Post-Pandemic: Coping Strategies and Psychological Well-Being among College Students within Metro Manila, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has really disrupted educational systems globally, impacting students' psychological well-being and coping strategies. This study aims to evaluate the coping strategies and psychological well-being of Filipino college students in Metro Manila during the post-pandemic period. A Sequential Explanatory Method approach was employed, starting with a survey of 248 students to assess their coping strategies and levels of psychological well-being. Statistical correlation analysis revealed significant relationships between social support and psychological well-being. To further explore these findings, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of 10 students. Thematic analysis identified key themes such as the role of virtual social interactions, the challenges of online learning, and various coping strategies. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences, highlighting the critical importance of social support and adaptive coping strategies in maintaining psychological well-being. These findings suggest that "educational institutions should enhance mental health resources and support systems to better assist students in the post-pandemic era."

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, Coping Strategies, Psychological Well-being, Post-Pandemic, Mental Health

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic, a global watershed moment, has made a lasting impression on Filipino students (Simbulan, 2023). The pandemic initiated a seismic shift in the educational modalities, transforming schools and campuses into empty halls lacking the levity and comradery that once characterized them. (Zagreb, 2023) It compelled students to trade in-person interactions for virtual ones and traditional classrooms for pixels on screens. Beyond the logistical challenges of remote learning lay a far-reaching and often concealed realm: the psychological terrain. (Dan *et al.,* 2023) In April 2020, it was reported that around "1.5 billion learners (over 90% of total enrolled learners) and 60.2 million educators worldwide had to stay home due to the pandemic" (UNESCO, 2020). The Philippines followed suit, implementing a lockdown on March 10, 2020 (UNESCO, 2020). Schools in Greater Metropolitan Manila closed, classes at all levels were suspended, and non-essential activities halted. "The lockdown extended to the entire island of Luzon, imposing a strict 30-day enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), with potential extensions" (Ocampo, 2020).

The latest WHO figures, as of 17 January 2022, the Philippines had recorded over 3 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 with over 52,700 deaths since March 2020. In this context, the Journal of Positive School

Psychology highlighted the intricate nature of the pandemic's psychological impact on Filipino students. This marked the onset of an uncertain period that disrupted their academic pursuits, daily routines, and emotional resilience (Serrano, 2022). The absence of peer interactions and the loss of the traditional learning environment were further compounded by widespread fears of illness, financial difficulties, and the rapid pace of change. Loneliness, anxiety, and depression became prevalent experiences for many individuals as the pandemic persisted, as reported in a study conducted by the National Library of Medicine (Jandric, 2021).

Amidst these challenges, the Philippines has been gradually returning to a state of normalcy. This progress began when the Philippines established an inter-agency task force to monitor COVID-19 in January 2020. The situation escalated when local transmission started on March 7, 2020, ultimately leading to a nationwide declaration of a public health emergency on March 8 (Talabis *et al.,* 2021).

A significant moment occurred when President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. addressed the nation in Bacolod City on October 23, 2022. He conveyed that it was time for the country to return to normalcy as the COVID-19 pandemic was receding. President Marcos acknowledged the difficulties posed by the pandemic but emphasized the need to resume regular activities, citing the gradual management of the crisis. He encouraged Filipinos to return to work and seize pre-pandemic opportunities, marking the beginning of a period where the nation needed to address pressing concerns (Parrocha, 2022) including the Psychological Adjustment and psychological well-being of our student community (Disord, 2023).

Research studies by Tabry *et al.* (2022) and Howell et al. (2021) have "underscored the critical role of community resilience and social support networks in post-pandemic Coping Strategies and psychological well-being". Additionally, a study by the World Health Organization (2023) delved into the responsibilities of educational institutions in providing mental health resources during the transition to a post-pandemic environment. As we witness the emergence of a post-pandemic Philippines, it becomes increasingly evident that our focus must shift from crisis management to understanding and facilitating students' Coping Strategies and Psychological Well-being (Rotas & Cahapay, 2023).

In this evolving landscape, the researchers endeavor to investigate post-pandemic coping strategies and psychological well-being among selected college students. The objectives are interconnected and aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences.

The primary objective of the researchers is to evaluate the coping strategies and psychological well-being of Filipino college students, encompassing aspects such as emotional stability, mental health, and overall resilience. Furthermore, the researchers seek to understand how these students have coped with the post-pandemic period, considering a myriad of influencing factors. Their commitment is rooted in understanding the distinct needs and challenges faced by the students as they navigate this evolving landscape. To attain this goal, the researchers will employ a strategic combination of focus group discussions and surveys, conducted simultaneously, thereby delving into the emotional and psychological intricacies of the students.

Ultimately, the aim of the researchers is to contribute to the long-term resilience of these college students, assisting them not only in recovering from the pandemic's impact but also in thriving as they pursue their academic and personal journeys in the post-pandemic era. This research represents a critical step toward providing the support and insights necessary for the students to flourish in the wake of these transformative times. Understanding and addressing their well-being is essential as we transition into a post-pandemic world. Through the framework of Sequential Explanatory Design, this study aims to address existing knowledge gaps and elucidate strategies for optimizing the positive impact of post-pandemic coping strategies on the psychological well-being of college students.

This study examines college students' coping strategies and psychological well-being after COVID-19. It

tackles academic changes, social isolation, financial hardship, and future uncertainty. The goal is to improve students' mental health with focused interventions and support. This study will use qualitative and quantitative methodologies to examine how students perceive and feel these changes and their psychological impacts. This study will also examine how students' demographics affect their recovery experiences and attitudes. This research aims to solve information gaps and improve post-pandemic outcomes.

QUALITATIVE PHASE: On the qualitative phase, the researchers will be utilizing the following objectives:

To explore how college students navigate and adapt to post-pandemic psychological challenges, examining the factors that shape their adaptation process.

To obtain a thorough understanding of their coping strategies and post-pandemic psychological well-being of the students. The information that will be obtained could bring the context on the participants' various subjective experiences.

To investigate how college students perceive and encounter post-pandemic shifts in Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (PERMA) and assess the impact of these factors on their overall Coping Strategies and Psychological well-being.

QUALITATIVE QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

What were your post-pandemic experiences?

