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IMPROVING WORK-RELATED OUTCOMES IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the stress encountered and stress-coping skill used by the school principals, enabling the development of an improvement program for work-related outcomes in educational contexts. An adapted survey questionnaire was distributed to school principals and teachers-in-charge of public schools in the Asturias district of the Cebu division in the Philippines. The first part of the survey questionnaire collected personal and professional details from school principals, while the second assessed their performance. Five categories of stressors were identified: administrative responsibilities, administrative constraints, interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal conflicts, and employers' expectations. The respondents' stress-coping strategies were then analyzed for their suitability and effectiveness in stress management. The data were analyzed using frequency, simple percentages, weighted means, and correlation coefficients, which revealed the extent of the stress they encountered from each of the five categories of stressors as well as the stress-coping strategies preferred by the school principal and observed by other teachers. Based on the findings, it is recommended that an improvement program be developed for work-related outcomes in educational contexts, focusing on school principals and stress management, which may be referred to as the Dynamic Administrative Performance Network.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature on stress management in schools, focusing on school principals' experiences in undertaking their duties and managing their teachers. Due to the little literature available in this field, the findings provide a contextual analysis of not only school principals' personal experiences but also their stress-coping strategies, resulting in the development of an improvement program to improve outcomes in educational contexts.

1. INTRODUCTION

The way in which a school principal manages their own work and staff is key to successful school administration; therefore, they play a crucial role in delivering quality education. However, due to their frequently redefined role, school principals have been placed under considerable stress, where personal conflict with occupational priorities. The stress encountered by school principals worldwide is now recognized as an obstacle to

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achieving quality education. Although leadership is vital in improving educational opportunities for all students, especially those with specific learning needs, the responsibility of ensuring educational strategies support active learning for all students was not completely fulfilled. Progressively extended working hours, evolving duties, financial difficulties, and increasing responsibility create a culture of anxiety, leading to the opportunity for homeroom perceptions and teaching–learning mediation to inform quality education being undermined and disregarded.

School principals also play an important role as a human resources manager, which, at the local school level, encompasses not only the recruitment, selection, and appointment of staff, but also staff motivation and retention, school climate, talent management, and other factors such as work–life balance. It is not surprising that being responsible for the working environment and conditions are causing school principals more stress across the world, as well as significantly inhibiting school administration.

School principals in the Philippines have generally been responsible for the management of school buildings only, their maintenance and repair. Furthermore, their role has been controlled by Central and Regional Office mandates to simply implement national educational programs without any adjustments, which has required little expertise in improving education. In addition, school principals have had needed no knowledge of how to administer their school budget or acquire school supplies and learning materials from appropriate suppliers. Instead, the Regional Office has managed the school budgets and procurement, with school principals simply informing the Region Office of what their schools needed. Moreover, school principals have had little input into the appointment of new teachers, who have generally applied to the Central Office.

However, the Governance of Basic Education Act 2001 (Republic Act (RA) 9155) redefined the school principals' duties, creating new difficulties (De Guzman & Guillermo, 2007; Yap & Adorio, 2008). Primarily, school principals are expected to: create a school climate conducive to learning; improve teaching practices and therefore the results achieved (DuFour & Eaker, 2009; Elmore, 2000; Terehoff, 2002); support and guide their teachers through supervision and one-to-one sessions (Tyagi, 2010); manage the implementation of the national educational program in a way relevant to their school; and ensure professional development programs are effective. Consequently, decentralization and school-based administration extends their role from school facilities manager to educational pioneer (Botha, 2004; Day, 2002) granting them control over school improvements for the first time (Sindhvad, 2009). These numerous, new demands, though, test the school principal's capabilities.

The effect of the increasing burden put upon school principals has been their susceptibility to ill health, since their responsibility for working conditions and staff issues causes stress. Work-related stress then prevents them performing their duties well and fulfilling their potential in all aspects of their role. Given that school principals are at the center of all school business, coordinating all its activities, it is essential they are aware of stress management techniques, identify the appropriate ones to apply to a specific stressor, and develop the most effective stress-coping strategies, enabling them to undertake their duties efficiently and achieve the school's goals, as well as sustaining their motivation and dedication to performing their duties well. Moreover, this study presents some theories about the occurrence of occupational stress, explaining the reason for an individual becoming stressed and the way in which they react to it, which significantly affects both the individual and their job.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In an innovation-propelled society, which has been as disparaged as a high-pressurized, fast-paced one, both of which are filled with uncertainty and mistrust, it appears that the general population feels incapable of meeting their employers' expectations, and are perturbed by the thought. Occupational stress has thus become a widespread and costly issue in the workplace. Leaving few people who do not encounter stressful conditions.

