

## "Stress and Coping Strategies among International Filipino Educators: A Global Exploration"

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### Abstract

*This research aimed to assess job stress level and utilization of coping strategies by overseas Filipino teachers along with the challenges they encounter while abroad. It was found that level of job stress of the respondents was often, and the utilization of coping strategies in terms of problem-focused was in great extent, while emotion-focused was moderate in extent. The relationship between job stress level and extent of utilization of coping strategies of the respondents with job demand was found to be negligible, while with job control and job support was low and moderate correlation respectively. The common top-ranking challenges among overseas Filipino teachers were language barriers, fellow Filipinos "crab mentality" culture, and lack of savings, work overload and homesickness. On the other hand, health problem while abroad, changing government policies from time to time and difficulty of acquiring permanent residency status, food aversions and culture shock, unclear or flexible job scope, Racial discrimination and unpaid salaries least challenges found among overseas Filipino teachers. The study used descriptive-correlational from 132 overseas teachers.*

**Key Words:** *job stress, job demand, job coping mechanisms, overseas workers, abroad*

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### Introduction

"A teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops." This is a quote from Henry Adams noting the influence a teacher can do to a person's life wherever they go. Teachers move from one place to another for seeking better opportunities and experiences. Moving from one place to another is existence. It has become a way of life nowadays which has started in the ancient times. It has started from Africa to Eurasia where ancient humans seek food, climate and other environmental factors which is the same reason in the present time. International and local migrations are not different at all. Reasons of migration are the same or similar in many ways. In Asia, migration has started in the 1840's which rapidly expanded in the 19th century to seek better opportunities (Amrith, 2014). In China, massive labor migration is due to seeking opportunities, business, jobs and career for a better life. Philippines is also known for both international and local migration for labor purposes. Labor migration in the Philippines has started with the Galleon Trade where it transported goods from Manila to Acapulco, Mexico back and forth. And later transported people to Mexico and the United States to work as fruit pickers and as crew on ships. In the 1880s, Filipino students, professionals and refugees began to arrive in Europe, mainly in Spain. This has become a phenomenon that exists until this day which expanded the labor market from construction and engineering to tourism, healthcare and domestic helpers.

Hence, today the Philippines rank as the third largest in migration in the world. More than 10 million Filipinos – or about 10 percent of the population are working and/or living abroad (Asis, 2017). There is a rapid movement of both local and international migration in the country due to economic reasons (Jolina, 1980). This remains the same reason for people migrating to other countries in the hopes of having a better life. Cavero and Capuno (2018) has agreed to this with the result of their research saying that inflation, unemployment rate, population growth, adult literacy rate, occurrence of natural and technological disasters, and income inequality are significantly related to migration. Though other reasons such as exiles, family reunion and other personal motivations still exist. Economic reason is still one of the top reasons for migration. In addition, Filipino migrants are widely distributed in different countries as well as occupational profiles. It is apparent that Philippine Labor is sought after in different countries in the world and today. The Philippines is the largest provider of labor migrants in many countries. According to the survey conducted by Philippine Statistic Authority (PSA), the number of Filipino contract workers around the world had totaled 2.4 million which consists of laborers (54%), service workers, shop and market sales workers (17.9%) and professionals (11.1%).

Later, Filipino migrant workers were called Overseas Filipino Workers which was stated in the Republic Act No. 8042 with the purpose of establishing a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, families and overseas Filipino Distress, and for other purposes. And this has adopted by all the agencies concerning Filipino migrant workers. Overseas Filipino Workers has notably contributed to the economy of the country. Remittances for the OFWs are one of the largest sources of foreign reserves in the Philippines. Cash remittances has rose 5.1% to 2.609 billion in August from 2.4834 billion a year earlier, based on data release by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Ibanez, 2021). With these numbers, it is evident that these remittances have helped a lot of families in the Philippines to improve lives economically. It has given security for the future and increased capacity to lead better lives. In addition, OFWs are now called the modern heroes of the country because of their significant contributions to the Philippine economy (Rocamora, 2018). This is one of the bright sides of the labor migrants working abroad but looking at the other side of the coin gives us another picture. They were able to fulfill their financial responsibility towards their family while battling the stress that brought about working abroad.

Moreover, Filipino teachers who are going overseas have the same reasons. It is reported by Contributor-Novio (2019) that Filipino teachers are in diaspora to seek survival and land in greener pastures. Everyone wants a greener pasture and so with professionals. Money is the number one reason in teacher migration according to a study conducted by Modesto (2020). Filipinos earn as much as thirteen times of their salaries in the Philippines. It is not surprising that Filipino teachers would opt to go abroad since teachers' salary in the Philippines is incomparable to what they make overseas. Income is the main incentive of Filipino teachers abroad however; it is not the only reason. Some of the reasons are in pursuit of personal growth and professional empowerment. And not only has that it also made the Filipino teachers becomes globally competitive as reported by Alcibar (2021). It is like shooting two birds in one stone for teachers. It gives them challenge and satisfaction while getting a good monetary reward. Though they also face difficulties and challenges in the workplace and the work itself which causes stress.

