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Occupational Stress and Adversity Quotient of Police Officers in Northern Samar

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to determine the adversity quotient and degree of stress of the police officers in the Province of Northern Samar. It was conducted among 288 police officers in the Province of Northern Samar. A descriptive- research approach was utilized to conduct the study. The results found that police officers in Northern Samar are dominated by males aged 25 to 30 years old, college graduates whose rank or position is patrolman/woman, served for 6 years or shorter and attended 0 to 3 relevant pieces of training on mental health. The adversity quotient® of the police officers in Northern Samar is low. The adversity quotient of the respondents differed across age, sex, educational attainment, rank or position and the number of years in service and experienced moderate stress on both operational and organizational stress. Likewise, their degree of stress differs in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, rank/position, number of years in service, and, the number of training attended. The operational stress of respondents is significantly related to age, number of years in service, and the number of relevant trainings attended whereas, profile such as sex, educational attainment and rank/position showed no relationships. In contrast, their occupational stress is significantly related to age, number of years in service. The number of relevant trainings attended however, sex educational attainment and the rank or position showed no relationship at all. Therefore, an implementation of crisis intervention program is needed for a balanced mental health condition of the police officers in Northern Samar.

INTRODUCTION

The role of the police force in maintaining the country's peace and security is critical. The Philippine National Police (PNP) is the country's top law enforcement agency, with duties and responsibilities intertwined with prosecution, courts, prisons, and community. More significantly, the police have additional responsibilities, such as crime prevention and control, maintaining peace and order, and ensuring public safety and security.

RA 6975 specifically reiterates that the Philippine National Police shall be a community and service-oriented agency responsible for maintaining peace and order and public safety (PNP Handbook, 2013). This means that the police officers are expected to fulfill their duties for the welfare of the people and that they should be of service to the community. For this reason, they were considered as frontliners and major responders during emergency situations. As police officers are required to have a high level of tolerance, which is a mental constraint and an expression of their resilience or adversity quotient. The science of resilience, or adversity quotient, measures an individual's capacity to deal with adversity in life (Stoltz, 2000). The adversity quotient of police officers is particularly significant since it indicates how well they can cope with their many duties in their line of work. Until now, no research of the adversity quotient among police personnel, particularly in the province of Northern Samar, has been undertaken.

Problem Statement

The study was designed to determine the occupational stress and adversity quotient of police officers in the Province of Samar.

Specifically, it aims the following:

1. Determine the profile of the police officers in the Province of Northern Samar as to:
    1.1 age;
    1.2 sex;
    1.3 educational background;
    1.4 position/rank;
    1.5 years in service; and
    1.6 number of relevant trainings attended.
2. Determine the adversity quotient of the respondents as to:
    2.1 control;
    2.2 ownership;
    2.3 reach; and
    2.4 endurance.
3. Determine the degree of occupational stress of the respondents as to:
    3.1 operational stress; and
    3.2 organizational stress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adversity is one of the most potent forces in life. It shapes one's character, clarifies priorities, and defines an individual's path. It can also be a fuel to greatness. Each person faces a rich assortment of daily adversities, ranging from minor hassles to major setbacks, even tragedies. The path to success, both in business and life, is learning how to convert adversity into a genuine advantage (Stoltz & Weihenmayer, as cited by Amparo, 2015). Adversity strikes without warning but adversities are part of living and people choose the way they react to each adversity in their lives (Brunkhorst as cited by Cornista & Macasaet, 2013). Accordingly, individuals have the ability to deal with

adversity. This ability is known as the adversity quotient. It is used to help individuals strengthen their ability to persevere through life's daily challenges, remaining true to their principles and dreams, no matter what occurs (Stoltz, 2000). It is an established science, theory, and approach for becoming more resilient. It is a measure of how an individual strives to overcome adversities or how a person responds to challenges and resolves them. Dr. Paul G.