Possible follow up questions:

1.1 Have you encountered specific challenges? If so, how were you able to handle them?

1.2 Since returning to in-person classes, has your motivation, interest, or passion changed?

1.3 How has the transition from distance learning to in-person classes affected your psychological well-being?

Have you experienced any changes in your social connections and relationships on campus since returning to in-person classes?

Possible follow-up questions:

2.1 What implications do these changes have on your current engagement with your peers/classmates?

2.2 How have these changes affected your psychological well-being? (e.g positive relationship with others, self acceptance, feeling of purpose or meaning in life)

What are some coping strategies that have worked well for you in adjusting to the "new normal"?

Possible follow up questions:

3.1 Can you share any particular situations where the presence or absence of adjustment strategies played a role in your academic accomplishments or setbacks?

How has the pandemic affected your plans for the future and your professional aspirations?

Possible follow-up questions:

4.1 How are you adapting to these changes?

4.2 Are these any new-found perspectives you've gained throughout the post-pandemic phase that add to your overall sense of meaning as a college student?

Are these any aspects of the "new normal" that you still find difficult to deal with? Can you elaborate on these?

Possible follow-up questions:

5.1 Do you think there are any particular aspects of campus life that you should improve to better assist students' post-pandemic psychological adjustment and psychological well-being? Why?

Hypothesis

Null hypothesis. There is no significant relationship between post-pandemic coping strategies and psychological well-being among college students within metro manila.

Assumption. College students within Metro Manila employ a variety of coping strategies to deal with post-pandemic stress, incorporating elements of PERMA (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment) alongside problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping strategies.

LITERATURE

Psychological Well-Being. "The components of well-being, according to Seligman's (2011) theory, are PERMA (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment)." Strong evidence that subjective well-being is the ultimate common path of such elements was reported by Goodman, Disabato, Kashdan, and Kaufmann (2017), and their findings are fully consistent with Seligman's theory. But they mistakenly claimed that he implied that PERMA was more than just its constituent parts and that it represented a distinct form of well-being. The complex problem of determining what constitutes a well-being element is discussed; it is a problem that goes beyond psychometrics.

In the words of Levi (2017), "psychological well-being is a dynamic state characterized by some degree of harmony between a person's strengths, needs, and aspirations, as well as environmental demands and possibilities." In order to have a thorough grasp of well-being as a concept, it is crucial to identify the characteristics that are associated with psychological well-being. Identity, purpose, and relatedness are all part of a bigger framework that supports psychological well-being (Ryff & Singer, 2019). Having psychological well-being is about attaining one's potential and leading a fulfilling life; "it is not so much an outcome or end state as it is a process of fulfilling or realizing one's daimon or true nature" (Deci & Ryan, 2016, p.2).

Each individual strives to be in good physical, emotional, and psychological health. In the recent Pandemic crisis, which resulted in a complete lockdown across the nation, university students' perceptions of the outside world in resolving day-to-day issues have been impacted. Some researchers from across the world anticipated that "COVID-19 will have an impact on the population's health in social, neurological, and particularly psychological dimensions" (Pantaleon *et. al*, 2021). In fact, the pandemic caused a significant incidence of mental health disorders in the general population, including acute stress, post-traumatic stress

disorder, anxiety, depression, irritability, insomnia, and impaired attention. (Martin & Collie, 2022). These symptoms were especially prevalent in people who had experienced the pandemic.

A parallel pandemic of psychological disorders like stress, panic, anxiety, worry, and depression is now more likely as a result of COVID-19 (Ebharhim & Dhahi, 2022). Community members' limited social connections, social isolation, and personal interactions are emotionally damaging. The spread of COVID-19 disease has restricted social interactions, freedom of movement, and daily life functioning. Coping strategies include adopting online socializing, maintaining physical distance, and minimizing outdoor activities intended for sport, shopping, leisure, or anything else.

Every aspect of life for humans has been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, including educational institutions. Online education undertaken prior to, throughout, and after COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly possesses a positive and negative aspect, particularly when it comes to students' mental health (Barrot, Llenares, & Del Rosario, 2021). Students are dissatisfied with their lives as they currently stand and feel let down by their circumstances. According to Petrie *et al.* (2020), students encounter challenges while using an online or hybrid learning strategy. Social isolation and loneliness were highly related to "Having a strong support system and a sense of belonging are linked to bad mental health students' psychological health and happiness both during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic" (Voltmer *et al.,* 2021).

Positive Emotion. Within the intricate fabric of human well-being, positive emotions stand as foundational threads, imbuing life with color and significance. In the post-pandemic Philippines, the resilience of the Filipino spirit is notably apparent, thriving in the face of challenges (Tabuga, 2020). Rooted in Martin Seligman's PERMA framework, positive emotions take a pivotal role in shaping individual and collective experiences. Seligman's model identifies Positive Emotions, among other elements, as integral components contributing to human flourishing (Madeson, 2020). This research aims to compile findings elucidating how these positive emotions, as defined by PERMA, have decisively impacted the journey of the Filipino people in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Consider the *"Bayanihan spirit,"* a cultural treasure close to Filipino hearts. It represents values like compassion, mutual support, and voluntary cooperation, expressed through comforting words like "*Tulungan*" and "*Damayan.*" This spirit isn't just inspiring; it turns regular folks into community heroes, sowing the seeds of positive emotions such as hope and unity (GOVPH, 2020). Acts of kindness, initiated by ordinary individuals, resonate like heartbeats across the islands, building resilience and optimism in the face of challenges.

As the research delves into this research, there is a proactive response from the government and healthcare sectors, working hand in hand with successful vaccination efforts. When these aspects come together, they create a sense of security and optimism, spreading hope across the Filipino landscape (Chan, 2021). The government's actions become more than just policies; they become rays of light, dispelling uncertainty.

The economic part of this journey unveils a story of recovery, job opportunities, and financial stability. It doesn't just offer financial security; it brings relief and rejuvenated hope. With job opportunities appearing on the horizon, Filipinos once again see a brighter future (Diokno, 2022).

But this research isn't just about numbers and policies. It dances through the streets, embracing stories of families reuniting, friends sharing laughter, and communities reviving cultural and religious traditions. These are the moments where positive emotions truly flourish, blooming like flowers in the sunlight (Diokno, 2022).