Further, stress is inevitable in every situation an individual is in. It has become a part of everyone's life in all aspects such as job, relationships, family and the list go on. Stress is the way people respond to different stimuli around. It affects both physical and mental state of a person depending on the response to a certain stressor. Work-related stress refers to the response which people display when facing problems, pressures or demands at work. Industrialized economies have caused a lot of changes in the workplace and the workforce structure. Employees are commonly faced with greater demands at work which results to depression which may increasingly be caused by work-related stressors (Tennant, 2001). Work-related stress is a serious growing problem in the United Kingdom and it is regarded as a significant health and safety issue (Holmes, 2001). The same holds true until today. A recent survey in the US said that workers are experiencing office stress and it is the biggest source of stress in their lives (Watson, 2020). Work-related stress is apparently not waning over the years despite the rise of technology. Supposedly, it will ease the bulk of work people do. In the United Kingdom, work-related

stress and anxiety is the leading cause for ill health and sickness absence in Britain. Workload pressures, tight deadlines and lack of managerial support were mentioned as the main causes of work-related stress in the United Kingdom (Liversedge,2018).

Nonetheless, work-related stress is not only limited to first world countries but it happens in any country. Jackson's (2021) reported that workers in the US and Canada have the highest levels of daily stress in the world. This entails that stress at work is significantly affecting every person's day to day life which has not changed since 2002. Konkolewsky (2002) has reported that nearly one in three European workers is affected by work-related stress according to European surveys. Since then, they have been working to help European workers ease work-related stress by working with different organizations in different countries in Europe. They also mentioned that work-related stress is one of the most important threats to worker's wellbeing (Konkolweysky, 2002). Countries like India, Mexico, Poland and the Philippines experience significant stress as well (Saghat et.al, 2009). Other Southeast Asian countries are also on the same page when it comes to stress at work. Japan reiterated in research that job stressors have indicated a strong association with psychiatric disorders, including major depression (Kawakami &Haratami, 1999). This situation has not change since then. It is published by Engelmann (2021) that about 54% of employees in Japan in their current working situation as of 2020.

Also, Philippines is in the same phenomena wherein 42% percent of Filipino workers said that their stress level had risen over the past years (Sausa, 2012). In 2013, a survey revealed that 59% percent of Filipino workers are experiencing more stress-related illness (Periabras, 2013). As reported by Ermitanio (2015), workforce in the Philippines registered some of the highest stress levels in Asia. Stress at work has been experienced by many Filipino workers and numbers are increasing significantly. A lot of organizations or companies have their own programs for stress management to employees. Although there are still concerns being brought up since it may not suffice the needs of the employees. Stress at work has a significant effect in businesses. The Philippine government has recognized the importance of mental health. In 2017, the Mental Health Act was released which focuses on the concern of mental health wellbeing (Republic Health Act 2084, 1995). This caught the attention of the different agencies may it be government or private sector.

In 2020, Department of Labor and Employment order 208 was released which mandates private sector employers to provide mental health support for their employees. Today, it is still a significant concern since stress related problems exist and affects a lot of people in their work and their daily lives. Denoga (2021) reported that 85% of employers in the Philippines plan to use wellbeing programs due to stress. Stress is the number one wellbeing concern of the workforce in the country nowadays. It affects the productivity of the employees and the company itself which could lead to a domino effect.

Educational institutions haven't given much attention when it comes to work-related stress in the Philippines. Though it has shown in many studies in different countries that it is. Ganotice, et. al (2015) stated that there is not much research in the educational setting concerning psychological well-being which he conducted on his own. On the basis of the research done, Filipino teachers' psychological well-being has a significant impact on a wide array of work-related outcomes. Mingoa (2017) specified that Filipino stress levels and vulnerability to stress were relatively high. It was mentioned earlier that countries like United States of America (Brinson, 2010), United Kingdom (Worth, 2019), Canada (Murray,2021), South Africa (Nkosi, 2020) and Taiwan (Kyriacou & Pei-yu, 2004). That being the case of many countries, teaching is considered as one of the most stressful jobs including the Philippines. Due to the fact that they cater to a lot of concerns in the realm of their job. Hence, Filipino teachers working abroad are in the same boat. Living in a different country while working postulate stress for the teachers. Ham, et. al (2014) mentioned that stress levels of women were significantly higher abroad than in the Philippines. Filipino teachers in the United States are going through this as well. It is emphasized by Modesto (2020) that Filipino teachers are facing difficulties in handling classroom discipline and adjusting to their new, cultural environment. It is narrated by Alcibar (2021) that overseas Filipino teachers have faced serious struggles in working abroad. Facing with these problems, most overseas Filipino workers turn to coping strategies which could alleviate difficult situations.

