

# Adversity Quotient and Coping Strategies of College Students in Lyceum of the Philippines University

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*Date Received: February 8, 2015; Date Revised: June 29, 2015*

**Abstract** - *This study would like to determine the adversity quotient of the college students of Lyceum of the Philippines University. It specifically determine the demographic profile of the respondents, the adversity quotient of the college students, coping strategies of the students, relationship between the variables and propose a plan of action. Qualitative and quantitative approach was utilized to gather the necessary information and results. The respondents assessed themselves that they can influence their adversities to a moderate extent. This means that they have moderate adversity quotient. Respondents' coping strategies are categorized in their ability to determine their adversities, immediately coping within the situation, rebuilding confidence and comprising strong network every after adversities. There is significant relationship between profile variable in terms of general weighted average and adversity quotient of the respondents.*

**Keywords:** *adversity quotient, A.Q level, Coping mechanism*

## INTRODUCTION

Life these days is a mixture of all sorts, on one hand there is knowledge explosion, technology revolution and progress in every field; on the other hand, they see poverty, scarcity of food, and resources, increase in crime, social, and political problems etc. All these changes have created situations which have made life miserable not only for adults but also for students. Laguador and Pesigan (2013) noted that intricacies in the program of study have always been part of the students' life in all levels with varying degrees which differ from the way students handle the situations.

In the present situations of the college students, the increasing uncertainty and complexity of their studies and duties, Adversity Quotient will help them

predict who can thrive in the face of adversity. Adversity Quotient (AQ) is a measure of how an individual perceives and deals with challenges. It measures the ability to act and overcome adverse circumstances. Those who cannot handle adversity can become easily overwhelmed and emotional, then pull back, stop trying and stop studying.

According to Stoltz (1997), the pioneer of Adversity Quotient theory, individual in an organization are of three kinds, climbers, campers, and quitters. Students who seek and accept challenges are considered climbers, no matter how hard their academic subjects are, the assignments, projects and reporting they still manage to perform well and some are able to join extracurricular activities, with regards to their clinical duties they are the ones who had the initiative to move and perform well in the task given to them. They are motivated to learn almost everything. Next are the campers, these are the students who can cope well in depressing events but have less drive than those with high adversity quotient. They do not accept many difficulties and they resist in giving up their comforts, no matter what the price is. The third kinds are the quitters. These students escape from challenges, they tend to give-up if worse situation arises. If being scolded by the instructors, they would rather go home or cut class. Sometimes, if they do not reach the expectations of their instructors or parents, they back out. Stoltz also said that changing behavior is not as difficult as normal beliefs and awareness of an individual's Adversity Quotient (AQ) level can help institutions to admit and retain the best and individuals can benefit by understanding their drawbacks and turning them into opportunities.

The researcher chose college students of Lyceum of the Philippines because the researcher being a psychology student will have an in-depth knowledge about the capability of students to cope with

adversaries in life. The researcher aimed to increase the level of awareness and identify the factors that influenced the AQ level of the college students. The researchers viewed that as students enroll in college, it was significant to be fully aware of their AQ level, primarily because it was a very important component to achieve good academic performances. It was not only being persistent to what people wanted but it is how people cope to certain obstacles and turned them as a drive that will push them closer to the goal. This study paved the way for the researchers to help them become competent and effective as future health care providers in the area of psychology. Furthermore, when stressful events arise, this study will help the students to assess themselves on what kind of adversity they tend to weaken and do extra effort to turn their weaknesses into a strong foundation or basis for facing with adversities.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study would like to determine the adversity quotient of the college students of Lyceum of the Philippines University. It specifically aimed to determine the adversity quotient of the college students; to identify the coping strategies of the students to different adversities; and relationship between the profile variable and adversity quotient.

### **METHOD**

#### **Research Design**

The study utilized both the qualitative and quantitative approach. The quantitative attribute is one that exists in range of magnitudes and can be therefore being measured. The qualitative research also is a field of inquiry that crosscuts discipline and subject matters. It aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. This method tends to both the qualitative and quantitative analysis of inquiry such as cover the present investigation. It involves analysis of an extremely broad range of phenomenon; its result is a comprehensive presentation and interpretation of statistical tabulations of data yielded by a survey.