Stoltz, founder of AQ, defined it as the measure of one's resilience and ability to persevere in the face of constant change, stress and difficulty or simply a measure of how an individual respond to adversity. He also stressed that AQ determines whether an individual stands strong and true when faced with adversity or he will be crippled or destroyed (Enriquez & Estacio, 2009). AQ resulted from years of research and application that made a major breakthrough in understanding what it takes to succeed (Stoltz as cited by Cornista and Macasaet, 2013). It has four CORE dimensions: control, ownership, reach and endurance. Control is the extent to which someone perceives they can influence whatever happens next. It is how much control a person perceives to have over the adverse event.

People who respond to adversity as temporary, external and limited have optimistic explanatory styles and tend to enjoy life's benefits (Canivel, 2010). Even in situations that seem overwhelming or out of their hands, high AQ invariably find or interpret some part of the of the situation be under their control while low AQ® usually give up (Cura & Gozum, 2011). In addition, the more control one has, the more likely one has to take positive action (Canivel, 2010). On the other hand, ownership is the likelihood that someone actually does anything to improve the situation, regardless of their formal responsibilities. It reflects accountability for achieving a specific result in response to a problem, determines who or what the origin of the adversity is or to what degree the person owns the outcomes.

A person with high AQ enhances their accountability to control, empower, and motivate action while low AQ people disowns the problem causing failure to act, give-up, point fingers, reduce performance and direct anger towards others and many more negative actions (Canivel, 2010). Also, high AQ individuals hold themselves accountable for situations regardless of the cause, while those with lower AQ® lapse into victimization and helplessness (Cura & Gozum, 2011).

The third core dimension of AQ® is reach. Reach is the extent to which someone perceives an adversity will "reach into" and affect other aspects of the situation or beyond. It is how far the outcomes, whether good or bad, will affect the other areas of a person's life (Enriquez & Estacio, 2009). In addition, it involves putting setbacks into their place, and not letting them undermine the healthy areas of work and the rest of one's life (Cura & Gozum, 2011). This implies that a low AQ person allow adversity to affect other aspect of his life leading to financial panic, sleeplessness, bitterness, distancing self from others and poor decision making but those with high score in reach one may limit the reach of the problem to the event at hand (Canivel,2010).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this research, descriptive method of research was used to determine the profile, degree of occupational stress and the adversity quotient of police officers in Northern Samar. The study was conducted during the School Year 2020-2021. The first semester tackled on the preparation of the research proposal; while the second semester devoted more time on data collection, thorough and careful analysis and interpretation of the data gathered. The study took place in the Province of Northern Samar. The respondents of the study were the 288 police officers in the Province of Northern Samar. They were chosen as the respondents of the study on account of their enormous duties and responsibilities which requires strength and resilience.

In selecting the respondents, a random sampling technique was used. Based on the data taken from the Police Provincial Office, there were a total of 1,022 police personnel in the Province of Northern Samar identified as target of the study. Hence, using the random sampling technique (lottery method), the population size with participants were 288 police officers across the areas in the province of Northern Samar.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the police officers in the Province of Northern Samar

Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 shows the profile of the police officers in Northern Samar in terms of age, sex, educational background, rank/position, years in service and number of relevant trainings attended.

Age

Figure 1 depicts information on the age profile of police personnel in the province of Northern Samar. The majority of 113 police officers (39.51%) are between the ages of 25 and 30 years old; 93 respondents (32.52%) are between the ages of 31 and 36 years old; 48 respondents (17.78%) are between the ages of 37 and 42 years old; 21 respondents (7.34%) are between the ages of 43 years old and above; and 11 respondents (3.85%) are between the ages of 24 and 24 years old. The mean age is 32.71 (33), with an SD of 6.16. The data imply that police officers in Northern Samar are young and in their early adult stage. Individuals in this stage of development have that vigor and zest in their career. They are in the process of developing their maturity in dealing with the challenges of life.