In this Filipino tale of resilience and hope, positive emotions are the brushstrokes, painting the canvas with hope, gratitude, and optimism. These emotions aren't solitary travelers; they are woven into the fabric of

Filipino culture, holding the nation together. They rise like the morning sun, dispelling the shadows of adversity.

As we reach the conclusion, it's clear that the Filipino story is ongoing. The findings in this research serve as a testament to the unyielding spirit of the nation. The symphony of positive emotions continues to play, serving as a soundtrack of hope and resilience in an uncertain world. In the face of challenges, Filipinos stand as an exemplary demonstration of how positive emotions can be more than a reaction; they can serve as guiding lights toward a brighter, safer, and more united future.

Engagement. In the unique background of the after the pandemic Philippines, the concept of "Engagement" emerges as a foundational and defining principle, characterized by the active and enthusiastic participation of Filipinos in a diverse array of activities that exert a profound and transformative impact on the recovery and rejuvenation of their communities (Dela Cruz, 2021). This dynamic engagement closely corresponds to the "E" component of the PERMA model in psychology, which signifies a profound state of immersion and flow, whereby individuals find themselves fully absorbed in their actions and experiences (Soots, 2023).

A wealth of scholarly literature reinforces the paramount role of engagement in the post-pandemic landscape. A recent study conducted by Vicentino (2021), examining "Netizens' Perception of Government Responses to COVID-19", delves into the intricate interplay between governance and citizen engagement. This research highlights "how Filipinos' active involvement is inextricably linked to their perception of the government's effectiveness in managing the pandemic and implementing comprehensive recovery plans" (Verzosa, 2020). The intricate connection between governance and engagement underscores the pivotal role of well-structured policy-making and effective communication in mobilizing communities for collective action.

Moreover, the economic facet of engagement, as expounded by Truelogic Marketing (2023), assumes a significant role in the post-pandemic Philippines. This study meticulously examines how Filipinos have exhibited a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit, actively engaging in the establishment of online businesses and adroitly harnessing digital technologies to sustain their livelihoods. This economic engagement is not only a testament to adaptability but also stands as a formidable driving force in the nation's economic recovery endeavor (Haferkamp, 2023).

An additional study on "Romanticizing Filipino Resiliency" (2022) lends a comprehensive understanding of the role of active engagement among Filipinos in the recovery and revitalization of their communities. Their findings emphasize the depth of involvement demonstrated by Filipinos, which underscores their unwavering commitment to fostering resilience and adaptability in the face of formidable challenges (Merca, 2021). Furthermore, research from the "Philippine Journal of Social Development provides valuable insights into the transformative potential of engagement in the post-pandemic Philippines, elucidating how Filipinos' engagement extends beyond mere involvement to catalyze a profound sense of unity and shared purpose" (Nicolas, 2022).

Relationship. In Seligman's PERMA model, a positive relationship is about the connection of an individual from the other and it is inherent for humans to seek close contact with other people, to build relationships, and to connect to them. This relationship can be built between two people who encourage, support, and care for one another. Heshmati *et. al.* (2020) noted that positive emotions and relationships are fundamental well-being factors for young adults. Positive relationship can lessen the stress of an individual and can improve their lifestyle as they are being encouraged by someone who cares for them. "Having a positive relationship with others and one's environment is critical to one's well-being and success in life" (Nadlifah, Setiawan, & Munir, 2023).

As Filipinos are in the post-pandemic phase, it is inevitable that they would immediately seek for

relationships. As stated by Seligman (2011), it is our basic human need to feel belonged, to feel loved and understood, and to be supported. "Positive Relationships include Parent Relationships, Peer Relationship, and Teacher-Student Relationship" (Lai *et al.,* 2018). "Relationships between teachers and students are paramount in the development of well-being and these have a special importance during the COVID-19 pandemic" (García-Álvarez, et. al, 2021). The support coming from them will influence the behavior of the student in school. "A positive relationship can have a great contribution to feelings of positive emotions and achieving a sense of accomplishment in life can contribute to meanings" (Hidayat, Habibi, Saad, Mukminin, Idris, 2018).

At some point during the pandemic, the relationship that was made face-to-face has been reduced and communication was cut-off. As a result, some developed anxiety and felt alone. "Loneliness has been positively associated with depressive and anxious symptoms while hope has been negatively linked to these symptoms" (Vasileiou *et. al.*, 2020). However, now that the country is now facing the effects of post-pandemic, the feeling of loneliness will gradually vanish. With people beside them, feelings of loneliness could be lessened. The well-being of the people will depend on the well-being of the people they connect with. That's why when they associate themselves with people who are generally good will also affect them. It is suggested that is why "positive relationships as a particular component of wellbeing were found to be positively predicted the highest by love and hope but also by social intelligence, gratitude, persistence, curiosity, and forgiveness" (Vasileiou *et. al.,* 2021).

Meaning. What is the intended significance behind individuals' assertion of personal life meaning? "Meaning is belonging to and serving something greater than ourselves. Having a purpose helps people stay focused on what matters most when faced with major obstacles or misfortune." (Seligman, 2012). The concept of meaning in life is frequently characterized as an individual's perception of their existence possessing a distinct purpose or their commitment to dedicating time and effort towards the achievement of deeply valued objectives (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Some scholars contend that an individual experiences purpose in life when he or she realizes that one's life makes sense (Reker & Wong, 1988). Meaning, as defined by another researcher, is said to manifest through individual achievements, interpersonal interactions, and engagements with artistic expressions and the natural world (Frankl, 1984). "The acquisition of meaning can also be achieved by aligning one's self or one's existence with a broader framework of meaning, such as a religious belief system or a personal philosophy of life" (Allport, 1961).

There is an argument suggesting that "the subjective experience of finding meaning in life is dependent on the satisfaction of four psychological demands, namely purpose, value, efficacy, and self-worth" (Baumeiste, 1991). Life is full of unexpected challenges and hardships that can test our own strengths and resilience. The difficulties encountered often prompt individuals to contemplate their meaning and purpose of their existence. In the same way that the pandemic forces us to constantly question our ability to persevere in the face of the numerous challenges it presents, each new day brings new uncertainties about how we will manage to cope with them. terms of careers, education, and employment (Hartung *et al.* 2020).

