
Exploring Students' Academic Stressors: The Case of Samar State University, Samar, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the students' academic stressors in Samar State University. The main objectives were to ascertain if the students do experience stress in school, identify their academic stressors, and how they cope up with stress. A qualitative approach using phenomenological design was used to explore the students' academic stressors. Thirty-one (31) students from different colleges in Samar State University willingly participated in the study. Participants met the description of a student: 1) a bona fide student of Samar State University; and 2) willing to participate in the study. From the data analyses, nine themes emerged: 1) exams and quizzes; 2) teacher's personality; 3) time pressure; 4) financial issue; 5) make-up classes; 6) classmates; 7) administration; 8) love life; 9) coping skills. Based on the results, it shows that students in Samar State University experience stress. Nevertheless, students tend to cope up with stress and their lived experiences can inspire other students to continue studying despite the stress.

Keywords: *stress, academic stress, stressors, students*

INTRODUCTION

In life, there are lots of problems being exposed and these are too shallow and cliché for humans to perceive. It is very common to hear about death and taxes in first and second position, and stress comes in the third position of humans' problems (Bernstein, et al., 2008). There is no exception to stress. It is part of life no matter how healthy, rich, happy, and puissant people might be. Stress is the emotional, physical, and mental human response to a certain stimulus. It is considered as the adaption or coping-response that helps the body to get ready for uphill situations or circumstances. When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, physical changes such as sweating, burn out, losing weight due to binge-eating or obesity due to stress-eating, worrying, muscle tension, headache, and difficulty in breathing or hyperventilation are just some of the possible symptoms that might occur. Psychological effects of stress such as irritability, social withdrawal or isolation, sense of helplessness, lack of interest in activities, and mood swings, are some of the changes that become obvious in a person's behavior. A person suffering from stress might experience difficulties in his or her daily normal functioning. Stress can be either negative or positive though, depending on the stressor and on how a person reacts or cope up with that stressor. Stressor is any event, situation, or circumstance that causes stress; it is when people encounter stimuli that they view as thrilling (negative) or motivating (positive) – one of these is the academic setting.

Stress has become an important topic in academic circles. Many scholars in the field of behavioral science have carried out extensive research on stress and its outcomes and

concluded that the topic needed more attention (Agolla, 2009). Academic stressors include the student's perception of the extensive knowledge base required and the perception of an inadequate time to develop it (Carveth, et al., 1996). Academic stress, among college students in particular, has been a topic of interest for many years (Shields, 2011). Academic stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competitions with other students, failures and poor relationships with other students or lecturers (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Also, the pressure to perform well in the examination or test and time allocated makes academic environment very stressful (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006). Stress really massively affects the performance of the student and hinders academic achievement. It limits the students' capabilities and it deflates their self-esteem.

Students are the hope of the world. They are the future heroes – doctors, lawyers, teachers, businessmen, innovators, social workers, scientists, and engineers. They have the knowledge and ability to make this world a better place – transformed, secured, and economic and political stable, but being a student is not easy at all and can be stressful especially in college where students are being trained to achieve their dreams. According to Sax (1997), a disturbing trend in college student health is the reported increase in student stress nationwide. Also, stress is considered to be a part of students' life and can impact the students coping strategies in accordance with the demands of academic life. This is so because academic work is always accomplished with stressful activities (Agolla & Ongori, 2009).

McKean et al. (2000) argue that undergraduate students experience higher stress at predictable times each semester because of the academic commitments, financial pressures, and lack of time management skills. In addition to academic requirements, relations with faculty members and time pressures are yet further sources of stress (Misra & McKean, 2000). Students are the future leaders of tomorrow and anything that interferes with their wellbeing should be termed as denying the society their future leaders (Agolla & Ongori, 2009). Academic stressors can affect health, academic performance, and emotional state once stress has become perceived negatively or has become steep. Hence, it is significant that students come up with effective techniques in order to cope up with stressful situations.

This study aimed to explore students' academic stressors in Samar State University. The results of this study will be helpful in understanding academic stressors of the students, come up with better coping skills that will help the students overcome academic stressors, and raise awareness of students' academic stressors. Hence, this study will serve as a guide on how to deal with students in able to help them become better leaders in the future.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This qualitative study utilized phenomenological approach. It aimed to know if the students in Samar State University experience stress in studying; to explore the students' academic stressors; and, to come up better coping skills. According to Creswell (1998), qualitative research is “an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researchers build a complex and holistic picture, analyze words, report detailed views of informants, and conduct the study in a natural setting”. Phenomenology aimed to accurately describe the phenomenon without a pre-existing knowledge to a framework, but remaining truth to the facts (Groenewald, 2004).