Sex

The data on the sex distribution of respondents is shown in Figure 2. The majority of the responders 208 (78.73%), are males, while 78 (27.27%) are females.

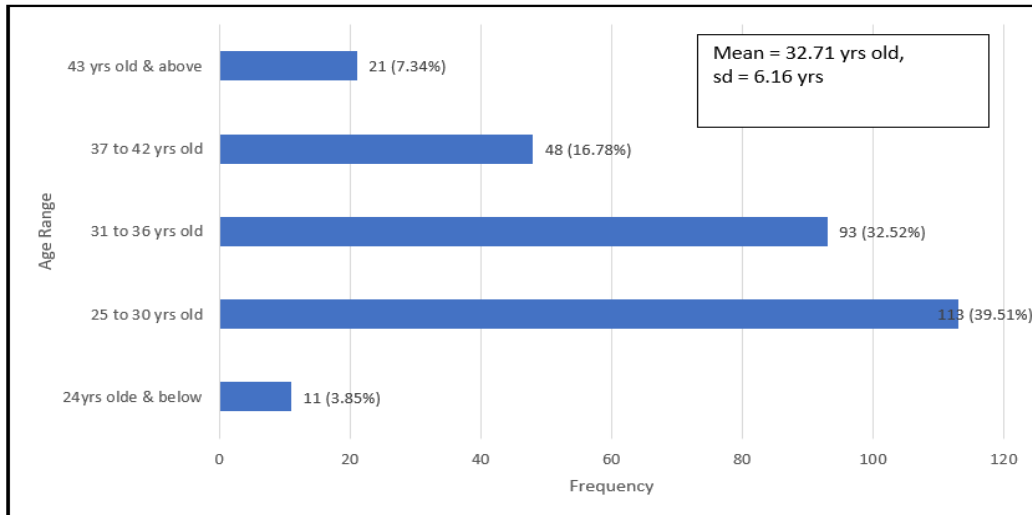Data show that males make up the majority of police

Figure 1: A Horizontal Bar Graph showing the Profile of Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of Age
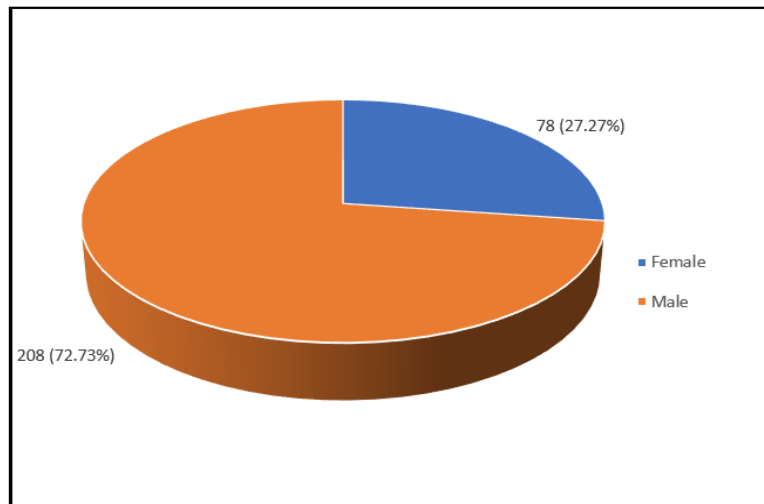

Figure 2: A circle graph showing the profile of police officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of sex

officers in Northern Samar, implying that police work is primarily a male-dominated career. The data suggest that as to the female recruits, it is in line with the 10 percent quota.