According to past studies, a quarter of employees considered their jobs as the primary stressor in their lives (Stutzer & Frey, 2008; Wang & Amato, 2000), and three-quarters believed workers encountered more work-related

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stress than the previous generation (Wachs & Helge, 2001). In fact, work is associated more closely with health problems than any other issues in life, such as financial or family concerns (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Furthermore, the gender composition of the workforce is evolving: over 50% of women are now in the labor market of which half are mothers with school-aged children (Cancian & Reed, 2008; Mosisa & Hipple, 2006).

Most people are unaware of how they react to stress (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010): people learn to ignore, overcome, or accept stress as part of daily life (Wheatley, 2010) but they must be able to recognize significant responses to stress (Dobson, 2012).

The Cycle of Wellness, which promotes good health and positive lifestyle responses, also reveals how work can create stress (Blake & Lloyd, 2008; Spruit et al., 2013). There are four adaptive responses that can reduce stress: behavioral includes assertiveness and time management, which can increase self-esteem and self-confidence (Paivio & Laurent, 2001; Peneva & Mavrodiev, 2013); physical includes nutrition, exercise, and relaxation, which improves physical health and resistance to disease (Bouchard, Blair, & Haskell, 2018); cognitive and emotional includes stress resilience and cognitive restructuring, which help to improve mental health and resistance to stress; and social and spiritual includes social support/networks and faith/beliefs, which can enhance a sense of wellbeing and enable change to be faced (Haglund, Nestadt, Cooper, Southwick, & Charney, 2007; Ruzek et al., 2007). The benefits are increased productivity, enjoyment, and intimacy. As such, the effect of stress depends on how the individual perceives and reacts to a situation (Aldwin, 2007; Hobfoll, 2004) meaning their stress-coping skills are essential to maintaining a well-balanced.

Word-related stress at a managerial level is a worldwide issue. The aforementioned Filippino Republic Act (RA 9155) provided school principals with a level of control over school improvement for the first time in 2001, but the additional responsibilities were accompanied with additional stress. The school principals were now given control to determine the general objectives for their school (John & Taylor, 1999; Roeser et al., 2013), develop and implement monthly and annual school improvement plans in cooperation with all partners (Carter, 2018; Moulton, 2001), and administer school finances, which were previously within the sole remit of the Division Superintendent (Miralao, 2004; Sutherland & Brooks, 2013).

This complex role raises the possibility of school prinicpals becoming more susceptible to psychological and emotional challenges; therefore, an investigation into stress levels among school principals in the Philippines is essential. Given their strategic position and influence over all aspects of school life, a better understanding of the problems and stress they face would highlight the complex nature and dynamics of the stress involved in school administration.

School principals play a role not only internally, supervising teaching practices, professional development, and learning materials, but also externally, representing the school as an important agency in the community (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Walker, Shenker, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2010). With the huge potential for stress, they thus need appropriate stress-coping skills maintain and enhance both job performance and satisfaction (Bowles & Gintis, 2011; Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

According to Beck (2014) the current era is a time of rapid change in which an increasing number of people are expected to work beyond what is healthy. As a result, Troman (2000) stated that all parts of modern society are affected by stress, while Richardson and Rothstein (2008) later found increasing evidence that stress was becoming the primary cause of the managerial lapses.

School principals, with the increasing demands, experience hectic and highly unpredictable workdays during which many individuals and groups compete for attention (Allison, 1997; Bakker, 2008), and the highest level of stress occurs in public schools (Platsidou & Agaliotis, 2008). Here, conflict and compromise are a constant feature, in addition to the daily demands from students, teachers, and parents, but school principals must also comply with

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the directives and regulations from the central, regional, division, and district administrations. Boyland (2011) has posited that in fact, a considerable proportion of the stress in a school principal's life is actually work-related.