Many factors that the COVID-19 Pandemic hinders many factors of their lives (Mugo, *et.al* 2020). The sudden transition to remote learning has posed challenges for students who are accustomed to in-person instruction (Anwar *et al.,* 2020). It hinders students to socialize and engage with other people. "Lack of access to necessary technology and reliable internet connection has hindered students' ability to fully engage in online classes" (Brownstein & Havens, 2021). The absence of a structured learning environment and the difficulty in maintaining motivation without face-to-face interactions have impacted students' academic performance (Bao, 2020). "The COVID-19 Pandemic increased stress, anxiety, and depression can hinder students' ability to concentrate, Because of the pandemic, college students are confused and disoriented about their futures in stay motivated, and effectively engage in their coursework" (Cao *et al.,* 2020). Despite every challenge students can find their purpose in life in reflecting on their personal values

and aspirations in life. "Engaging in activities that align with their values and purpose can provide a sense of meaning and fulfillment" (Damon, 2019). "Encouraging students to reflect on their core values and aspirations can help them gain clarity about what truly matters to them" (Steger *et al.,* 2019). Pursuing passions and exploring their own personal growth can lead them to find the real meaning of life after experiencing a handful of challenges brought by the pandemic. "Encouraging students to take risks and embrace new experiences can lead to personal growth and a greater sense of meaning in their lives" (Iasiello *et al.,* 2021). There are still numerous reasons to find the meaning, purpose and drives to continue and discover the purposefulness of their post-pandemic lives.

Accomplishment. Accomplishment, as a constituent element within the PERMA paradigm. Popularized by positive psychologist Martin Seligman, the PERMA framework's overarching goal is to help people feel better emotionally and thrive in life. There are five basic components to the approach that all work together to promote health and happiness. The model shows that putting an emphasis on these factors can help people live happier, more contented lives (Seligman, 2023). It pertains to the perception of attaining objectives and reaching significant milestones that contribute to an individual's holistic state of well-being and sense of satisfaction. The process entails establishing precise objectives, advancing towards them, and encountering a feeling of competence and accomplishment following their successful achievement (Madeson, 2017). Within the framework of the PERMA model, the concept of success extends beyond mere academic or professional accomplishments to cover personal growth and the acquisition of skills. The significance of participating in activities that require individuals to push their limits and expand their capabilities is underscored, resulting in heightened levels of self-assurance, drive, and adaptability. The connection between accomplishments and the notion of achievement has been extensively acknowledged as essential for the psychological well-being and adaptation of individuals. The act of establishing and attaining objectives has been found to be linked with heightened levels of motivation, self-worth, and a feeling of direction in one's life (Locke & Latham, 2006). The attainment of goals serves to furnish individuals with a feeling of purpose and orientation, as well as facilitating progress towards desired objectives. Accomplishments that align with a person's values and interests provide a feeling of meaning and purpose in life (Steger, 2012).

Participating in activities that hold personal significance and provide a sense of fulfillment contributes to psychological adaptation and subjective well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a multifaceted impact on college students, particularly in terms of their capacity to attain academic achievements. The transition to online education and the subsequent closure of educational institutions have significantly altered students' academic habits and objectives. The transition to online education and the temporary shutdown of educational institutions have significantly altered the established academic routines and objectives of students. Their ability to succeed academically may be hindered by less access to resources, restricted interaction with peers and teachers, increased stress, and distractions (Browne *et al.,* 2021). Numerous extracurricular activities and events, encompassing sports, organizations, and social meetings, have been subject to cancellation or transition to virtual platforms as a consequence of the ongoing pandemic. In addition to academic achievement, these activities frequently give pupils the chance to grow personally and enhance their skills (Hausmann *et al.,* 2021). Moreover, the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic poses obstacles for students in their ability to partake in customary graduation ceremonies and pursue educational opportunities overseas, which traditionally represent noteworthy accomplishments and act as sources of pride and fulfillment for students (Svanholm, 2020).

As we approach the second anniversary of the initial wave of school closures caused by the epidemic, a return to typical academic conditions continues to elude several kids, instructors, and parents. In addition to growing COVID-19 cases by the end of 2021, schools have experienced acute staff shortages, high rates of absenteeism and quarantines, and rolling school closures. In addition, it is worth noting that both students and instructors persistently grapple with mental health difficulties, heightened occurrences of aggression and

misconduct, and apprehensions regarding the loss of instructional time (Kuhfeld *et al.,* 2022). The evidence suggests that "the outbreak has a detrimental impact on kids' academic performance, which is consistent with their achievements. Despite the multifaceted impact on students' academic achievements, there remains a compelling rationale for students to assert themselves and embrace the opportunities that enable them to attain personal triumphs." According to research, college students' psychological reactions to the epidemic have a substantial impact on how they pursue success (Odriozola-González *et al.,* 2020).

Nevertheless, the concept of resilience assumes a significant function in facilitating students' ability to adjust and persist in the face of challenging circumstances (Li *et al.,* 2021). By developing resilience, students are more effectively prepared to sustain their motivation and effectively manage obstacles, promoting a sense of achievement even in the face of difficult circumstances. College students showed exceptional flexibility in reframing their objectives and devising alternate strategies to achieve success (Heslop *et al.,* 2020). The concept of academic resilience capacity refers to the inherent power of students to persevere and enhance their academic performance in the face of significant challenges or the existence of substantial risk factors (Dwiastuti *et al.,* 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably caused disruptions to the conventional routes of achievement for college students. However, these individuals have demonstrated their ability to persevere, adjust, and utilize available resources in order to navigate through these difficult circumstances. College students are discovering alternative pathways to personal achievement by developing resilience, embracing change, fostering social connections, and engaging in online skill development. As the global community navigates the post-pandemic era, the competencies and proficiencies acquired throughout this period will establish a solid foundation for their future accomplishments.

Coping Strategies. Following the assessment of an individual's threat to their well-being and the available resources to manage the threat, we take into account situations that are dependent on both situational and individual factors. Coping strategies are applied (Carver *et al.,* 1989, Korbmacher & Wright, 2020). Coping strategies play an important role in the physical and mental health of an individual, especially during adapting to stressful situations. In the transactional theory of stress, stress is about the relationship between an individual and their environment which they appraise whether or not it is relevant to their well-being. According to Lazarus, he defined coping with stress as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person". Based on the definition, it can also be assumed that coping is dependent on personality patterns and perceptual experiences. The strategies one chooses for adapting to a situation are highly individualized. Coping is never the same for two people (Chowdhury, 2023). "It involves conscious, purposeful actions employed when an individual appraises a situation as stressful" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 as cited in Biggs, *et al.* 2017). Coping has two major facets: problem-focused or active coping and emotion-focused or passive coping.