Educational Background

Displayed in Figure 3 is a horizontal bar graph regarding the educational background of police personnel in Northern Samar. The data revealed that 254 (88.81%) respondents are college graduates; 23 (8.04%) respondents obtained units in a master's degree; 6 (2.10%) respondents are full-fledged master's degree holders; 2 (0.70%) respondents obtained units in a doctorate; and only 1 (0.35%) respondent holds a doctorate title.
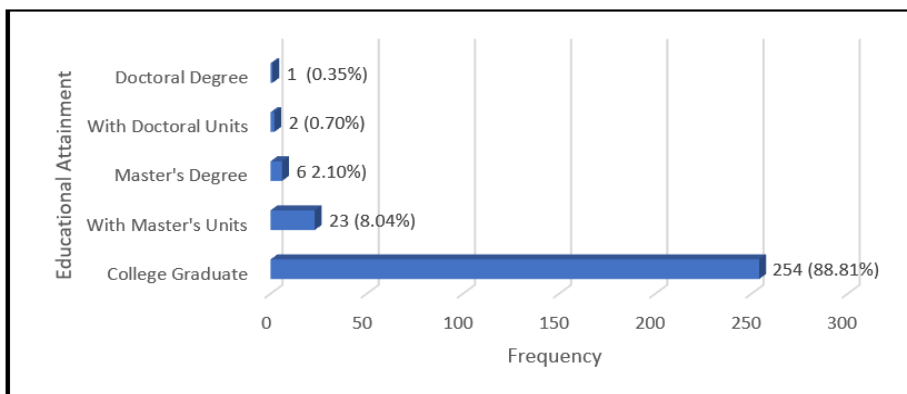

Figure 3: A Horizontal Bar Graph showing the Profile of Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of Educational Background

According to the data, the majority of police officers in Northern Samar are college graduates, which is one of the major requirements for joining the Philippine National Police (PNP).

It also implies that pursuing higher degree of education, though being encouraged in the police force, is not much given importance, as there are other training/schoolings which require the police officers to attend for promotional purposes.

Position/Rank

Figure 4 shows a vertical bar graph indicating the rank/position profile of police officers in Northern Samar. As depicted in the graph, majority of the respondents (107 or 37.14%) are patrolmen/women; 75 or 26.22% are police corporals; 49 or 17.13% are police staff sergeants; 26 or 9.09% are police master sergeant; 12 or 4.20% are police senior master; 10 or 3.50% are police chief masters; and only 7 or 2.45% are police officers.
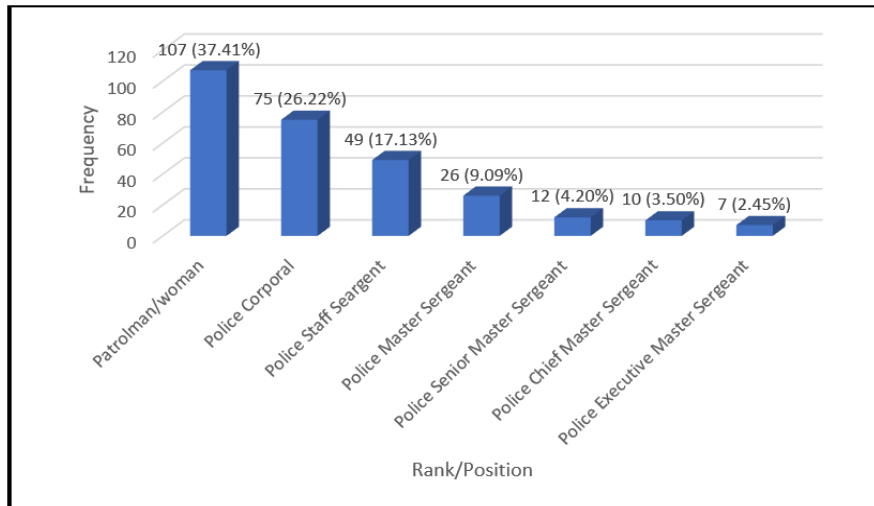

Figure 4: A Vertical Bar Graph showing the Profile of Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of Rank/Position

It may be deduced that the vast majority of police personnel in Northern Samar are patrolmen/patrolwomen, the lowest rank or position in the Philippine National Police (PNP). This is because majority of them are just college graduates.