School principals have reflected that significant stress is related to their accountability for students' academic achievement: Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari, and Blum (2010) revealed how those who were retired discussed stress associated with student discipline and parental concerns rather than academic achievement. Indeed, current school principals believe the move toward academic leadership and accountability in response to national reports and federal legislation is responsible for the majority of the stress they experience. In fact, Elder (2018) posits that the types of stress placed upon school principals varies over time according to social change and the changes in ways of living.

Nevertheless, stress has played a part in the exceptional achievements of some school principals: Rudolph and Repenning (2002) reported that a moderate level of stress helped people reach their peak performance, although Wright and Bonett (1997) showed that excessive levels of stress (i.e., burnout), or even its absence, resulted in a significant decline in their performance. Many school principals start out woefully unprepared for the challenges ahead, despite high stress levels and extreme anxiety leading to unfavorable outcomes (Bellingrath, Weigl, & Kudielka, 2009; Zeidner, 2007).

As a complex and dynamic relationship between the individual and their environment, some academic leaders are unable to cope with the pressure of their jobs, display symptoms of stress, and may become incapable of performing their duties. Multiple symptoms of stress have been identified, including sleeping difficulties, loss of appetite, poor concentration, emotional outbursts and anger, performance dips, drug abuse, tension and anxiety (Challem, 2011; Griggs, 2018) high blood pressure, depression, and restlessness. Furthermore, if school principals' responsibilities and duties increase without the proportional increase in administrative time/support, greater stress will inevitably be the result. However, healthy stress management techniques have also been identified, including self-control, time management, maintaining a sense of humor, relaxation and noncompetitive exercise, and positive thinking. According to Allison (1997), school principals with more extensive stress-coping strategies are much more likely to experience lower stress levels and be in better health.

Adapting to pressure encompasses multiple techniques: it is a case of lifestyle changes in which a range of effective methods are practiced and applied to maintain both physical and mental health (McGill, 2018). Baldacchino and Farrugia (2002) state that effective ways of adapting to stress comprise a combination of coping strategies adjusted according to the type of and individual's reaction to a situation. Thus, school principals can reduce their anxiety by learning various coping skills (Lovallo, 2015) and being sufficiently adaptable to turn to different sources of help: physical activities, diversionary tactics, time management abilities, social activities, attitudinal approach, among others. Eventually, this holistic approach becomes synergistic, providing physical, emotional, and intellectual benefits. While Austin, Shah, and Muncer (2005) believe that the predominant strategy for coping with stress was talking and sharing feelings with trusted friends. Stress management is only effective if individuals are able to recognize a stressful situation, their response to the stressor, and select the most appropriate strategies.

Administrative stress continues to be an important issue, particularly among school principals, who are expected to cope with the stress of achieving diversity and equity in education, as well as being accountable for good academic attainment by students. Therefore, it is important to determine the relationships between specific work–life factors, personal characteristics, and stress levels, which could enable school principals, superintendents, school committees, and university leadership programs to redefine job descriptions, design appropriate development programs, and formulate suitable selection processes to mitigate the harmful effects of stress. After all, school principals are essential for improving the educational opportunities their school offers to all students of all needs.

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2.1. Study Aims

This study assesses the stress-coping capabilities of school principals working in the Municipality of Asturias, Cebu, for the Philippine Department of Education. The following factors are specifically examined: 1) Profile of the respondents; 2) Extent of stress encountered by school principals together with their administrative responsibilities, and constraints, interpersonal relationships and conflicts, and employers' expectations; 3) Stress-coping strategies used; and 4) Significant relationships between school principals' profiles and the types of stress encountered.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey method using questionnaires to collect quantitative data necessary for analysis and interpretation. The 35-item Administrative Stress Index (ASI) was developed to identify the stressors encountered in educational settings (Morrison, 2015) while the 26-item Coping Preference Scale (CPS) was designed to measure the extent to which school principals adopted various coping strategies, both of which are self-assessment tools (Pecora, Whittaker, Barth, Borja, & Vesneski, 2018).