This research aims to determine the level of the job stress of the overseas Filipino teachers and to know the extent of their utilization of coping strategies. Data on the level of job stress and the extent of the utilization of coping strategies will help the government agencies align the existing programs to the overseas Filipino teachers. Government agencies such as OWWA, POEA and DFA may use the data to strengthen the existing programs and positive measures being utilized to combat stress by the workers abroad. The results of this study would also give awareness to the agencies which will make way for formulation of programs that are more effective and that can reach more workers that are undergoing job stress.

## **Review of Related Literatures**

### **Job Stress**

Job stress is caused by conditions in the workplace that negatively affect workers. Specifically, an individual's performance and/or overall well-being of his body and mind (Sauter, et. al, 1999). It is a type of stress which concerns any condition that has something to do at the workplace. Generally, Sauter, et. al (1999) defined job stress as a harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when situations do not match. For an instance, if job requirements do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker, it could lead to job stress. And job stress can affect worker's psychological and physical being of a person.

### **Job Demands Control-Support Theory**

Every day, people encounter situations where it exceeds expectations or facing a taxing circumstance where it can't be solved in a snap of a finger. These situations surely cause stress to people. Stress is defined by Selye (1936) as the nonspecific response of the body to any demand. These demands are not easy to fulfill if people are not ready and don't have enough to offer. And work is one of the most demanding environments where people are in. This does not come as a surprise since people spend most of their time at work. It enables people to earn money to sustain living expenses and lifestyle. There are many sources of stress at work which most are inevitable. Excessive workload or unrealistic deadlines, poor working conditions and lack of support and control at work are directly related to the kind of job people do. Some are personal like relationships and work-life balance.

Job security and development, organization change and culture, and management styles are related to the structure of the company. These are all identified by Pindar (2021) as causes of stress at work from a study. People go through these challenges at work in various ways. Work-related stress is always related to the kind of job people have and the conditions they are in. The theory of Karasek (1999) has given a very good explanation about these phenomena. This theory is called Job Demands-Control-Support which suggests that everyone has control on everything.

### **Job demand**

This is defined by Jacobs et. al (2013) as aspects of any job that include the costs to the person completing the tasks necessary to the job. Job demand can create stressful situations. However, workers can decrease this depending on how they will control it and considering the relationship with co-workers and managers. Karasek,1979 as cited in Jacobs et. al (2013), job demands are dependent on the stress sources present in any environment. It can be measured by the amount of stress caused to the worker participating in the job.

### **Job Control**

This is termed as decision latitude which refers to the capability of the person to control their tasks and general activity. Job control is subdivided into two major aspects. First is skill discretion which refers to a person's opportunity to use specific job skills in the working progress. Second is decision authority which refers to the extent to which a person is autonomous in task-related decisions, such as timing and method control (Hausser, J.A., et al, 2010). It relates to the freedom permitted to the worker in deciding how to meet the demands and how to perform tasks. This is seen as a composite measure that is

built up from two related psychosocial working conditions such as skills discretion and decision authority (Pelfrene, E., et al., 2010). According to Karasek (1979) as cited in Hausser, J.A., et al (2010) jobs high on demand and low on control (high strains jobs) bears the highest risk of illness and reduced well-being. On the other hand, jobs which are low on demands and high in control (low strain jobs) have lower occurrence of adverse reactions.

### **Job Support**

This is defined as the overall levels of helpful social interaction available on the job from both co-workers and supervisors (Karasek and Theorell, 1990, as cited in Towler, 2020). Supervisors and co-workers are both important in the work site. Having a good relationship between the two gives an employee a strong support at work in times of stressful situations. Supervisor support can influence workers' attitude towards the job. In addition, if employees have the support of the supervisor, they are less likely to show intention to leave the organization (Ng & Sorenson, 2008, as cited in Towler, 2020). Another essential part of the job support is the co-workers. Colleagues or co-workers have a direct impact on well-being since the proximity is closer than the supervisors. Due to proximity, colleagues will be able to give immediate help to a co-worker. Having a support system in the workplace itself is essential. According to Treiber and Davis (2012) it is more important to gain support from co-workers because support is critical and immediate.