Problem-focused. Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing the root causes of stress, as noted by Ogilvie (2023), who highlights efforts to generate solutions and adopt new problem-solving approaches in coping with stressors.

This coping strategy may encompass activities such as seeking advice from objective friends, brainstorming various solutions, or journaling emotions to alleviate their intensity. Lazarus and Folkman (1988) emphasize that individuals often possess internal and external resources to effectively manage or diminish stress. In response to the sudden transition to online learning, students have demonstrated adaptive behaviors by developing time management skills, seeking academic support, and establishing new study routines, as observed by Smith (2020). These adaptive strategies are consistent with the problem-focused coping approach. Further support for the efficacy of problem-focused coping comes from Baker (2019), whose research underscores the effectiveness of active problem-solving techniques in reducing stress levels. Additionally, a study from Shoenmakers (2015) highlights "the positive impact of problem-focused coping strategies on enhancing both academic performance and psychological well-being among students". Ageing

(2015) also emphasizes "the crucial role of problem-focused coping in mitigating the adverse effects of stress on mental health outcomes." Moreover, recent findings published in PLoS (2021) underscore the significance of problem-focused coping in fostering adaptive adjustment and resilience in the face of challenging circumstances. These studies collectively reinforce the importance and effectiveness of problem-focused coping strategies in addressing stress and promoting well-being.

Emotion-focused. This method concentrates on techniques that decrease the emotional distress brought on by the circumstance. An individual may experience overwhelming feelings of fear, anger, sadness, or shame when they are under emotional stress. They might even have an excessively strong or insufficient emotional reaction to the circumstances, making them feel numb or "spaced out." They may attempt to control their emotions in different ways if they are attempting to deal with emotional stressors. (Emma *et al*. 2021)

They might try to understand what's behind their feelings so they don't feel so overwhelmed. They might try to reduce the intensity of their feelings through distraction or relaxation.

Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping offers a valuable framework to understand how individuals appraise stressors, employ coping strategies, and ultimately adjust to the post-pandemic landscape.

Cognitive Appraisal. "cognitive appraisal is a process by which Individuals examine a certain interaction and determine the potential stressors" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). "Cognitive appraisal happens when people examine two important aspects that influence how they respond to stress" (Chishima *et. al*, 2018). Two views describe the correlation between emotion and cognitive appraisal. First, it is said that cognitive appraisal causes emotion. This view suggests "that the way we interpret the eliciting event determines our emotions" (Yarwood, n.d.). As a result, different interpretations of the same event could elicit different emotions." The second view is that emotions cause appraisal. Meaning, that cognitive appraisal could be felt after the felt emotion (Yarwood, n.d.). These two factors are the risky characteristics of the stressor to the person and the assessment of the resources required to minimize, endure, or eliminate the stressor and the stress it causes. Lazarus and Folkman classified it into two kinds: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal.

Primary Appraisal. During the primary appraisal, "individuals assess whether or not there's anything at stake in this encounter. Individuals assess situational demand and personal relevance to decide whether external stressors are threatening or challenging" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) Lazarus and Folkman's theory proposes three main types of evaluation: (1) an appraisal that the situation is potentially harmful or involves a risk of loss for the person, (2) an appraisal interaction in which the person feels emotionally or physically threatened, and (3) a challenge to the assessment that has some form of opportunity for growth or mastery. The most important predictor of emotional state in response to everyday stressful situations is primary appraisal, understood as the evaluation of whether the event represents a negative emotional threat, challenge, or loss. (Fernández-Castro *et.al,* 2022).

Secondary Appraisal. Secondary appraisal, an integral component of stress appraisal theory, plays a pivotal role in assessing individuals' resources and options in coping with stressors (Sharifabad, 2020). It serves as a reliable predictor of positive emotional outcomes. Coping self-efficacy, elucidated by Bandura (1997), is a key element within secondary appraisals, reflecting individuals' beliefs in their ability to effectively manage and overcome future challenges. This process involves a thorough evaluation of available resources to tackle stressful experiences (Noret, Hunter, & Rasmussen, 2018). For instance, when faced with a poor grade, undergraduates may initially perceive it as either "annoying" or "important" during the primary cognitive appraisal phase. Subsequently, they may transition to acknowledging their capability to "overcome this situation" during the secondary appraisal stage (Chishima *et al.,* 2018). Extending upon these foundational concepts, recent studies by Velichkovsky (2024) "shed light on the role of secondary appraisal in fostering resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms in the face of adversity. Velichkovsky's research further

emphasizes the significance of secondary appraisal in promoting psychological well-being and enhancing overall resilience against stressors."

Avoidant Coping. Traditionally, "coping has been defined as a special category of adaptation elicited in normal individuals by unusually taxing circumstances" (Costa, *et. al* 1996). The most influential model of psychological stress response is the one proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). According to the authors, "the process of coping was defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts which are undertaken by an individual in order to deal with demands which are especially challenging and are probably exceeding individual capacities and/or resources" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). "Avoidant coping is characterized by the subscales of denial, substance use, venting, behavioral disengagement, self-distraction and self-blame" (Better Mind, 2024). "Avoidant Coping is associated with poorer physical health among those with medical conditions". It suggests that "it would allow a gradual recognition of the threat, which might also be positive in the case of uncontrollable situations" (Rodríguez, *et. al,* 1993). Avoidance coping is attempting to remain out of stressful situations instead of handling them. Although it might seem like avoiding stress is a great way to become less stressed, this isn't always the case. The majority of the time, the only way to truly lessen the stress that an issue or stressor causes is to face it head-on. Although we can't always avoid stress, we can manage it with useful coping mechanisms, which is why it aims for "stress management" as opposed to "stress avoidance". (Scott, 2024). College students were given the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), the Brief COPE, and the PSS. This study supported the well-established pattern of students reporting high levels of perceived stress. They also discovered a correlation between higher perceived stress and poorer sleep quality and avoidant coping mechanisms. Numerous other studies have demonstrated the connection between coping strategies and perceived stress, particularly in students who exhibit higher levels of perceived stress. (Brougham *et al.,* 2009). Lastly, because avoidance coping ignores the underlying causes of stress and, when overused, exacerbates anxiety and tension, it is generally considered unhealthy and ineffective. The majority of avoidant coping strategies are attempts to obtain short-term stress relief, even when doing so exacerbates the situation over time. According to research, avoidance coping has a number of negative effects, such as increased stress, lowered self-esteem, and worsened physical and mental health. (Shaffir, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

The post-pandemic era has brought forth a significant need to understand students' Coping Strategies and Psychological well-being (Heliyon, 2023). The theoretical underpinnings of the current study were anchored on the Transactional model of Stress and Coping Theory and PERMA Model.

Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping (1984) has been instrumental in understanding Coping Strategies. It emphasizes cognitive appraisal, involving primary and secondary appraisal. Primary appraisal evaluates stressors as threats or challenges, while secondary appraisal assesses coping resources. Coping strategies include problem-focused coping, which addresses the stressor directly, and emotion-focused coping, which regulates emotional responses. "Avoidance coping, also referred to as avoidant coping, avoidance behaviors, or escape coping, is an effective method of coping where an individual alters their actions to steer clear of confronting, feeling, or dealing with challenging situations" (Scott,2024). By recognizing the pivotal role of cognitive appraisal and the subjective nature of stress, their framework sheds light on how individuals not only cope with stressors but also cope psychologically. The emphasis on perception and interpretation aligns with the process of Coping Strategies, illustrating how individuals, armed with coping, can effectively navigate and find equilibrium in the face of life's challenges (Biggs,2024).

Inversely, The PERMA model developed by Seligman (2011) will provide a deeper comprehension of students' well-being. It emphasizes five key elements: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. The post-pandemic landscape challenges students' well-being across these

dimensions, especially in maintaining positive emotions and sustaining meaningful relationships. By employing the PERMA model, the current study encourages a profound knowledge of how fostering positive emotions, engagement in meaningful activities, and nurturing social connections can contribute to students' post-pandemic psychological well-being.

With the integration of the two theories, the researchers posit that students who demonstrate high resilience are better equipped to engage with the dimensions of PERMA. For instance, students may be more capable of building and maintaining meaningful relationships or finding purpose in their post-pandemic college experiences.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed an Sequential Explanatory Design to assess the Psychological Well-Being and Coping Strategies of college students in Metro Manila. Initially, quantitative data were gathered using Likert scale surveys – specifically, the Brief-COPE Scale comprising 28 items and PERMA-Profiler with 23 items, both acknowledged for their reliability (Riope, 2019). This quantitative phase involved a sample of 384 participants and was distributed online using google forms. After filtering out ineligible respondents, the final sample size was 248, guaranteeing the accuracy and consistency of the data (Pneumol, 2018).

For the qualitative phase, researchers conducted focus group discussions with 10 participants. These discussions involved structured interviews to capture qualitative insights. By incorporating these dual methodologies, as suggested by Bhandari (2020), the researchers aimed to comprehensively explore the research topic from various perspectives. After conducting the focus group discussions, the qualitative data obtained were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. Themes and patterns emerging from the data were identified and interpreted to complement and enrich the quantitative findings, offering deeper insights into the psychological well-being and coping strategies of college students in Metro Manila. This Sequential Explanatory Design approach enhanced the overall quality of the study and ensured a thorough and nuanced understanding of the psychological well-being and coping strategies of college students in Metro Manila.

RESULTS

What is the level of the respondents following in terms of:

Problem 2. Coping Strategies

Problem-Focused Coping

Emotion-Focused Coping

Avoidant Coping

Dimensions of Coping	Mean	SD	Description
Problem-focused	3.17	0.55	High
Emotion-focused	2.88	0.41	High
Avoidant Coping	2.25	0.52	Moderate

Note: 1.00-1.60=Very Low, 1.61-2.20=Low, 2.21-2.80=Moderate, 2.81-3.40=High, 3.41-4.00=Very High

Figure 6. Level of the Respondents' Coping in Terms of Problem-focused, Emotion-focused and Avoidant Coping

The Brief COPE Inventory assesses various coping strategies across multiple dimensions, revealing how people handle stress. In terms of student coping strategies, the findings for the three primary dimensions—Problem-Focused Coping, Emotion-Focused Coping, and Avoidant Coping—provide valuable information (Mead, 2019).

Problem-Focused Coping. The result of Problem-focused dimension includes strategies for directly addressing and resolving stressors, has a mean score of 3.17 and a standard deviation of 0.55. This high mean indicates that students primarily use problem-solving strategies, such as planning, seeking instrumental support, and actively addressing the issues that cause stress. The relatively low standard deviation suggests that the students surveyed used these strategies consistently (Mead, 2019).

Emotion-Focused Coping. The result of the Emotion-focused dimension includes strategies for managing the emotional response to stress, and has an average score of 2.88. This high mean indicates that students frequently use emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking emotional support, venting, and using positive reframing. Although not as high as the problem-focused dimension, this score indicates a significant reliance on emotional management techniques to deal with stressors (Mead, 2019).

Avoidant Coping. The result of the Avoidant coping dimension includes strategies for avoiding dealing with stress directly, such as denial, substance use, and behavioral disengagement, has a mean score of 2.25 and a standard deviation of 0.52. This moderate mean indicates that, while students use avoidant strategies, it is to a lesser extent than problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. The moderate use of avoidant coping strategies indicates that, while not the primary methods used by students, they do form part of their overall coping skills (Mead, 2019).

In summary, students prefer active, problem-solving approaches to stress management, which are closely followed by methods for managing their emotions. Avoidant coping strategies are used less frequently, indicating a more balanced approach in which students prefer to confront and manage stress directly rather than avoid it. This pattern of coping strategies demonstrates the students' proactive and constructive approach to dealing with stress in both their academic and personal lives. In evaluating coping strategies using the Brief COPE Inventory among 248 participants, distinct patterns emerged across problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping mechanisms. Problem-focused coping was highly prevalent, with 186 respondents (75%) frequently employing strategies such as planning and seeking instrumental support, yielding a mean score of 3.17 (SD = 0.55), indicating robust use. Emotion-focused coping was also prominent, utilized by 165 participants (66%) who engaged in seeking emotional support, venting, and positive reframing, reflecting a mean score of 2.88. Avoidant coping strategies, such as denial and behavioral disengagement, were utilized by 124 individuals (50%), with a mean score of 2.25, illustrating moderate adoption compared to other coping methods. These findings underscore a diverse array of coping mechanisms employed by the sample, highlighting varying preferences in addressing stressors through problem-solving, emotional regulation, or avoidance strategies.