More so, using a qualitative research, the researcher would be able to connect with their participants and to see the world from their viewpoints (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The emphasis is on how individuals construct meaning and knowledge through interactions within the social context which appropriately aligns with this study's interest in exploring students' academic stressors. The researcher found this method most applicable to the inquiry in order to provide a comprehensive analysis on the students' academic stressors in Samar State University.

Participants

Participants of the study were identified using purposive sampling. Using purposive sampling, the researcher can choose their participants that will be fit for the study (Dever & Frankel, 2000). Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard, et al., 2006). The researchers conducted interview from random enrolled students of different colleges. Thirty-one (31) students from different colleges in Samar State University willingly participated in the study. Participants met the description of a student: 1) a bona fide student of Samar State University; 2) willing to participate in the study.

Data Collection

In gathering the appropriate data for the study, a semi-structured interview was used in collecting data. This type of interview was the most familiar strategy in collecting qualitative data (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of inquiry that merges a pre-determined set of open questions with the privilege for the researchers to explore particular responses further; used to understand how interventions work and how they could be enhanced. It also allows respondents to tackle and raise issues that you may not have considered. According to Teijlingen (2014), a semi-structured interview is predetermined questions, but order can be modified based upon the interviewer's perception of what seems most appropriate. Question wording can be changed and explanations given; inappropriate questions for a particular interviewee can be omitted, or additional ones included. The contents of the interview guide were validated by two professionals who were expert in the field of psychology. The researchers also provided an agreement that included acquiring informed consent, assured confidentiality, permission to record and publish, and depicting the ethical principles of research. As to data accumulating methods, the researchers used note taking and dialogic form interview to get deeper responses from the participants.

RESULTS

From the data analyses, nine themes emerged: 1) exams and quizzes; 2) teacher's personality; 3) time pressure; 4) financial issue; 5) make-up classes; 6) classmates; 7) administration; 8) love life; 9) coping skills. The nine themes and sub themes that emerged suggested that students are experiencing stress in studying in Samar State University. They have academic stressors as evident in themes 1 to 8. However, Theme 9 illustrates how they manage and get through stress. The following sections present the major themes and subthemes.

Theme 1. Exams and Quizzes

Examinations and quizzes are part of the requirements needed to be accomplished by the students in order to pass the subjects in studying. Theme 1 can be best explained by three (3) sub themes including Information Overload, Difficulty of Subject/Lesson, and Lack of Preparation. From the analysis, it can be noticed and understood that being a student is not that easy. They are experiencing stress due to exams and quizzes and they are having difficulties regarding Information Overload, Difficulty of Subject/Lesson, and Lack of Preparation.

Subtheme A. Information Overload

Students are expected to study their lessons especially when exams and quizzes are about to happen. However, when they are being done all at once, it's hard for the students to grasp all information in just a short period of time during review. Pulling an all-nighter can also affect the students' concentration in studying or reviewing for exams and quizzes. Thus, Information Overload is considered as an academic stressor for them.

Exams and quizzes themselves cause a lot of pressure to the students. Students are forced to study hard. Overload of information makes the students more stressed, especially when the lessons being reviewed are not included in exams and quizzes.

Information Overload, as being experienced by the students due to exams and quizzes, is illustrated in the following statements:

- (1) *"It is quite hard for me to study when exams are pile up. I'm stressed because it's hard to review or study all subjects especially if all major subjects are taken on the same day."*
- (2) *"Yes. When it comes to reviewing our lessons, especially now, we have a lot to be reviewed. Also... what you call this... They are giving us handouts where lessons are not even included in the examination. Like 2 or 3 topics only appear in the exam."*
- (3) *"Yes, of course, there is an elimination here in COED. It's stressful because you have to force yourself to study hard in order to pass. It is because of the elimination. Exams and quizzes are also my stressors. These make me stay up late at night just to study and review all my lessons especially when it's Midterms and Finals."*

Subtheme 2. Difficulty of subject or lessons

Students experience stress due to difficulty of subject or lessons. They are stressed-out when they could not fully grasp the topics or lessons being discussed to them or if they consider certain subjects as difficult to deal with. Students' experiences are stated below:

- (1) *"Like, a subject that is really hard for me to deal with. No matter how I push myself to listen and concentrate, I am still having a hard time dealing with it. I'm pressured on what I am going to do."*
- (2) *"Exams and quizzes are also a factor. Especially if the subject or lesson is too hard for me."*
- (3) *"Also, exams and quizzes. They really affect my performance in school particularly if I am having a hard time understanding our lessons. Especially if I don't have enough sleep, it really affects my scores in our quizzes."*

Subtheme 3. Lack of Preparation

Students experience stress when they are not ready – physically and intellectually – to face the exams and quizzes. This may be due to lack of sleep, laziness, or no review or study before the exam. Experiences of the students are stated in the following statements:

- (1) *“Exams, quizzes, and recitations are also factors of stress especially if I am not ready. Sometimes it’s hard for me to focus on my lessons; if I am too lazy to study. It really affects my academic performance and it makes me hard to maintain my grade.”*
- (2) *“Sometimes. A bit pressured when it comes to our major, especially if the exam is approaching. Then, there will be a quiz out of a sudden without even informing us. Also, if we will have a quiz about a certain topic, that hasn’t been discussed to us yet.”*

Theme 2. Teacher’s Personality

Teachers’ personality is another concern of students in Samar State University. Students are stressed on some of their teachers’ personality. Theme 2 can be best explained by its 3 subthemes: 1) terror, 2) demanding, 3) inconsiderate. According to them, some teachers are terror who demand a lot of projects or requirements, and inconsiderate to the students’ capabilities

Subtheme 1. Terror

Terror teachers are a factor of students’ stress. Teachers who are terror are causing disturbance or annoyance to the students. According to the students, they are always angry inside the classroom and can’t control their temper. Experiences of the students are stated in following statements:

- (1) *“Ummm... yes, the teachers are displeasing. Seriously, it’s true that there are terror teachers; they are the ones who stress me out.”*
- (2) *“Is it okay to include teachers? The teachers are terror. I don’t feel like attending the class because the teacher is always angry.”*
- (3) *“It’s quite difficult especially if the professor is terror.”*

Subtheme 2. Demanding

According to the participants, some teachers in Samar State University are demanding. Students stated that teachers require much effort or skill from their students, obligating them to meet the standards. Experiences are illustrated in the following statements below:

- (1) *“And there are teachers who pressure us, students... They even demand best and high quality projects, the expensive ones of course.”*
- (2) *“They demand a lot. It’s already difficult for us and yet they make things more complicated.”*
- (3) *“Also, the teachers who pressure us to accomplish all requirements as soon as possible.”*

Subtheme 3. Inconsiderate

Based on the participants’ statements, some teachers in Samar State University are inconsiderate to the students’ capabilities, making it more difficult for them to accomplish what is being required of them. Inconsiderate teachers are insensitive or thoughtlessly

causing difficulties, pain, or inconvenience to the students. Experiences are illustrated in the following statements:

- (1) *“They don't take into consideration the students' capabilities. They want this and that, as if all students are the same. I wish they treat students based on his or her abilities and capabilities. Their expectation stresses me out.”*
- (2) *“...They don't even consider our capabilities. For me, they should know how to deal with students' capabilities in order to help them grow instead of causing them stress.”*

Theme 3. Time Pressure

Time pressure is one of the stresses being experienced by the students in Samar State University. It is when students are compelled and pressured due to deadlines, lack of time, and difficulty of projects. Theme 3 is best described with its three sub themes below:

Subtheme 1. Deadline of Submissions

Students experience stress due to deadline of submissions. It is a stressor to the students since there were instances when they couldn't meet and accomplish their requirements on or before deadline. Experiences are stated in the following statements:

- (1) *“Tasks, assignments, projects, and deadline of submissions are the causes of my stress. But I think, it is the deadline of submission which triggers it most. There was an instance when I couldn't meet that deadline. Sometimes I can't avoid to cram during such situation.”*
- (2) *“Lots of project. Especially if we are pressured to accomplish it before the deadline.”*
- (3) *“Projects are also stressful especially if I find it hard to finish before the deadline.”*

Subtheme 2. Level of Difficulty

When projects or assignments are too hard to handle and comprehend, students in Samar State University happen to experience stress.

- (1) *“When projects or assignments are too hard to handle and comprehend, students in Samar State University happen to experience stress.”*
- (2) *“As students, we are bounded by so many requirements. So we really need to comply all of those like quizzes, assignments, and projects... I couldn't sleep well. I overthink because of the requirements. I'm always irritated as well. I cannot avoid this kind of stress in school because I need to pass all the requirements.”*
- (3) *“(It's something like you want to give up your studies already because you cannot handle the heavy workloads anymore.”*

Subtheme 3. Lack of Time

Students experience stress because they always cram and chase time. They are pressured to accomplish projects or assignments and other requirements as soon as possible.