### **Coping**

Coping is a way on how people reduce or manage stress in life. As it is defined by Folkman & Lazarus (1998), coping is cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands. Coping could be a cognitive effort and/or a behavioral attempt depending on what the person chose to utilize. Many coping strategies have been named including positive and negative coping strategies but this study will only focus on two main categories. These are identified by many authors. Folkman & Lazarus (1998) named two coping strategies: problem-focused and emotion-focused. Similarly, coping strategies are classified by Pudrovska (2007) into two: problem-focused coping or active coping and emotion-focused coping. This study will then be focusing on these two coping strategies and will refer to this way throughout the text. These two are focused in many researches along with the negative coping strategy. Negative coping strategy will be categorized in this research as coping strategies used apart from emotion-focused and problem focused. According to Heffer (2017), the use of negative coping strategies predicted higher levels of stress, depressive symptoms and poorer emotion regulation overtime. Hence, high utilization of negative coping strategies entails negative impact to the person as well. Whereas, utilizing problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies signifies lower levels of stress among expatriate teachers in Saudi Arabia (Syed, 2020). Harlow (2008) supports this in a study she conducted, teachers who utilize problem-focused and emotion-focused reported lower level of stress as compared to teachers who do not utilize coping strategies at all. In a nutshell, high utilization of coping strategies exhibits lower level of stress whereas low utilization of coping strategies would indicate higher level of stress.

### **Problem-focused Coping**

Meanwhile, it is also called 'active coping' which is directed at problem solving or taking action to change the source of the stress. This strategy is usually invoked when constructive action can be taken. (Pudrovska, 2007). According to Aldwin and Yancura (2004), problem-focused coping, also called instrumental action, encompasses behaviors and cognitions aimed at solving the problem. For instance, seeking information, taking direct action, or breaking the problem down into more manageable pieces, a strategy referred to as "chunking." These are ways on how people cope with their problem when taking direct actions. Similarly, active and task-oriented coping strategies are characterized by problem solving and planning. This is to overcome barriers and has been found to aid in psychosocial adjustment (Magee and Crerand, 2012). Higgins and Endler (1995) specified that people who adopt problem-focused style are more successful in addressing stressful situations. Filipino women migrants utilize problem-focused when

facing problems on the process of going abroad (Ham, et.,al, 2014). It is suggested that problem-focused coping is utilized when situational demands are perceived as controllable. In contrast to emotion-focused where it is more utilized in situations that are seem uncontrollable (Folkman & Folkman (1984); Forsythe and Compas (1987).

### **Emotion-focused Coping**

Emotion-focused coping focuses on reducing or managing the emotional distress that result from the crisis. Wishful thinking, distancing, avoidance and positive reappraisal are some of the emotion-focused coping strategies. This strategy is utilized when people feel that the situation cannot change and must be endured (Pudrovska, 2007). Aldwin and Yancura (2004) defined emotion-focused coping as a wide range of strategies that are directed toward managing one's emotional response to the problem. Examples of emotion-focused coping strategies are avoidance, withdrawal, expressing emotion and the use of substances such as alcohol or food (Adlwin &Yancura, 2004). There are other types of coping which are also mentioned in some research such as social ease or social support and spiritual practice. Social Ease or Social support is seeking both emotional and concrete aid from others or advice (Aldwin, C. and Yancura, L., 2004). For instance, confiding with others when undergoing stressful situation. Spiritual Practice is seeking to conserve or transform meaning in the face of adversity. Belief in a punitive God, or feeling that one has been treated unfairly or deserted, maybe associated with much poorer outcomes (Aldwin, C. and Yancura, L., 2004). Overseas Filipino workers utilized emotion-focused coping strategy when facing problems abroad. Emotion-focused coping in the form of seeking social support and engaging in religious activities (Ham, et.,al, 2014). In this research, social support and engagement in religious activities will be regarded as emotion-focused coping strategy. Thus, focusing in the emotional aspect of these two is very useful. Teachers who are not aware of how to effectively cope with stress decrease their ability to educate their students properly. Emotions and problem-solving skills also play an important role in decision-making.

### **Job Stress and Coping Strategies**

For the present study, the focal point is the relationship of job stress and coping strategies. Many studies have displayed an array of findings with regards to the relationship of job stress and coping strategies. Chen et al (2009), mentioned that job stressors are positively related to stress coping strategies. It is evident that coping strategies are highly utilized when experiencing job stress. This entails that the high utilization of coping strategies would help in reducing job stress. This is in-agreement by Schaufeli's (2001) findings; utilizing coping resources are positively related to job stress. He mentioned that employees who can draw upon coping resources are more likely to deal with job stress successfully. From these collaborated results, it is safe to conclude that less utilization of coping strategies may deem higher job stress levels. On the other hand, negative coping strategies are incongruent to these findings. It was mentioned earlier that negative coping strategies employed by workers are strategies that are not included in this study. According to Li, et., al (2017), negative coping strategies increase job stress. Negative coping strategies used in this research are procrastination, trying to forget, and not doing anything. For teachers, Austin (2005) identified escape avoidance, accepting responsibility, and uncontrolled aggressions were utilized by teachers and are regarded as negative coping strategies. Results of his research confirmed that negative coping strategy has a negative effect on coping with job stress for teachers. Hence, utilization of coping strategies has a significant notion on the level of job stress. Consequently, testing the extent of utilization of coping strategies and its relationship to the level of job stress will be focused in this study.