Problem 3. Psychological Well-Being

Positive Emotion

Engagement

Relationships

Meaning

Accomplishments

Dimensions of well-being	Mean	SD	Description
Positive Emotion	6.89	1.77	High
Engagement	7.21	1.44	High
Relationship	7.24	1.85	High
Meaning	7.08	1.75	High
Accomplishment	7.15	1.48	High

Note: 1.00-2.80=Very Low, 2.81-4.60=Low, 4.61-6.40=Moderate, 6.41-8.20=High, 8.21-10.00=Very High

Figure 7. Level of the Respondents' Psychological Well-being in Terms of Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Accomplishment

PERMA is a model of well-being developed by psychologist Martin Seligman, representing five essential elements that contribute to a fulfilling and flourishing life. Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning, and Accomplishment are the five dimensions of coping that are shown in the table along with their mean scores, standard deviations (SD), and qualitative descriptions. Every component is assessed to comprehend how people are handling or responding to challenges or challenges.

Positive Emotions. The mean of 6.89 and the standard deviation of 1.77 indicate a significant level of analysis in the results. High levels of positive emotions have been described by respondents as a coping strategy. Although there is some variation in the responses, as indicated by the relatively high standard deviation, the overall mean indicates that most people are able to sustain a positive emotional state.

Engagement. High levels of engagement, with a mean of 7.21 and a standard deviation of 1.44, indicate that respondents are actively involved and turn to their interests and hobbies as a coping mechanism. A lower standard deviation suggests that respondent's coping mechanisms for engagement are more consistent.

Relationship. Strong results in the relationship dimensions with mean 7.24 and standard deviation 1.85, imply that support and relationships with respondents have significance for coping. The higher standard deviation indicates that there is an extensive amount of variability among the ways that respondents view or apply relationships as a coping mechanism.

Meaning. Another high-scoring dimension with mean of 7.08 and standard deviation 1.75 in finding meaning in experiences and situations in life. This suggests that respondents find meaning in life as a coping mechanism for stress. There is some variability in this dimension, as indicated by the comparatively high standard deviation.

Accomplishments. The results indicate that the respondents had a high sense of accomplishment with mean of 7.15 and standard deviation of 1.48, suggesting the importance of goal-setting and acknowledging one's own accomplishments as coping mechanisms. There is an acceptable level of consistency among respondents in this area, as indicated by the moderate standard deviation.

The study participants generally report strong coping mechanisms across various dimensions, as evidenced by the high ratings for all five coping dimensions. Since the means vary from 6.89 to 7.24, it is unlikely that any one dimension is significantly higher or lower than the others. This thorough high score across the

board suggests that the participants have a well-rounded coping strategy. While Positive Emotion and Relationship are more consistently used across individuals, Engagement and Accomplishment tend to be less consistently used, as indicated by the varying standard deviations.

Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents':

Coping Strategies

Psychological Well-Being

		Positive Emotion	Engagement	Relationship	Meaning	Accomplishment
Problem-focused Coping	Pearson Correlation	.431**	.484**	.421**	.507**	.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	248	248	248	248	248
Emotion-focused Coping	Pearson Correlation	.091	.160*	.141*	.146*	.173**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.152	.012	.027	.021	.006
	N	248	248	248	248	248
Avoidant Coping	Pearson Correlation	-.210**	-.175**	-.176**	-.179**	-.164**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.006	.005	.005	.010
	N	248	248	248	248	248

Figure 8. Correlation Matrix

The correlation Matrix shows significant relationships between the respondents' coping strategies and various dimensions of psychological well-being. The following sections will detail these correlations, demonstrating how increases in dimensions of Brief Cope are associated with corresponding increases in each dimension of PERMA.

Problem-focused Coping (PFC) demonstrates strong positive correlations with all dimensions of psychological well-being. The Pearson correlation coefficients for PFC with Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship Quality, Meaning, and Accomplishment range from 0.421 to 0.507, with all p-values less than 0.01. This suggests that students who engage in problem-focused coping strategies, which involve actively addressing and solving problems, tend to have higher levels of positive emotions, are more engaged in activities, maintain better quality relationships, find greater meaning in life, and feel a stronger sense of accomplishment (Walinga, 2014).

On the other hand, Emotion-focused Coping (EFC) presents a more nuanced picture. EFC shows significant positive correlations with Engagement (r = 0.160, p < .05), Relationship Quality (r = 0.141, p < .05), Meaning (r = 0.146, p < .05), and Accomplishment (r = 0.173, p < .01). However, it does not significantly correlate with Positive Emotion (r = 0.091, p = .152). This indicates that while emotion-focused coping, which involves "managing emotional responses to stress, can enhance interpersonal relationships and a sense of achievement, it might not directly boost immediate positive emotional experiences" (Raypole, 2020).

In contrast, Avoidant Coping (AC) is significantly negatively correlated with all dimensions of psychological well-being. The Pearson correlation coefficients for AC with Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship Quality, Meaning, and Accomplishment range from -0.164 to -0.210, with all p-values less than 0.01. This suggests that students who tend to avoid or deny stressors experience lower levels of positive emotions, are less engaged, have poorer quality relationships, find less meaning in life, and feel less accomplished. Thus, avoidant coping appears detrimental to overall psychological well-being (Scott, 2024).

These findings highlight the important role of coping strategies in shaping the psychological well-being of college students. Problem-focused coping emerges as particularly beneficial across various well-being dimensions, while avoidant coping shows consistent negative effects. Emotion-focused coping has selective positive effects, particularly in relational and achievement domains. These insights can inform interventions aimed at promoting effective coping strategies to enhance psychological well-being among students in post-pandemic contexts.