- (1) *“Yes. Projects, it seems so hard to accomplish them if we are lacking out of time.”*
- (2) *“Also, projects. Especially if I don't have enough time to do it. I always cram and it really stresses me out.”*
- (3) *“Projects are very stressful as well! Particularly when there's too much work to do but no adequate time to accomplish them.”*

Theme 4. Financial Issue

Students are faced with another stressor in school which is financial issue. They are dealing with difficulties on where to get money to pay for their expenses in school such as projects and contributions. Theme 4 is best explained with one sub theme: school expenses. Experiences are stated in the following statements:

Subtheme 1. School Expenses

- (1) *“Expenses like tuition fee, oh I forgot we have free tuition already *laughs*. Financial concern here in SSU, it’s one of my stressors, like lack of allowance, expenses due to projects or photocopies of lessons.”*
- (2) *“I am currently stressed because of financial issues. I need to pay for my school stuffs because it’s unbearable not to do so. I end up borrowing money. There is nothing which causes me more stress other than this.”*
- (3) *“Financial. We have a lot of expenses here in school. Sometimes, I lack of allowance because of it. I save money due to some expenses in school such as projects or contributions. I think not everyone has the same concern as mine when it comes to financial issue.”*

Theme. 5. Make-up Classes

Students experience stress due to make-up classes. They are compelled to divide their time and attention; also, conflict of schedule adds to their burden – a subtheme of Theme 4.

Subtheme 1. Conflict of Schedule

Students are not in favor of make-up class due to conflict of schedules. They are confused with their time and priorities. Experiences are explained in the following statements:

- (1) *“It stresses me out if I couldn’t follow the schedule or if I wouldn’t attend the class. I’m not in favor of make-up classes because they make me prioritize them instead of going home and have quality time with my family.”*
- (2) *“Make-up class is also the cause of my stress. It’s so hard to follow the schedule especially if you have something to do at the same time. Sometimes, I can’t avoid choosing between make-up classes and other priorities.”*

Theme 6. Classmates

Classmates are also the cause of the students’ stress. Students experience stress due to their relationship with their classmates, and competition as well.

Subtheme 1. Competition

It cannot be denied that competition always happen inside the classroom. It drives the students to study hard and acquire academic achievements. Experiences are being explained in the following statements:

- (1) *“My classmates, because of competition, I guess. Stuff like that can’t be avoided especially if we are really pressured to have academic achievements and pass our subjects.”*
- (2) *“Plus, stressed because of my classmates, it is due to the competition.”*

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- (3) *“Also, classmates! Yes, that’s true, classmates are also a factor. Why? Ummm... it pressures us due to the competition inside the classroom.”*

Theme 7. Administration

Students experience stress in studying in Samar State University because of the administration. Theme 7 includes a subtheme: enrolment. This subtheme explains the students’ stress regarding enrolment in the administration.

Subtheme 1. Enrolment

Students experience difficulties due to the process of enrolment. They are stressed due to their hassle experience in terms of processing papers, long queues, and others.

- (1) *“Ummm... commonly during enrolment at the administration. I am stressed out, really. Instead of attending classes, we still process papers in the registrar then we need to go back and forth, suffer in long queues and there. There are instances that the admin is offline. Enrolment is a waste of time.”*
- (2) *“Ummm... it is the process of payment. For example, enrolment. It’s better if it’s done in every college department to avoid hassle. You’re pressured to process the enrolment as early as possible.”*

Theme 8. Love Life

Love life is a part of a person's life apropos their relationships with lovers; an expression to put in a nutshell all the romance you have in your life, or lack thereof. It can be considered as an inspiration by other students. However, students experience stress whenever they encounter negative issue regarding love life. Theme 8 is best explained with two sub themes: 1) no love life, 2) separated or broken-hearted.

Subtheme A. No Love life

Students experience stress in their academics when they don’t have a love life. They need a sense of intimacy in order to be inspired and motivated to study.

- (1) *“Also, love life, it’s hard to study without motivation.”*

Subtheme B. Broken-hearted or Separated

Students’ experience of being broken-hearted or separated from their loved ones which affect their academic performance; thus making them experience stress.