### **Challenges encountered by Overseas Filipino Teachers**

Challenges are an inherent part of daily life, and this holds true for individuals in the workforce, especially for those employed overseas who grapple with unique cultural and environmental adjustments. Numerous studies have examined the challenges faced by teachers working abroad, aligning with Halicioglu's (2015) findings, which include culture shock, adaptation to a new environment, personal

hurdles, and unfamiliarity with the school system. Other researchers, such as Higgins (2019) and Stasel (2021), have identified homesickness and difficulties in adapting to new workplaces and cultures.

Language barriers also feature prominently, as noted by Arietta (2021), who highlighted this challenge in her experiences as an overseas teacher. Filipino teachers abroad encounter similar obstacles. Reyes et al. (2020) reported difficulties in communication, adjusting to a new lifestyle, homesickness, and adaptation as the most common challenges faced by these educators. Modesto (2020) echoed these findings, emphasizing language barriers and environmental adjustments. Collectively, these studies underline the inevitability of challenges when working abroad. Tamayo and Bautista's (2020) survey identified ten key challenges faced by overseas Filipino workers, encompassing homesickness, salary issues, employer relationships, savings concerns, language barriers, co-worker dynamics, workloads, climate adjustments, housing inadequacies, transportation difficulties, and the "crab mentality" culture among fellow Filipinos. In our questionnaire, these challenges will be addressed explicitly as: homesickness, unpaid salaries, employer mistreatment, lack of savings, language barriers, unsupportive co-workers, work overload, climate acclimatization, insufficient housing, inconvenient transportation, and the cultural challenge of fellow Filipinos' envy.

### Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative approach, which gathers pertinent information through survey method that pays attention to comprehending and deciphering the significance participants and to understand overseas job stress, coping mechanisms and strategies. This descriptive-correlational design deals with the information that is mainly verbal and derives meaning from the participant's point of view which also intend to understand the significance that people attach to daily lives. The participants of the study were one hundred thirty-two (132) Filipino teachers overseas. Purposive sampling specifically snowball method was used. This study used a survey questionnaire which were validated by the experts in the field.

### Results and Discussions

This section discusses the level of job stress in terms of the following factors: job demand; job control; and job support.

**Job Demand.** Table 1 shows the level of job stress along with the job demand factor. As revealed, the obtained overall mean is 3.44 which indicates that job demand stress is "often" which indicates a high-level job stress along with job demand. This is validated in research conducted by Lagos and Magallanes (2020) stating that teachers often experience high level of stress from job responsibilities. Specifically, job requires great effort at work (4.26) is the 1st in rank; Job requires to work fast is on the 2nd rank with a mean of 3.56. The 3rd in rank is having an excessive work demand (3.49). Travers (2017) has specifically mentioned this in a study conducted where workload is excessive since there are many job responsibilities that a teacher has to take. Having conflicting demands at work (3.16) is the 4th rank which is also one of the problems being faced by teacher in Taiwan by Kyriaco & Pei-yu (2004). Workload is too much to handle is in the last rank with a mean of 2.73. Even though this is in the last rank, it still causes stress among teachers. According to Mingoa-Rabago (2017) too much paper work is one of the main of stress for teachers.

**Table 1. Level of Job Stress – Job Demand**

Item	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
My job requires me to work fast.	3.56	Often	2
My job requires great effort at work.	4.26	Always	1
There is an excessive work demand.	3.49	Often	3
There are conflicting demands at work.	3.16	Sometimes	4
My workload is too much to handle.	2.73	sometimes	5
<b>General Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>Often</b>	

The data shows that there is indeed a high demand of work from teachers which entails high level of job stress considering the demand at work. Education industry is one of the most important parts of the society, hence it requires more attention to it which makes the teachers have to exert great effort at work. Preparing lessons, checking papers, joining school activities are the common demands that they have to do at work. These job responsibilities are sometimes not only related to teaching since they have to get involved in school activities as well. Teacher stress is typically conceptualized as unpleasant emotions resulting from aspects of the work as a teacher (Collie et al. 2012; Kyriacou 1987, 2001; Liu and Onwuegbuzie 2012). Moreover, possible consequences of high job demands and long-term teacher stress are reduced teacher self-efficacy (Klassen et al. 2013; Skaalvik and Skaalvik 2016) and reduced teacher well-being, for instance higher levels of burnout (Betoret 2009) and negative affect, depression, and psychosomatic responses (Skaalvik and Skaalvik 2015). Though this is just one of them but generally the demands at work is the main cause of stress for teachers. This is supported by studies conducted by Travers (2017); Alson (2019) and Mingoa-Rabago (2017) wherein workload is one of the main causes of stress for teachers at work. Overall, findings show that being a teacher has a great demand abroad although being too much to handle is ranked lastly which means that work demands are still manageable despite of being frequently required at work. Lastly, teacher stress may not only result in increased motivation for leaving the profession, but also in actual leaving (Weiss 1999).