#### **Participants**

The participants of the study were 100 college students of the Lyceum of the Philippines University, SY 2010-2011, second semester, randomly chosen from the different colleges.

In terms of age, it shows that majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 16-20 years

old as it got the percentage of 75 followed by age bracket of 21-25 years old with percentage of 15. Four percent of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 26-30 years old and 31 years and above. In terms of gender, it shows that majority of the respondents are female with 80% while males, 20%. In terms of general weighted average, it shows that 25% of the respondents got the GWA of 1.50, 2.25 and 2.50 while 20% of the respondent got 1.75 and 5% of the respondents got 3.00.

Videbeck (2006) explains that the person's age seems to affect how he or she adopts to adversity. People with young age of onset may have poorer capability to handle the vague feelings of foreboding and less effective coping strategy compared with older ones. A possible reason for this difference is that younger individuals have not had experiences of successful independent living or the opportunity to work and be self-sufficient and have a less well-developed sense of personal identity than older people.

Dweck (2005) revealed an important difference between how men and women respond to adversity. Women learned to attribute their failures to permanent traits, whereas men learned to attribute failures to more temporary sources, such as lack of motivation. Women are more likely to explain the adversity as their fault and due to an enduring characteristic. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to attribute failure to something temporary.

Many students look fine when things are easy and all is going well. But many students, even very bright ones, are not equipped to deal with challenges. When they hit more difficult work, as they often do when they get to junior high school or middle school, they begin to doubt their intelligence, they withdraw their effort, and their performance suffers. People have seen this happen to students who were top students in grade school -- they seem to lose their confidence, their liking for school, and their determination to do well (Dweck, 2005)..

#### **Instrument**

The researcher used questionnaire as their primary data in gathering the instruments. There were two sets of questionnaire. The first set is a standardized questionnaire but partially modified include two parts. The first part includes the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender and general weighted average while the second part is adapted from Stolz' Adversity Quotient Response Test. The second set of questionnaire is an

unstructured questionnaire that covers the coping strategies of the college students towards their adversities

### Procedure

The preliminary forms of the questionnaires were submitted to the adviser for comments and suggestions regarding the format and item content. The suggestions served as guidelines for the revisions of the questionnaires. A second refinement based on the feedback was made. This was followed by writing on the final draft of the questionnaire.

The researchers distributed the questionnaires among the target respondents, follow by a formal interview. The researcher waited for the respondents to finish answering for them to be sure that they would get the final result.

### Analysis

A questionnaire was utilized to gather the needed data for the research. The researchers studied the obtained data and analyzed the information written in the questionnaires. Through interview, the researcher gathered and tallied the answers then combined all the some data by discussing the result for the final output. Weighted mean was used to interpret and analyze the results; Eta-squared to determine the relationship between the demographic profile and adversity quotient.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the adversity quotient of the respondents. It shows that the respondents can influence the situation to a great extent when they

accidentally delete an important document and the project that will be submitted to their professor within 1 hour as it got the highest weighted mean of 3.65. They are unable to take the weekend off due to projects and activities with weighted mean of 3.60 in rank 2. The item —Someone you respect attempts to discuss an important issue got the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank with weighted mean of 3.55 followed by the item —Your classmates respond unfavorably to your latest ideal with weighted mean of 3.45 and verbally interpreted of moderate extent. The high-priority project in school they are working gets cancelled got the weighted mean of 3.40 in rank 5, and the item—After extensive searching for your certain project and assignment, you cannot find an important document in rank 6 got the weighted mean of 3.25. The item —Your personal and school obligations are out of balance, —You lost something that is important to you, —You miss your major subject class because of traffic and —Your computer crashed for the third time this week with weighted mean of 3.15, 3.10, 3.00, and 2.60 in rank 7, 8, 9, and 10 respectively.

The adversity quotient of the respondents got the composite mean of 3.27 and verbally interpreted as moderate extent. For moderate adversity quotient, people delay from taking constructing action. With moderate challenges, students probably do a reasonably good job of keeping faith and forging ahead. Those with moderate adversity quotient were more difficult to maintain a sense of control when faced with more serious setbacks or challenges. They just respond to adverse events depending on the magnitude of the event (Stoltz, 2007).