The school principals' personal and professional attributes, in terms of age, gender, marital status, highest educational attainment, years of service in their current role, and relevant training and seminars attended were determined first. Their performance as school principal was then assessed by identifying the stressors encountered, which were categorized administrative responsibilities and constraints, interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal conflicts, and employers' expectations, and the stress-coping strategies adopted, which were analyzed for their suitability and importance in effectively managing stress. By revealing the problem areas, it became possible to propose ways of mitigating work-related stress and enhancing individual stress-coping skills. The data collected were statistically analyzed using simple percentages, weighted means, and correlation coefficients to calculate significant differences, and the results used to help school principals develop the dynamic capabilities required to improve their school's performance.

The study was conducted in the third congressional district of Asturias, in the northwest of the school division of Cebu, which includes 32 elementary schools and 7 primary schools. With a mean percentage score of 70% in the National Achievement Test (NAT), the district is considered one of the low-performing districts in the division. From the current 300 teachers, which is expected to increase due to constant promotions and additional new plantilla, 11 school principals and 7 teachers-in-charge, who were managed by a public schools district supervisor, participated in this study. It should be noted that many of those from large schools were also responsible for small schools because the district numbered more schools than school principals available.

At the data collection stage, mutually convenient times were arranged for all school principals to their participation would be simultaneous, in addition to of the prompt return of the questionnaires using pre-addressed envelopes. For validation purposes, selected teachers in the district also agreed to be respondents for the questionnaires related to the CPS.

The questionnaire comprised three sections: the first concerned the respondents' attributes; the second was the ASI; and the third, the CPS. By building the personal and professional profile of school principals, their performance in the role could be assessed in relation to their individual demographics.

The ASI, a self-assessment tool developed by Swent and Gmelch, is the most frequently cited instrument in the literature on administrative stress in schools. Respondents indicate their perceptions of 35 typical work-related situations, in which the individual stressors are assigned to five categories: 1) administrative responsibilities, such as supervision, evaluation, and negotiation; 2) administrative constraints, such as time, meetings, and workload; 3) interpersonal relationships, such as resolving conflicts between students, staff members, and superiors); 4) intrapersonal conflicts, such as those between their performance and internal beliefs and expectations; and 5) employers' expectations, in terms of the differences between their own expectations and those to whom they are accountable. The questionnaire provided the school principals selected the options that indicated the extent of

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stress they encountered under the five stress categories: Frequently (5), meaning the situation caused them the greatest stress; Almost Frequently (4), meaning it regularly caused them stress; Occasionally (3), it sometimes caused stress; Rarely (2), it was seldom stressful; and Never (1), they did not consider the situation stressful and therefore never experienced any anxiety.

The CPS was a self-assessment tool developed by Roesch to measure the extent to which respondents used a range of stress-coping strategies. The 26 items were assigned to seven categories: 1) social activities; 2) physical activities; 3) reflective practices; 4) diversionary tactics; 5) personal attributes; 6) time management; 7) and attitudinal approach. The adapted questionnaire enabled school principals to indicate how they coped with work-related stress, including two Other options to disclose any additional coping strategies, and the results revealed the extent to which specific strategies were employed. To validate their responses, other teachers responded to the same questionnaire to determine whether the coping preferences indicated by the school principals were observed in the school.

The results derived from an analysis of these responses enhanced the understanding of the school principals' position, the potential stress it can cause, and the most effective stress-coping strategies for not only improving their performance but also supporting a healthy lifestyle. Based on these interpretations, appropriate stress management techniques can be designed and taught to enhance overall organizational and educational performance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Profile of Respondents

Respondents' profiles include age, gender, marital status, highest educational attainment, years of service as school principals, relevant training and seminars attended, and an assessment of their performance.

Table-1. Profile of school principals.

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
A. Age (years)		
50+	6	33.33
46–50	3	16.67
41–45	1	5.56
36–40	6	33.33
31–35	2	11.11
B. Gender		
Male	6	33.33
Female	12	66.67
C. Marital Status		
Single	3	16.67
Married	15	83.33
D. Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree with Masters Units	18	100.00
E. Years of Service as School Principals		
≥15	1	5.56
13–15	2	11.11
10–12	4	22.22
7–9	3	16.67
4–6	2	11.11
≤3	6	33.33
F. Relevant Training and Seminars Attended		
Division	18	100.00
District	18	100.00
Regional	6	33.33
National	3	16.67

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Table 1 shows that a total of 18 school principals, 6 men and 12 women, responded, of whom the majority were married. It should be noted that being in the majority, the female perspective dominates this particular study.