- (1) *“Stressed because of love life *laughs*. Love life also affects us and our studies.”*

Theme 9. Coping Skills

Academic stressors can massively affect a student’s academic performance in school. Academic stress isn’t easy to deal with according to the students. However, they firmly believe that they can overcome stress by having inspiration, engaging to relaxing activities, socializing, and accepting the reality. Students’ coping skills make them keener to finish their studies despite the stress.

Subtheme A. Inspiration

Students need to be inspired in order for them to be motivated and relieved from stress. Inspiration can help a student to be more passionate. It will stimulate them to do something creative. They are keen to accomplish tasks when they are inspired.

- (1) *“Staying positive and focused help me get rid of my stress. Also, my family and friends are my stress relievers. Yes, they are my inspiration and motivation at the same time.”*
- (2) *“But yeah, I just think of my family... that I am doing this for them and for myself as well. I can manage it.”*

Subtheme B. Hobbies

One way of overcoming stress is by engaging on relaxing activities – hobbies. Students pray, play, go out, eat, listen to music, and watch movies to unwind and cope up with stress.

- (1) *“I just play computer and talk to my classmates to reduce stress. Yes, stuffs like those can make me feel better.”*
- (2) *“Praying and singing are my only ways to get rid of stress.”*
- (3) *“I just relax. I talk to my friends and family to be relieved from stress. Also, stress-eating is my way of getting rid of stress. Staying positive will really help me get through it.”*

Sub theme C. Acceptance

Students just accept the reality and move on. They just consider the significance of the situation to be motivated and stress-free.

- (1) *“Whatever is required of me, I will do it and relax quite a bit at the same time. I know how to handle my priorities. If I’m not capable of finishing them, I would not push myself too hard.”*
- (2) *“In order to pass, I just have to manage and control my stress. I’m trying my best to accomplish everything that we are required to pass.”*
- (3) *“I just do my best even when it’s hard.”*

DISCUSSION

Results of the present study showed the occurrence of nine themes: 1) exams and quizzes; 2) teacher’s personality; 3) time pressure; 4) financial issue, 5) make-up classes, 6) classmates, 7) administration, 8) love life, and 9) coping skills.

In the first major theme, which is about exams and quizzes, the participants talked about how they experience stress when: 1) they acquire too much information during review; 2) they have subject or lesson difficulty; and 3) they don’t have enough time to study for an examination or quiz. This study is supported by Agolla and Ongori (2009). They found out that psycho- logical pressure to perform well in tests, examinations, expectations from peers, friends, family members and attending of lectures were among the common sources of the students stress while at the campus.

The second major theme focuses on teacher’s personality and how the students deal with stress due to the teacher’s demands and attitude towards the students – terror and inconsiderate. According to Sonia (2015), such stress comes from too much homework, unsatisfactory academic performance, preparation for tests, lack of interest in a particular subject, and teacher’s punishment. Stress from high expectations of teachers, parents, and self

is usually an agony for students studying in schools. A study conducted by Ravitch (2010) states that “the goal of education is not to produce higher test scores, but to educate children to become responsible people with well-developed minds and good character.”

The third major theme is about time pressure. The participants reported about having stress and being pressured to accomplish requirements due to deadline of submission, level of difficulty, and lack of time. This study is supported by Singh (2011). He asserted that once classes start, students map out assignment due dates and do their best to keep up with the work. In practice, however, doing quality work and turning it on time is a challenge that can easily lead to stress, especially when unforeseen events occur.

The fourth major theme tackles about financial issue. Students stress is also due to school expenses such as projects, fees, and contributions. A related study by HanNa, et al., (2014) shows result that financial stress is widespread among students – 71% of the sample reported feeling stress from personal finances. The results of the proportion tests and logistic regressions show that this study successfully identified important financial stressors among college students. Two of the most important financial stressors were not having enough money to participate in the same activities as peers and expecting to have higher amounts of student loan debt at graduation. The results also indicate that students with higher financial self-efficacy and greater financial optimism about the future are significantly less likely to report financial stress

The fifth major theme focuses on the concern of the students regarding make-up classes. Students experience stress due to conflict of schedules.

Theme 6 is about classmates. The participants reported about how they experience stress due to the competition occurring inside the classroom. This correlates to Majumdar’s (2014) study. She asserted that academic pressure also contributes to competition among classmates, thus affecting the social support network available for a given student.