Number of Years in Service

Shown in Figure 5 is a circle graph depicting the profile of Northern Samar police officers in terms of years in service. With a mean score of 8.97 and a standard deviation of 5.55, it was known that the majority of respondents, 128 (44.76%) had served for 6 years or less; 87 (30.42%) had served for 7 to 12 years; and 71 (24.83%) had served for 13 years or more.

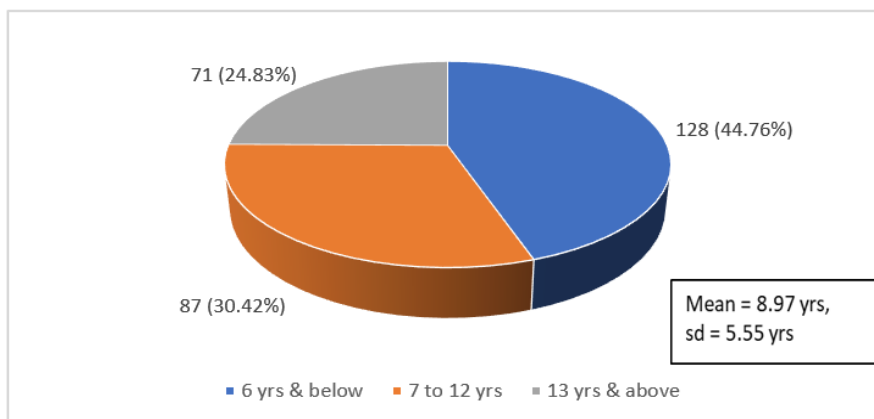As indicated by the mean years of service which is 9 years

Figure 5: A Circle Graph showing the Profile of Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of Number of Years in Service

(8.97), majority of the police officers are young in service. They still have to be seasoned with more experiences in the police work.

Number of Relevant Trainings Attended

Figure 6 displays the data on the number of relevant trainings attended by the police officers in Northern Samar. The data showed that majority, 140 respondents or 48.95% attended 0 to 3 trainings; 67 respondents or 23.43% attended 4 trainings; while, only 79 respondents or 27.62% 5 to 12 trainings.

It could be gleaned from the data that the police officers in Northern Samar had few trainings attended. Police officers should be given opportunities to attend more in-service training for them to be adaptive to the needs of time and more competent in their job.
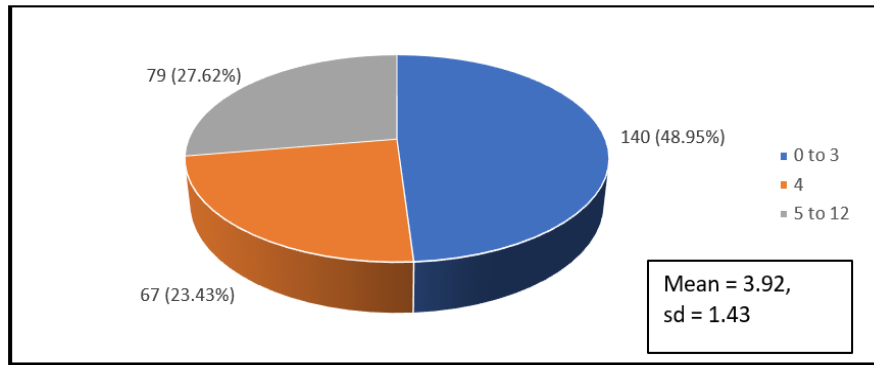
Figure 6: A Circle Graph showing the Profile of Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar in terms of Number of Relevant Trainings Attended

Adversity Quotient of the Police Officers in Northern Samar

Table 1 presents the data on the adversity quotient of the police officers in the Province of Northern Samar. Based on the over-all mean score of 114.83 interpreted as "low", it is understood that the respondents have the lowest level of adversity quotient. Specifically, on control dimension, the mean score obtained is (X=30.34) is interpreted as "below average"; on ownership dimension (X=29.70) interpreted as "low"; on reach dimension (X=27.02) interpreted as "below average"; and on endurance dimension (X=29.09) interpreted as "below average".