Table-2. Extent of respondents' stress.

Stress Encountered	Mean	Verbal Description
A. Administrative Responsibility		
1. Frequently interrupted by phone calls	4.00	Almost Frequently
2. Administer negotiated contracts	3.94	Almost Frequently
3. Speak to groups	3.50	Almost Frequently
4. Plan and direct the tasks of numerous individuals	4.22	Frequently
5. Prepare budget and allocate resources	4.44	Frequently
6. Staff evaluation	3.83	Almost Frequently
7. Endeavor to increase open endorsement and funding for school programs	4.44	Frequently
Average	4.05	Almost Frequently
B. Administrative Constraints		
1. Frequently interrupted by staff wishing to talk	4.11	Almost Frequently
2. Frequently interrupted by telephone calls	4.28	Frequently
3. Writing memos, letters, and other communications	4.33	Frequently
4. Meetings seem to take up too much time	4.11	Almost Frequently
5. Workload found to be too heavy and impossible to complete during a normal day	4.33	Frequently
6. Need to comply with state, government, and hierarchical principles and approaches	4.33	Frequently
7. Endeavor to complete reports and other administrative work by deadline	4.56	Frequently
Average	4.29	Frequently
C. Interpersonal Relationships		
1. Endeavor to resolve staff differences	4.11	Almost Frequently
2. Staff do not seem to understand my goals and expectations	3.63	Almost Frequently
3. Endeavor to resolve differences with superiors	4.33	Frequently
4. Handle student discipline	4.06	Almost Frequently
5. Endeavor to resolve student differences	3.33	Occasionally
6. Attempt to influence immediate supervisor's actions and decisions affecting me	3.44	Almost Frequently
7. Endeavor to resolve parent—school conflicts	4.06	Almost Frequently
Average	3.85	Almost Frequently
D. Intrapersonal Conflicts		
1. Feel progress in job not what it should/could be	3.94	Almost Frequently
2. Feel lack expertise to undertake assigned responsibilities	3.44	Almost Frequently
3. Feel failed to entirely meet all requirements to undertake my role	3.89	Almost Frequently
4. Cannot obtain information needed to conduct job	4.17	Almost Frequently
5. Decision-making that influences the lives of known individuals	4.33	Frequently
6. Endeavor to meet social expectations	3.22	Occasionally
7. Have impossibly high expectations of myself	2.94	Occasionally
Average	3.70	Almost Frequently
E. Employers' Expectations		
1. My superior(s) assigns many obligations to me	3.61	Almost Frequently
2. Inclined to take an interest in extramural school activities to the detriment of personal time	4.22	Frequently
3. Unclear about the extent and responsibilities of my role	4.33	Frequently
4. Unaware of how superior(s) regard me or assess my competency	4.17	Almost Frequently
5. Feel expectations of me impossible to achieve	3.56	Almost Frequently
6. Feeling insufficient is anticipated from me by my prevalent	3.17	Occasionally
7. Suspect that unable to fulfill the competing requests from those with more expertise	4.72	Frequently
Average	3.97	Almost Frequently

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Teacher can apply for the position of teacher-in-charge with a minimum of a bachelor's degree or equivalent and three years' service. As can be seen in Table 1, all the respondents in this study held bachelor's degrees with masters units, but the majority (33.33%) had been in post the least number of years.

According to Hans Selye (cited in Yuasa (1993), those who are newly appointed experience the highest stress levels, as they are still learning their new role, adjusting to their new responsibilities, and a novice in coping with the physiological and psychological effects of the stress they now encounter.Finally, all the respondents have attended relevant training and seminars within the district and division, but far fewer the regional or national conferences, seminars, and workshops, probably due to the expense and travel distance. However, the few who did attend these were expected to cascade their learning to others in their district or division.

Table-3. Respondents' stress-coping strategies.