**Job Control.** Table 2 shows the causes of job stress along with the job control factor. The obtained overall mean of the job control factor is 3.75 which indicates that control at work is “often” which indicates high level of control on the job. Having an autonomy in the job buffers the level of job stress. This indicates that overseas Filipino teachers are able to make decisions about their jobs independently. This entails that gaining a high control over the job buffers the high level of job demand among overseas Filipino teachers.

**Table 2. Level of Job Stress Along Job Control**

Item	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
I have the opportunity to learn new things at work.	4.05	Often	4
My job requires me to be creative.	4.48	Always	1
I do the same task over and over again.	3.66	Often	6
I have the possibility to decide how to carry out my job.	4.12	Often	2
I have the possibility to decide what to do at work.	4.04	Often	5
I have the freedom to decide how to manage my work.	4.06	Often	3
I can work at my own pace.	3.54	Often	7
My works hours are flexible	2.78	Sometimes	9
I can easily grant permission to be absent from work.	3.00	Sometimes	8
<b>General Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>Often</b>	

The results indicate that there is a high level of job control with an overall mean of 3.75. It reveals that despite of high demand at work they also have the capability to control their tasks and general activity which acts as a buffer of such demand at work. First in rank is job requiring to be creative (4.48); having the possibility to decide how to carry their job (4.12) is 2nd in rank; Third is having the freedom to decide how to manage work with a mean of 4.04; having the opportunity to learn new things at work (4.05) is at 4th rank. Fifth in rank is having the possibility to decide what to do at work (4.04); doing the same task over and over again (3.66) is at the 6th rank; 7th in rank is working at their own pace (3.54); being granted permission to be absent at work (3.00) is 8th in rank and lastly is flexible working hours with a mean of 2.78.

These results imply that there is a high control at work for teachers abroad. Teaching abroad gives you the freedom to showcase your creativity and knowledge since they don't have much expectation on what you have to offer according to your nationality. In this case, the teachers are allowed to use



specific job skills that are relevant to their work which allow them to have control over their job. The data also shows that there is a high extent to which the person can decide how work responsibilities are carried out at work. Therefore, this shows that teachers have high demand at work but there is also a high control over the job which lowers the impact of job demands. According to Shi, W., et al (2011), when high job demand and high job control exist at the same time, it can eventually achieve transformation from high stress work to positive work. Job control moderates the negative effect of job demands on health and well-being. Specifically, high job control is predicted by Karasek (1979) that high job control eases the negative effects of high job demands. In this regard, Wall et al (1996) also stated that increased control reduces the effects of stressors by allowing individual face demands when they are best able to do so in ways, they find most acceptable.

In addition, passive labor, which combines low demand and low control, is particularly precarious since it can cause people to lose interest in their jobs. On the other hand, when high expectations and high control coexist, people engage actively in the working process because, despite the high demands, the teacher is better able to plan what to prioritize while at work. The circumstance that is seen as being the least stressful combines low demand with strong process control. Moreover, Atunez(2018) mentioned that negative effects that generate the high job demands can be buffered or intensified on the degree of control that workers have the activity. The results garnered above shows a high degree of control over workload which means that the negative effect of this is lowered, hence, it doesn't cause high level of stress.

**Table 3. Level of Job Stress Along Job Support**

Item	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
There is a quiet and pleasant atmosphere at my place of work.	3.79	Often	6
I can rely on the help of my colleagues.	3.80	Often	5
Communication between colleagues is good.	3.99	Often	4
My colleagues respect me for the work I do.	4.34	Always	2
I have a good relationship with my colleagues.	4.38	Always	1
I have a good relationship with my boss.	4.17	Often	3
People around at work understand when I may have a "bad" day.	3.45	Often	7
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>Often</b>	

**Job Support.** Table 4 shows the mean values of job support factor under job stress. Specifically, having a good relationship with their colleagues is the first in rank with a mean of 4.38. Second in rank is colleagues respect the person for the work they do (3.80). Having a good relationship with their boss (4.17) is number 3 in rank. Whilst, communication between colleagues is good (3.99) is in rank 4. Being able to rely on the help of their colleagues (3.80) is number 5. Having a quiet and pleasant atmosphere in the workplace (3.79) is sixth in rank. Lastly, is people around at work understand when someone may have a "bad" day (3.45).