Of the four categories of the adversity quotient, the police officers got "low" in the "ownership" dimension. The result score of 29.70 implies that the respondents have poor ability to show eagerness to improve their situation (whether good or bad). They are slow and

unmotivated to act, control and empower themselves to obtain desirable results. They find difficulty to hold themselves accountable for situation regardless of the cause.

However, as revealed by the score in "control" category (score of 30.34), the finding suggests that the police officers tend to exhibit their belief that they are influential in making things happen and are optimistic that they can control adverse events. Although, at times as denoted by the below average score (27.02) in "reach" category, they are easily affected by changes, adversities and challenges which sometimes undermine their healthy areas of work and the rest of their lives. So, they tend to experience sleeplessness, panic, bitterness, isolation and poor decision-making. The endurance score of 29.09 described as "below average" implies that they tend to resist changes/stresses as temporary and believe that there are solutions to problems. The over-all mean score of the AQ was 114.63 described as "low". The finding suggests that the police officers have poor ability and are not resilient enough to persevere in stressful situations. They find it hard to immediately respond to adversity, challenges and stressful situations.

Table 1: Adversity Quotient of the Police Officers in Northern Samar

Category	Mean	Interpretation
Control	30.34	Below average
Ownership	29.70	Low
Reach	27.02	Below average
Endurance	29.09	Below average
Adversity Quotient	114.63	Low
Legend: 176-200 high	*119-135 below average*	
158-175 above average	*40-118 low*	
136-157 average		

Degree of Stress of the Police Officers in Northern Samar

Table 1 and 2 present data on the operational occupation stress of the police officers in Northern Samar.

Operational Stress. Table 2 presents data on operational stress of the police officers in Northern Samar.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Operational Stress of the Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar

Operational Stress	X	SD	Interpretation
Description	sd	0.34	Highly Evident
Over-time demands	4.52	A Lot of stress	1.38
Not enough time available to spend with friends and family	4.51	A Lot of stress	1.44
Fatigue	4.93	A Lot of stress	1.43
Occupation-related health issues	5.49	A Lot of stress	1.37
Limitations to social life	5.29	A Lot of stress	1.50
Working alone at night	5.52	A Lot of stress	1.44
The risk of being injured on the job	4.57	A Lot of stress	1.48
Finding time to stay in good physical condition	4.52	A Lot of stress	1.46

Feeling like always on the job	4.39	Moderate stress	1.41
Work related activities on days	4.02	Moderate stress	1.33
Lack of understanding from family and friends about work	4.07	Moderate stress	1.36
Eating healthy at work	4.13	Moderate stress	1.38
Negative comments from the public	4.06	Moderate stress	1.41
Paperwork	3.94	Moderate stress	1.37
Making friends outside the job	3.94	Moderate stress	1.44
Shift in work	4.14	Moderate stress	1.55
Friends/family feel the effects of the stigma associated with job	4.33	Moderate stress	1.64
Traumatic events	4.10	Moderate stress	1.51
Managing social life out of work	4.14	Moderate stress	1.52
Uploading a higher image in public	4.10	Moderate stress	1.47
Mean of Operational Stress	4.44	Moderate stress	1.00

Legend:

6.51 – 7:00	=	*A Lot of Stress (LS)*
5.51 – 6.50	=	*---*
3.51 – 4.50	=	*Moderate Stress (MS)*
2.51 – 3.50	=	*---*
1.51 – 2.50	=	*---*
1.00 – 1.50	=	*No Stress At All (NSA)*