Stress-Coping Strategies	**School Principals (n = 11)**		**Teachers' Observations (n = 7)**	
Indicators	**Mean**	**Verbal Description**	**Mean**	**Verbal Description**
1. Set realistic goals	3.50	Almost Always	3.42	Almost Always
2. Delegate responsibility	4.33	Always	3.70	Almost Always
3. Maintain a sense of humor	3.56	Almost Always	3.64	Almost Always
4. Withdraw physically from the situation	3.56	Almost Always	3.38	Sometimes
5. Engage in leisure or recreational activities	3.44	Almost Always	3.46	Almost Always
6. Practice interpersonal skills with staff, students, and parents	3.61	Almost Always	3.84	Almost Always
7. Work harder	3.39	Sometimes	3.66	Almost Always
8. Engage in spiritual growth activities, such as meditation	3.61	Almost Always	3.60	Almost Always
9. Maintain healthy lifestyle	3.67	Almost Always	3.68	Almost Always
10. Use time management techniques	3.72	Almost Always	3.52	Almost Always
11. Talk with family and friends	3.39	Sometimes	3.80	Almost Always
12. Engage in less leisure or recreational activities	3.83	Almost Always	3.64	Almost Always
13. Maintain regular sleep habits	4.11	Almost Always	4.04	Almost Always
14. Break daily routine or move to a less stressful task for short period	3.89	Almost Always	3.82	Almost Always
15. Talk to district administrators or other school principals	3.94	Almost Always	3.94	Almost Always
16. Community involvement	2.78	Sometimes	3.44	Sometimes
17. Approach problems optimistically and objectively	3.78	Almost Always	3.64	Almost Always
18. Engage in regular physical exercise	2.94	Sometimes	3.14	Sometimes
19. Use relaxation and stress management techniques	3.06	Sometimes	3.24	Sometimes
20. Compartmentalize work and non-work life	3.78	Almost Always	3.60	Almost Always
21. Establish office procedures to screen visitors (limit open door policy) and minimize unplanned interruptions	2.61	Sometimes	3.16	Sometimes
22. Create more positive and self-supporting mental sets	4.17	Almost Always	3.76	Almost Always
23. Take mini vacations	4.17	Almost Always	3.78	Almost Always
24. Seek solitude, slow down, and take time to reflect	3.83	Almost Always	3.48	Almost Always
25. Socialize, such as lunching with others	4.17	Almost Always	3.74	Almost Always
26. Take opportunities to engage in networking to increase management and communication skills	3.94	Almost Always	3.86	Almost Always
Average	3.65	Almost Always	3.61	Almost Always

4.2. Extent of Respondents' Stress

The extent of stress encountered by the respondents in undertaking their responsibilities is shown in Table 2.

On average, the respondents encountered stress related to their administrative responsibilities Almost Frequently, with an average weighted mean of 4.05; administrative constraints Frequently, average weighted mean

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of 4.29; interpersonal relationships Almost Frequently, average weighted mean of 3.85; interpersonal conflicts Almost Frequently, average weighted mean of 3.70; and employers' expectations Almost Frequently, average weighted mean of 3.97.

Evidently, the highest stress levels are frequently experienced owing to administrative constraints such as time constraints, meetings, workload, and compliance with provincial and district policies. However, as administrative responsibilities were also considered stressful, stress tolerance levels among the respondents were obviously low. This significant result can be explained by reference to Sogunro (2012) who found that administrative stress occurred when a school principal's competency does not match is the level expected.

Moreover, Fields (2005) revealed that during their first year in the role, school principals and assistant principals were mainly anxious, and irritated, about an unrealistic workload that cannot be completed within their contracted working hours and requires them to continue to work in their own time, as well as managing staff and the disputes that can arise. In addition, Boccio, Weisz, and Lefkowitz (2016) pointed out that those who experienced a greater pressure of work reported higher levels of stress, less job and professional satisfaction, and a stronger desire to leave.

4.3. Respondents' Stress-Coping Strategies

The strategies the respondents adopted to cope with their work-related stress and how often the used them are shown in Table 3.

Most school principals preferred to delegate some of their duties to their staff; however, the main concern with this strategy is whether their staff are cooperative, and moreover, capable of undertaking the work satisfactorily. This collection of stress-coping strategies were Almost Always employed, producing an average weighted mean of 3.65. It is obvious that the role of school principals is very challenging: a variety of stressful situations require responses that depend on an effective combination of stress-coping skills. It is thus recommended that all school principals are offered the opportunity to attend annual professional development sessions to not only learn about but also practice and become skilled in applying various stress-coping strategies. School principals would benefit from integrating stress management techniques into their daily life and should be proactive in learning stress-coping skills to cope better not only at work but also at home and in their communities; with practice, everyone can learn how to detect stressors and control their response when pressure starts to build up.