The seventh major theme is about administration. Administration is also a cause of stress. Students experience stress due to enrolment process. This study is supported by Rowan (2005) who concluded that: first, the appropriate break point between immediate and delayed enrolment is the end of the calendar year that a student graduated from high school. This study also reveals the value of looking at a delayed group in comparison to immediate enrolment and no enrolment, since there are differences among all three groups for measures such as background characteristics, academic preparation and achievement, and social and cultural capital. Third, a combined model of college access based on traditional students (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Perna, 2000; St. John, 2003) is appropriate for examining the predictors of both immediate and delayed enrolment in college relative to no enrolment. Fourth, measures of social and cultural capital are related to the timing of college enrolment but seem to be relatively more important in the decision to enroll immediately than in the decision to delay enrolment. Fifth, graduates who delay enrolment average fewer resources and weaker preparation than graduates who enroll immediately, but average more resources and better preparation than graduates who do not enroll. Finally, even after controlling for other variables, socioeconomic status is related to timing of college enrolment. Students who enroll immediately as well as those who delay enrolment have higher socioeconomic status than those who do not enroll, with those who enroll immediately having higher socioeconomic status than those who delay enrolment.

The eighth major theme discusses about love life. Students experience stress due to their love life or romantic relationships: 1) no love life, or 2) separation/heartbreak; and this factor affects the academic performance of the students in Samar State University. This is evident to a related study conducted by Bernales and Colonia (2011) states that time management of the respondents was imbalanced which entails that they were more focused in their romantic relationship than in studying. Anxiety and the time spent with the partner were found to be significantly related to academic performance. However, since the results revealed that UP BS Computer Science 2 students who were involved in a relationship (during the academic year 2010-2011) have lower anxiety level as students, the researchers concluded that the time spent with the partner have the most significant effect to their academic performance. It was also found that the level of motivation has no significant relationship with the academic achievement of the respondents. Those who are single have a higher grade and they are more focused on their academics (Ronco & Sinocruz, et al., 2012).

The last major theme which is Theme 9, students' coping skills for stress has been discussed. Despite the academic stressors, students manage to de-stress by setting up strategies and made a way to develop coping skills. This is supported by a study conducted by Al Farhan, et al., (2015) which states that coping strategies that were statistically significantly applied more often were blaming oneself and being self-critical, seeking advice and help from others, and finding comfort in religion. Female students were more stressed than males but they employ more coping strategies as well. Stress is very common among medical students. Most of the stressors are from coursework and interpersonal relationships. Low self-esteem coupled with self-blame and self-criticism is quite common. In addition, coping skills can help the youth to navigate through these challenges. These would help students to be self-reliant, solve problems and make informed choices, which in turn promote their physical and psychological well-being. It is found that developed training is effective in enhancing proactive coping and general self-efficacy of college students (Kadhiravan & Kumar, 2012).

The major causes of stress among students are academic workload, inadequate resources, low motivation, and poor performance in academic work, continuous performance in academic work, overcrowded lecture halls, and uncertainty of getting jobs after graduation from the university. This finding is quite consistent with earlier studies (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006). This study asserted the that the students' academic stressors in Samar State University include exams and quizzes, teacher's personality, time pressure, financial issue, make-up classes, classmates, administration and love life. Nevertheless, students learned how to develop strategies in order to cope up with stress.

In addition, Kumaraswamy (2013) found out that health education programs, mentorship and a reduction in information overload in the curriculum can be important strategies to enable undergraduates cope better with the demands of tertiary education. The psychological well-being of college students needs to be more carefully addressed, and closer attention paid to the styles of college teaching. It is concluded that three main issues need to be addressed: greater attention needs to be paid to educational processes; teachers and their teaching must be valued; and appropriate support systems should be provided for college students and trainees.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, the said major themes are evident to be considered as academic stressors of students in Samar State University and found out to have massive effect on the students' academic performance in school. This study can help set a better understanding on academic stressors; inspire other students to come up with coping skills and pursue studies despite academic stress; and lastly, raise awareness regarding students' academic stressors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers suggest the following for further research considerations:

To the University

- (1) The university should prioritize raising awareness about academic stressors by conducting seminars for teachers and students which tackle about stress and its causes, time management, and coping skills.
- (2) The university must offer more and quality financial aids aside from scholarship grants and student loans that can help students' concern on financial issues.

To the Teachers

- (1) The teachers, as the second parents of the students, should broaden their understanding, and might as well consider the capabilities of the students when it comes to the level of the school requirements' difficulty.

To the Students

- (1) Students should develop coping skills to overcome stress by learning how to balance time and school works, and engage to relaxing activities in able to de-stress.

To the Future Researchers

- (1) Conduct further studies and in-depth exploration of students' academic stressors in school.

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