Generally, the police officers are found to have "moderate stress" (X=4.44; SD=1.00) in terms of operational stress. Specifically, it could be observed from the data that the police officers encountered "a lot of stress" on statements such as "over-time demands" (X =4.52; sd=1.38); "not enough time available to spend with friends and family" (X =4.51; sd =1.44). These findings support Yun, et al's (2013) study that the effect of police officer stress is not only harmful to the officer's physical health, but it has a spiral effect on spouses and other family members leading to family disputes, divorce, and even interfamily violence. "Fatigue" (X=4.93; sd=1.43); "occupation-related health issues" (X=5.49; sd=1.37); "limitations to social life" (X =5.29; sd =1.50) ; "working alone at night" (X=5.52; sd =1.44); "the risk of being injured on the job" (X=4.57; sd=1.48); and, "finding time to stay in good physical condition" (X=5.52; sd=1.46). These physical conditions demonstrated a lot of stress among police officers since it affects their physical well-being. The findings support the study of Tyagi and Dhar (2014) which found that police officers are subjected to physical stress such as dealing with victims, exposure to violence, threats, and uncertainty in shift timing.

On the other hand, the police officers encountered "moderate stress" on statements such as: "feeling like always on the job" (X=4.39; sd=1.41), "work related activities on days" (X=4.02; sd =1.33), "lack of understanding from family and friends about work" (X=4.07; sd=1.36), "eating healthy at work" (X=4.13; sd =1.38), "negative comments from the public" (X=4.06; sd=1.41), "paperwork" (X=3.94; sd=1.37), "making friends outside the job" (X=4.13; sd=1.38), "shift in work" (X=4.14; sd=1.55), "friends/family feel the effects of the stigma associated with job" (X=4.33; sd=1.64), "traumatic events" (X=4.10; sd=1.51), "managing social life out of work" (X=4.14; sd=1.52), and, "uploading a higher image in public" (X=4.10; sd=1.47).

The findings indicate that the police officers in Northern Samar experienced moderate stress in terms of operational stress. Indeed, the result also imply that police officers in Northern Samar obviously experiences stress to a moderate level. Thus, interventions to eliminate or reduce the degree of stress of the police officers should be both at organizational and individual levels as LaMontagne, et al (2007), Schnall (2007), Arnetz (2013), Hashmi (2015) and Bhui (2016) also suggested in their researches.

Organizational Stress. Table 3 shows data on the level of organizational stress of the police officers in Northern Samar. Generally, the police officers are found to have "moderate stress" in terms of organizational stress. Specifically, it could be observed from the data that the police officers experienced "a lot of stress" on indicators such as "dealing with court system" (X=4.82; sd =1.49); "lack of training on new equipment" (X=4.53; sd =1.44);" leaders over-emphasize the negatives" (X=4.82; sd=1.56); "Internal investigations" (X=5.10; sd=1.48); and, "too much computer work" (X=5.27; sd=1.44). The findings support the study of Chen (2016) that appearing in court, completing police reports, and working fluctuating shifts are cited as stressors that is part of police work.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Organizational Stress of the Police Officers in the Province of Northern Samar

Occupational Stress	X	SD	Interpretation
Description	sd	0.34	Highly Evident
Staff shortages	3.92	Moderate stress	1.43
Bureaucratic red tape	3.95	Moderate stress	1.40

Perceived pressure to volunteer free time	3.99	Moderate stress	1.38
Unequal sharing of work responsibilities	4.17	Moderate stress	1.49
Lack of resources	4.16	Moderate stress	1.45
Dealing with court system	4.82	A lot of stress	1.49
Lack of training on new equipment	4.53	A lot of stress	1.44
The need to be accountable for doing job	4.43	Moderate stress	1.46
Constant changes in policy/legislation	4.14	Moderate stress	1.36
Inadequate equipment	4.29	Moderate stress	1.44
Dealing with supervisors	4.30	Moderate stress	1.44
Inconsistent leadership style	4.14	Moderate stress	1.35
Excessive administrative duties	4.31	Moderate stress	1.43
Leaders over-emphasize the negatives	4.82	A lot of stress	1.56
The feeling that different rules apply to different people (e.g. favoritism)	4.09	Moderate stress	1.39
Feeling like you always have to prove yourself to the organization	4.42	Moderate stress	1.58
Internal investigations	5.10	A lot of stress	1.48
Too much computer work	5.27	A lot of stress	1.44
If you are sick or injured your co-workers seem to look down on you	4.37	Moderate stress	1.43
Dealing with co-workers	4.24	Moderate stress	1.50
Mean of Occupational Stress	4.37	Moderate stress	1.05