The results imply that having a good support at work results to a lower job stress. Shi (2011) said that level of social support can directly influence work stress. Additionally, social support can mobilize and offset the work stress effectively. In addition, teachers who recognized job support from employers have a lower sense of career intent and career commitment. These two results may indicate that teachers

**Table 4. Utilization of Coping Strategies in terms of Problem-Focused**

Item	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
When confronted with a stressful situation, I take charge of the event.	3.23	Sometimes	9
When having problems, I ask my friends or relatives for help.	2.83	Sometimes	13
I set up a plan and try to carry it out.	3.46	Often	5
I concentrate my efforts on doing something about a situation I'm in.	3.57	Often	2
When an unexpected, negative event happens to me, I actively seek information about the event and learn how to cope with it.	3.49	Often	4
I browse the internet, read or watch videos to find a solution.	3.24	Sometimes	8
When stressed by a complex situation, I focus my attention on those aspects of the situation that I can manage.	3.45	Often	6
I increase my work duration to figure things out.	3.06	Sometimes	12
When I am in a bad situation, I think hard about what steps to take.	3.58	Often	1
When faced with a difficult situation, I think hard about what steps to take.	3.55	Often	3
I seek suggestions from my colleagues, seniors or supervisors.	3.07	Sometimes	11
When I am frustrated, I pursue a relaxing activity to become productive in solving the problem.	3.37	Sometimes	7
I try to get advice or help from people who are experts about the problem.	3.15	Sometimes	10
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	

with high job satisfaction, career intent, and career commitment likely utilized other stress coping mechanisms other than supports. Thus, Shi (2011) concluded that social support can help teacher effectively with their job responsibilities. It promotes the growth of professional ability and greatly relief work stress and burden. Hence, support from school boards, teachers' unions, and faculties of education need to make workplace health a priority as the impact of employee mental health can be profound (Baumann & Muijen, 2010) and can bring changes in education that promote workplace wellbeing.

Table 4 shows the utilization of coping strategies in terms of problem-focused. First in rank is thinking hard about what steps to take when faced with stressful situation with a mean of 3.58. Second is concentrating efforts on doing something about a situation (3.57); Thinking hard about the steps to take is the third (3.55) and actively seeking information about the event and learning how to cope (3.49) is fourth in rank. Setting up a plan and carrying it out (3.46) is the fifth; focusing the attention on the situation that can be managed (3.45) in the sixth rank; pursuing a relaxing activity to become productive in solving the problem is seventh (3.37); browsing the internet to find solution (3.24) is eight in rank. Taking charge of the even when confronted with difficult situation (3.23) is ninth; tenth in rank is getting advice or help from experts about the problem (3.15); eleventh in rank is seeking suggestions from colleagues (3.07); increasing work duration to figure things out is the twelfth in rank and lastly is asking friends or relatives for help (2.83).

**Relationship between Job Stress and Coping Strategies**

Table 5 shows the relationship between job demand and utilization of coping strategies. Job demand and the utilization of coping strategies are both negligible in correlation at 0.05 level of significance (2-tailed). This indicates that there is statistically significant relationship between the need

for a job and the use of coping mechanisms by Filipino teachers working abroad. Teachers encounter a variety of potentially stressful events every day that might have a detrimental impact on their ability to teach, their effectiveness as teachers, and even

**Table 5. Relationship Between Job Demand and Utilization of Coping Strategies**

	<b>Coefficient of Correlation, r</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Coping Strategies	0.107*	Negligible
Job Demand	0.107*	Negligible

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

their health. From a proactive standpoint, the link between job demands and the use of coping mechanisms is insignificant since Filipinos are naturally more satisfied with their teaching jobs than teachers from any of the other six Asian nations (JobstreetAsia, 2016). The excessive job demand is a factor which can cause job stress in an individual within given period of time (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001). Job demand means the number of various activities over which a teacher has to spend time (Gruskin et al., 2000). Job demand is such job-related factors that can generate pessimism in employees resulting in depression, poor performance and lack of the motivation. Thus, it is negligible because it is explicitly understood that high job demand requires high coping mechanism, whereas low job demands requires low coping mechanism (Amalu, 2014). The use of coping mechanisms appears to be varying with the needs of Filipino teachers working abroad. Nonetheless, Asis (2017) also noted that Filipinos are more likely born with the ability to be resilient in handling issues, including stress, in any manner.