**Table 1. Respondents' Adversity Quotient (N=100)**

Adversity Quotient	WM	VI	R
1. You accidentally delete an important document and your project that will be submitted to your professor within 1 hour	3.65	GE	1
2. The high-priority project in school you are working gets cancelled	3.40	ME	5
3. Someone you respect attempts to discuss an important issue	3.55	GE	3
4. Your classmates respond unfavorably to your latest idea	3.45	ME	4
5. You are unable to take the weekend off due to projects and activities	3.60	GE	2
6. After extensive searching for your certain project and assignment, you cannot find an important document	3.25	ME	6
7. You miss your major subject class because of traffic	3.00	ME	9
8. Your personal and school obligations are out of balance	3.15	ME	7
9. Your computer crashed for the third time this week	2.60	ME	10
10. You lost something that is important to you	3.10	ME	8
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>ME</b>	

**Table 2. Coping Strategies of the Respondents**

Theme	Category
Coping Strategies	Adversities
	Immediate Coping
	Rebuild Confidence
	Strong Network

From the first day on earth until the last, students faced different levels of adversity. Adversity may be sickness, a failing grade, or the loss of a loved one. How they handled these adversities defined how they achieved greatness in their lives. By remaining focused, determined, and concentrated on the positive, many times they could become stronger. Parents were now sheltering their children against any little adversity for fear it might be painful. They taught them how to make adversity worked for them. These adversities and the way they handled the adversities defined who they were and prepared them for challenges in the future. Making students realize their potentials will bring out their willingness to lead (Laguador, Velasquez & Florendo, 2013). Adversity often developed unknown talents. Once the door of adversity closed one opportunity, the door of greatness often opened another. When adversity came, do not avoid it; attack adversity with all resources. The way students managed adversity defined who they were for future opportunities, because adversity could be the seed of greatness (Natividad, 2008).

Kopoka (2008) noted that all human beings routinely utilized coping skills in daily life. When helping human deals with specific problems, professional counselor found out that a focus of attention on coping skills with or without remedial action often helps the individual. The range of successful coping skills varied widely with the problems to overcome.

Coping, first way to deal with adversity, is a process of managing toxin circumstances, expending efforts to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize, reduce or tolerate stress or conflict. Second is self control which refers to the ability to control human behavior through the exertion of will. Self control is required in order to inhibit impulsivity, and has been a recurrent theme throughout history, culture and philosophy, where it is considered a key to volition and free will. Next is adaptation which refers to the ability to adjust to new information and experiences. Learning was essentially adapting to constantly changing environment. Through adaptation, students were able to adapt new behaviors

that allow them to cope with change. Fourth is self improvement, the change of one's attitude. Personality development is the fifth way to assess, know and discipline oneself. And lastly, time management and motivation.

**Table 3. Relationship Between the Profile and their Adversity Quotient (N=100;  $\alpha=0.05$ )**

Variables	Eta	Eta <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Age	.341	.116	Not Significant
Gender	.298	.089	Not Significant
Civil Status	.295	.087	Not Significant
General Weighted Average	.126	.016	Significant

Based on the eta-squared of 0.016, the profile variable general weighted average and adversity quotient of the respondents have significant relationship, thus, the null hypothesis of no significance is rejected. However, there is no significant relationship between the profile variable of age, gender and civil status and adversity quotient of the respondents, thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

This confirms the findings of D'Souza (2006) where it was found that there is a significant relationship between adversity quotient and school performance of secondary school students for the total sample from different types of schools. In this study, however, only 7.18% of the variance in a respondent's general weighted average can be attributed to his or her adversity quotient. This means that knowing the adversity quotient of a respondent gets us closer to predicting accurately his/her GWA.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 16-20 years old, female, single and got the GWA of 1.50, 2.25, and 2.50. The respondents assessed themselves that they can influence their adversities to a moderate extent. This means that they have moderate adversity quotient. Respondents' coping strategies are categorized in their ability to determine their adversities, immediately coping within the situation, rebuilding confidence and comprising strong network every after adversities. There is significant relationship between profile variable in terms of general weighted average and adversity quotient of the respondents.

This study may be used as a guide to the students to face the challenges of life. LPU faculty may use this to guide students in relation to adversity quotient in achieving their goal. The Office of the Student Affairs may utilize this study to provide different programs in the enhancement of adversity quotient. Lyceum of the Philippines University may provide policies for the enhancement of management services with the adversity quotient.

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