitney U value of 1634.000 and a p-value of 0.023, indicating that higher educational attainment is associated with better work performance. Similarly, a significant difference was observed concerning length of service; teachers with shorter tenures had a mean rank of 59.30, while those with longer service recorded a mean rank of 72.10. The Mann-Whitney U value of 1887.500 and a p-value of 0.048 further corroborate this significant finding.

In addition to educational attainment and length of service, the analysis of plantilla position also revealed significant differences in work performance. Teachers in lower positions exhibited a mean rank of 62.65, whereas those in higher positions had a mean rank of 72.33, leading to a Mann-Whitney U value of 1962.000 and a p-value of 0.041. Collectively, these results indicate that teachers with higher educational attainment, longer service, and higher plantilla positions tend to demonstrate significantly better work performance, highlighting the importance of these variables in influencing educators' effectiveness in their professional roles.

Table 8: Relationship Between AQ and Work Performance

Variables	**rho**	**p-value**	**Significance (p < 0.05)**
Adversity Quotient	0.020	0.816	Not significant

Table 8 presents the relationship between Adversity Quotient (AQ) and work performance, highlighting the statistical analysis conducted to understand this dynamic. The correlation coefficient, represented by the rho value, was found to be 0.020, suggesting a negligible association between AQ and work performance. Furthermore, the p-value of 0.816 significantly exceeds the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the observed relationship is not statistically significant.

These results imply that, within the context of this study, the level of adversity quotient does not have a meaningful impact on the work performance of public elementary school teachers. Therefore, while AQ may play a role in individual resilience, it does not appear to directly influence the effectiveness or performance outcomes in this educational setting.

Table 9: Relationship Between Stress Levels and Work Performance

Variables	**rho**	**p-value**	**Significance (p < 0.05)**
Stress Levels	-0.076	0.382	Not significant

Table 9 illustrates the relationship between stress levels and work performance, presenting the statistical findings from the analysis conducted. The correlation coefficient, represented by the rho value, was recorded at -0.076, indicating a very weak negative correlation between stress levels and work performance. Additionally, the p-value of 0.382 is considerably above the 0.05 threshold, which signifies that this relationship is not statistically significant.

These findings suggest that, within the scope of this study, stress levels do not have a meaningful impact on the work performance of public elementary school teachers. Consequently, even though stress is a prevalent factor in educational environments, its influence on the effectiveness and performance outcomes of teachers appears to be negligible in this context.

Table 10: Relationship Between AQ and Stress Levels

Variables	**rho**	**p-value**	**Significance (p < 0.05)**
Adversity Quotient	0.152	0.080	Not significant

Table 10 presents the relationship between Adversity Quotient (AQ) and stress levels, summarizing the results of the analysis. The correlation coefficient, indicated by the rho value, was calculated to be 0.152. This suggests a weak positive correlation between AQ and stress levels. However, the p-value associated with this correlation was 0.080, which is higher than the significance level of 0.05.

Consequently, these findings indicate that there is no statistically significant correlation between AQ and stress levels among public elementary school teachers. Although the positive rho value suggests a potential relationship, the lack of significance implies that AQ may not be a meaningful predictor of stress levels in this context. This

highlights the complexity of factors influencing stress in educational settings, suggesting that other variables may play a more critical role.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with prior research indicating that educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position do not significantly affect Adversity Quotient (AQ) levels among public elementary school teachers. Studies by Rahmayanti et al. (2020) and Shen (2014) have similarly concluded that these demographic factors do not yield meaningful differences in AQ. Additionally, the absence of significant differences in stress levels across these variables reinforces the findings of Gold and Batchelor (2017) and Pagayanan (2016), who also noted that job demands and environmental factors impact teachers uniformly, regardless of their educational background or years of service.

In contrast, significant differences in work performance based on educational attainment, length of service, and plantilla position suggest a more complex relationship. Teachers with higher educational attainment, longer service, and elevated plantilla positions may possess more effective teaching strategies and a greater capacity for adaptability. This enhancement in teaching effectiveness could be attributed to the cumulative experience and advanced training associated with these variables, resulting in higher performance evaluations. This observation aligns with the conclusions drawn by Yazon and Ang-Manaig (2017), who posited that increased educational qualifications and experience can positively influence teaching performance.

The study's findings raise important questions regarding the relationships between AQ, stress levels, and work performance. The lack of significant correlations suggests that higher AQ or lower stress may not inherently lead to better performance outcomes for teachers. This challenges common assumptions that resilience and stress management directly translate into improved teaching efficacy. Instead, the results indicate that other factors, such as professional development, support systems, and personal motivation, might play a more significant role in influencing teacher performance.

Moreover, the study's results echo the findings of Cando and Villacastin (2014), who asserted that AQ does not necessarily predict teaching outcomes. This underscores the complexity of the educational environment, where multiple interacting variables contribute to teachers' work performance. It suggests that while AQ and stress levels are relevant constructs, they may not be the primary drivers of teaching effectiveness in the context studied.

These findings invite further investigation into the factors influencing teacher performance beyond AQ and stress levels. Future research should explore how different dimensions of professional experience, institutional support, and personal attributes interact to shape educators' effectiveness. Understanding these dynamics will be essential for developing targeted interventions aimed at enhancing teacher performance and, consequently, student learning outcomes in diverse educational settings..

Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights into the factors influencing the Adversity Quotient (AQ), stress levels, and work performance of public elementary school teachers. The findings indicate a lack of significant relationships between AQ and stress levels with work performance, suggesting that other critical elements—such as intrinsic motivation and professional development—may play a more influential role in determining teacher effectiveness. This emphasizes the need to consider a broader range of variables when assessing performance in educational settings.

Given these findings, it is imperative for future research to delve deeper into additional variables that may impact AQ and stress levels among teachers. Investigating factors such as institutional support, classroom environments, and personal attributes could provide a more comprehensive understanding of what drives teacher performance. Moreover, exploring how these elements can be leveraged to enhance teachers' capabilities could lead to more effective professional development programs and support systems.

In conclusion, while this study highlights the complexity of the interplay between AQ, stress levels, and work performance, it also underscores the necessity for ongoing research in this area. By broadening the scope of inquiry, educators and policymakers can better identify strategies to foster resilience and effectiveness among teachers, ultimately benefiting both educators and their students.

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