The common challenges that overseas teachers encounter is the following: language barrier is leading among the common challenges encountered with a frequency count of 273 equivalent to 17.91%. This implies that communication as a factor that challenges their life teachers abroad. Second in rank is fellow Filipino “crab mentality” culture with a frequency of 211 equivalent to 13.85%. Overseas Filipino workers are tending to be too proud of themselves and treat others as inferior beings most especially if they perceived themselves as superior and/or senior in experience than another teacher (Sausa, 2012).

Third in rank is lack of savings with a frequency of 196, 12.86% in percent. This is due to familial overdependence on remittances. With increasing family expectations and dependence on the teachers’ income, sometimes make it a challenge for migrant workers to develop substantial savings and can drive more materialistic or consumerist lifestyles especially among teachers that are difficult to sustain thus it creates additional stress to the teachers overseas. Work overloads ranked 4th with a frequency of 176 and a percentage equal to 11.55%.

Hence, homesickness ranked fifth with a frequency count of 156 equivalent to 10.24%. This means that there is a “distress or impairment caused by an actual or anticipated separation from home. On the other hand, there are overseas Filipino teachers identified some challenges which is 70 in frequency and equivalent to 4.59% that are noteworthy of addressing job stress which includes the following: health problem while in abroad with frequency of 23; unclear or flexible job scope with frequency of 15; racial discrimination with 12 frequency; changing government policies from time to time and difficulty of acquiring permanent residency status with frequency of 11 and last is food aversions and culture shock with 9 frequency. Lastly, unpaid salaries which ranked twelfth with a frequency count of 54 which is equivalent to 3.54%. This means that only few overseas teachers encounter this but regarded as challenge in their work place.

### **Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations**

#### **Findings**

1. For either of the factors (job demand, job control and job support), level of job stress of the respondents is found to be often. Further, the level of stress for job demand is relatively high compared to job control and job support.

2. The utilization of coping strategies in terms of problem-focused is found to be in great extent. Moreover, the utilization of coping strategies in terms of emotion-focused is moderate in extent.
3. The relationship between job stress level and extent of utilization of coping strategies of the respondents with job demand is found to be negligible. On the other hand, the relationship of utilization of coping mechanism with job control and job support is low correlation and moderate correlation respectively.
4. Common top-ranking challenges found among overseas Filipino teachers are language barriers, fellow Filipinos “crab mentality” culture, and lack of savings, work overload and homesickness. Contrary to the top-ranking challenges, health problem while abroad, changing government policies from time to time and difficulty of acquiring permanent residency status, food aversions and culture shock, unclear or flexible job scope, Racial discrimination and unpaid salaries are the least challenges found among overseas Filipino teachers.

### **Conclusions**

1. Teachers deemed recognition of their job stress at work, (which includes job demand, job control and job support) and have clear picture on the utilization of coping mechanisms. Overall, teachers are highly stressed on job demands over job control and job support. On the other hand, there is a good job support at work that yields to a lower job stress.
2. Generally, teachers are knowledgeable on the utilization of coping mechanism in terms of problem-focused and emotion-focused. Teachers portray great extent of utilization of coping mechanism in terms of problem-focused over emotion-focused.
3. There is a negligible relationship between coping mechanism and job demands. Contrary to job control which has a low correlation and job support is moderate correlation. Nonetheless, as job support increases, job demands will decrease thus the job stress will decrease.
4. Teachers have common challenges being experience that are contributory to their stress at work.

### **Recommendations**

Based from the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are respectfully presented:

1. The results of the study should be deliberated by the concerned employers as basis for formulating ways to lessen teachers’ stress and to improve their job demands, job control and job support as well as their utilization of coping mechanisms.
2. A school which includes the employers should have activities that would lessen boredom and work under load in the institution. These activities can be in a form of team building once in a while.
3. School heads should monitor their subordinates to check the relationship that is present in them and address such if needed to avoid quarrels and misunderstandings in the group to address the crab mentality culture.
4. The school should see the dangers present in the institution and eradicate them, if not, they must observe preventive measures the proper way around.
5. School calendars should be done well to a lot sufficient time to teachers about different activities such as academic activities, professional activities and many other more and orient the teachers about what they will be doing in their job to avoid conflict.
6. The School’s Administrative Staff should check teacher workloads if there is a need to cut some or add more to eliminate stressors such as work overload or work underload.
7. Schools should provide platforms for teachers to exercise their full potential where students shall benefit from it and should always be informed about their teaching staff doing.
8. Schools should conduct seminars specifically stress management and time management for teachers to enhance their skills as well as their performance.
9. Professional development programs should be contextualized with the utilization of coping mechanism for teachers.

10. Different support systems are encouraged to sustain and strengthen job support and lessen the job demands and control among teachers.
11. Further studies on the overseas Filipino stress and utilization of coping mechanisms in broader depth and breadth, and different methodology are initiated by other researchers so as to explore and answer besetting questions about teachers' stress levels and also job satisfaction.

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