Legend:

6.51 – 7:00	*=*	*A Lot of Stress (LS)*
5.51 – 6.50	*=*	*---*
4.51 – 5.50	*=*	*---*
3.51 – 4.50	*=*	*Moderate Stress (MS)*
2.51 – 3.50	*=*	*---*
1.51 – 2.50	*=*	*---*
1.00 – 1.50	*=*	*No Stress At All (NSA)*

On the other hand, the police officers encountered "moderate stress" on indicators such as: "staff shortages" (X=3.92; sd=1.43), "bureaucratic red tape" (X=3.95; sd=1.40), "perceived pressure to volunteer free time" (X=3.99; sd=1.38), "unequal sharing of work responsibilities" (X=4.17; sd=1.49), "lack of resources" (X=4.16; sd=1.45), "the need to be accountable for doing job" (X=4.43; sd=1.46), "constant changes in policy/legislation" (X=4.14).

On the other hand, the police officers encountered "moderate stress" on indicators such as: "staff shortages" (X=3.92; sd=1.43), "bureaucratic red tape" (X=3.95; sd=1.40), "perceived pressure to volunteer free time" (X=3.99; sd=1.38), "unequal sharing of work responsibilities" (X=4.17; sd=1.49), "lack of resources" (X=4.16; sd=1.45), "the need to be accountable for doing job" (X=4.43; sd=1.46), "constant changes in policy/legislation" (X=4.14; SD=1.36), "Inadequate equipment" (X=4.29; sd=1.44), "dealing with supervisors" (=4.30;=1.36), "Inadequate equipment" (X=4.29; sd =1.44), "dealing with supervisors" (X=4.30; sd=1.44), "inconsistent leadership style" (X=4.14; sd=1.45), "excessive administrative duties" (X=4.31; sd=1.33), "the feeling that different rules apply to different people (e.g. favoritism)" X=4.09; sd=1.39); "feeling like you always

have to prove yourself to the organization" (X=4.42; sd=1.58); "if you are sick or injured your co-workers seem to look down on you" (X=4.37; sd=1.43); and, "dealing with co-workers" (X=4.34; sd=1.50). It could be deduced from the findings that police officers in Northern Samar experiences moderate level of occupational stress.

CONCLUSIONS
Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:
Most of the police officers in Northern Samar are in their maturity with the potential and capacity to handle themselves maturely. Majority of the police officers occupy the lowest rank/position. Being young in the service, they can still be given/have chances to develop themselves professionally and improve their career. Most of the police officers have the poor ability/ are not resilient to persevere in changing and stressful situations. Resiliency and adjustability are necessary traits to be developed and honed for those who are engaged in the police work. Adversity quotient increases as the police officer matures in age, much higher in male than in female police personnel; is more observable in police officers with advanced educational background; and with more experienced police personnel. With the maturity and confidence of themselves the police officers view stressful situations more objectively and accurately. The occupational stress (operational and organizational stress) experienced by the police officers in Northern Samar being in a "moderate" level, is still manageable, especially if attended promptly and intervention program is designed to address the need. Occupational stress is experienced mostly by younger police officers than older ones; those with low rank/position in the organization;

those who are young in service or with limited experience; and those who have few trainings and seminars attended. As the police officers mature in age, gain more years of experience and attend more relevant seminars and trainings, they less likely to experience occupational stress (operational and organizational).

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