Table 3 also shows other teachers' observation of how their school principals deal with the pressure of their work. These teachers were asked to indicate how often they had noticed their school principals using the stated stress-coping preferences: none had been witnessed Always, which would have produced a weighted mean ranging from 4.20 to 5.00, and the teachers' observations produced the same result that the stress-coping preferences were Almost Always used, giving an average weighted mean of 3.61. Whether based on basic conversations or close relationships, teachers had identified how their school principals coped with the deadline and other countless pressures under which they worked.

Although school principals may themselves be unaware of how they cope with stress, their behavior in the workplace can reveal how works under pressure. However, according to Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache, and Alexander (2010), they should be aware of they react in all aspects of their role as leaders, whether working at the planning, outsourcing, implementing, or evaluating stages in which stress occurs: Borg and Riding (1993) had demonstrated that respondents who revealed more symptoms of stress displayed less job satisfaction.

As the role of school principal has become ever more complex, Reynolds and O'Dwyer (2008) explored the relationships between the emotional intelligence, stress-coping skills, and leadership effectiveness of those working in public schools. They found that while a negative relationship existed between their emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, their stress-coping skills were positive and significant predictors for their effectualness as a leader.

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4.4. Significance Testing of Relationships

In the final stage of the data analysis, the correlation between the respondents' profiles and the type of stress they encountered was calculated.

Table-4. Significant relationships between school principals' profiles and types of stress.

Stress Encountered	Gender		Marital Status		Years of Service as School Principals		Relevant Training and Seminars Attended	
	Eta	Sig.	Eta	Sig.	Eta	Sig.	Eta	Sig.
Administrative Responsibility	0.111	0.661	0.550	0.018*	0.810	0.015*	0.417	0.240
Intrapersonal Conflicts	0.560	0.016*	0.359	0.143	0.750	0.051	0.402	0.266
Employers' Expectations	0.776	<0.001**	0.026	0.918	0.688	0.127	0.661	0.014*

Note: * significant at 0.05 level.
** is highly significant.
*** is extremely significant.

As can be seen from the results shown in Table 4, significant relationships exist between: the stress arising from their administrative responsibilities and both their marital status and the years of service as school principals; the stress generated by their intrapersonal conflicts and gender; and employers' expectations and the relevant training and seminars they attended. In addition, the relationship between employers' expectations and school principals' gender is extremely significant.

Marks and Printy (2003) examined the potential of active collaboration in enhancing the quality of teaching. They found that although transformational leadership is essential in this process, when it is combined with shared instructional leadership, the cooperation and empowerment of the teaching staff led to a higher level of school performance and a lower level of stress experienced by the school principal.

Preparing future school principals to take over complete control of schools starts with an all-encompassing leadership training program. In fact, Combs, Edmonson, Jackson, and Greenville (2009) pointed out that completing even one course within such a program can greatly increase an individual's self-confidence in school management. Goldring, Huff, May, and Camburn (2008) discovered that although some school principals invested a lot of time and effort in instructional leadership, it was not a personal choice not their personal attributes but the challenges they faced that predicted whether they enrolled on a leadership program.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that school principals Almost Always experience administrative stress due to not only the nature of their work but also the demands of academic stakeholders. As a result, they perform their duties poorly, are at risk of ill health, and become demoralized. Their stress tolerance levels are currently low; thus, they need to learn various stress-coping skills to improve their job performance. Despite being highly stressed, however, they cope by focusing on their job, even to the detriment of their personal and family's needs. The analysis and interpretation of how significantly stress levels correlated with administrative responsibilities, intrapersonal conflicts, and employers' expectations represented the stress tolerance levels and stress-coping skills of school principals, providing data on the strategies they preferred to use in managing their stress. Consequently, it is recommended that school principals' awareness of stress management techniques should be raised and then they should practice choosing the best ones in specific contexts, which will reduce their stress levels and increase their performance.

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