Qualitative Result

Triangulation Data

Triangulation in qualitative research involves cross-verifying findings through multiple sources or methods to enhance accuracy and reliability (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Member checking, a key aspect of triangulation, involves validating data with participants to ensure its alignment with their experiences or perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, integrating insights from existing literature provides a broader context for understanding the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2002). Subject matter experts contribute valuable insights that complement the data analysis process, enriching the interpretation of findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To maintain accuracy, it's essential to cite information from reputable sources, ensuring the credibility of the research (Polit & Beck, 2017). In simple terms, triangulation means using different angles or approaches to confirm and strengthen research conclusions. By combining member checking, literature review, and subject matter expertise, researchers can ensure the robustness of their qualitative data analysis (Denzin, 1978).

In the Qualitative Findings, "a combination of thematic analysis and deductive analysis was employed to examine the data collected from focus groups" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). "Thematic analysis helped identify recurring patterns and themes in the qualitative data, providing a deep understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences" (Faster Cap, 2024). Deductive analysis involved applying established theories to the transcribed data, specifically the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011) and the Transactional Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). By integrating these theories into the analysis, the research aimed to understand how participants' experiences and coping strategies related to these established psychological theories. This approach allowed for a nuanced exploration of the research topic, shedding light on both emerging themes and their connections to established psychological theories.

PERMA

Theme 1: Positive Emotion

Finding motivation from within oneself can significantly impact one's overall well-being and sense of fulfillment. "I would say, mataas yung motivation ko since, nakakapag isip isip ako." This statement highlights the intrinsic motivation experienced by an individual, indicating a strong sense of drive and purpose derived from their internal thoughts and reflections. Internal motivation, characterized by a genuine interest and enjoyment in activities, is closely linked to positive emotions and psychological well-being

(Løvoll *et al.,* 2017). Furthermore, Steinmayr et. al. (2019) suggest that achievement motivation encompasses various constructs, including ability self-concepts, task values, goals, and achievement motives.

"Na ma-motivate yung sarili ko". According to Davidovitch and Dorot (2023), "Motivation drives a person and leads them to achieve their goals and behave in a certain way". . This assertion encapsulates the essence of motivation as a dynamic force propelling individuals towards their objectives. Their research underscores that motivation is not merely a transient feeling but a deliberate choice individuals make to pursue their aspirations. Moreover, Davidovitch and Dorot's findings highlight the heightened motivation observed among undergraduate students, correlating it with the process of maturation that accompanies aging. This suggests that as individuals grow older, their motivational drive tends to increase, further reinforcing the positive focused coping approach (Blumenfeld & Marks, 2001).

"Nagkaron akong time for myself" underscores the importance of self-care and dedicating personal time to activities that nurture positive emotions (Smith *et al.,* 2021). During times of heightened stress and uncertainty, such as the pandemic, self-care becomes essential for maintaining mental well-being. Engaging in self-care practices like relaxation, hobbies, and personal reflection can effectively enhance positive emotions and serve as a buffer against stressors (Smith *et al.,* 2021). "By actively cultivating positive emotions, individuals can develop effective coping mechanisms to navigate stressors more effectively" (Fredrickson, 2001).

Theme 2: Engagement

"Nandun pa rin yung excitement ko na makipag usap sa ibang tao honestly" signifies an enduring eagerness for interpersonal communication amidst the significant changes in social environments. The importance of socialization in human development and adjustment to societal norms is widely recognized by sociologists (Seda, 2016). Socialization serves as a process through which individuals learn to adapt to group dynamics and conform to social expectations. Meaningful conversations provide opportunities for connection, self-expression, and intellectual stimulation. The theme statement reflects an intrinsic motivation to engage in such interactions, indicating proactive involvement in social relationships (Parker, 2008).

"Lahat finifriends ko ganon, parang lahat kinoclose ko" reflects the importance of friendship in fostering well-being and satisfaction in life. Choi *et al.* (2020) conducted a study demonstrating that individuals with friends and close confidants tend to report higher life satisfaction and lower rates of depression. Friendships provide emotional support, companionship, and a sense of belonging, which are essential for overall psychological health. The statement also alludes to the formation of new friendships during the pandemic, as individuals seek social connections to mitigate feelings of isolation and loneliness (Smith *et al.,* 2021). Abrams (2023) suggests that the initiation of acquaintanceships can lead to positive outcomes for individuals. These connections can occur in various settings such as schools, workplaces, or public spaces. Engaging in social interactions, even with acquaintances, promotes feelings of belongingness and fosters a sense of community (Jones & Lee, 2019).

The statement "Siguro yung.. naging coping strategy ko is..yung pag meet ng friends sa labas" suggests that socializing with friends outside serves as a coping mechanism for the individual. This coping strategy can be explored within the context of engagement in the PERMA profiler, particularly in how social interactions contribute to psychological well-being. Meeting friends outside provides opportunities for social support, which is crucial for coping with stress and adversity. Research indicates that "social support buffers the negative impact of stressful life events and promotes psychological resilience" (Thoits, 2011). Engaging in social activities with friends allows individuals to share experiences, receive emotional support, and gain perspective on their challenges, thereby enhancing coping efficacy.

Theme 3: Relationship

The statement "Socially, I was dependent on my social friends" suggests a strong reliance on social relationships for support and companionship. Dependence on social friends can be an indicator of a supportive social network, which plays a crucial role in promoting psychological well-being. Research consistently demonstrates that social support from friends enhances relationship satisfaction, buffers against stress, and fosters emotional resilience (Relat,2023).

The statement "Nung nag post-pandemic, parang, sa school, like in terms of the people in school, gigil ako magkaroon ng, like, interaction with friends" reflects a desire for social interaction and connection following the pandemic, particularly within the school environment. The eagerness to interact with friends post-pandemic reflects resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms in response to social challenges. Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity and adapt positively to life changes (Masten, 2001). Seeking social interaction with friends demonstrates a proactive approach to coping with the social disruptions caused by the pandemic, indicating a capacity for social adaptation and psychological well-being.

The statement "Nung nag F2F na, nung first meet na naming lahat, dun ko sila parang mas nakilala ganun. Mas nag-bond kami tas naging close" describes the experience of deepening social connections and forming closer relationships during an in-person meeting. Research suggests that face-to-face interaction plays a crucial role in relationship development, facilitating nonverbal communication, emotional expression, and interpersonal rapport.. Meeting in person allows individuals to pick up on subtle cues, such as facial expressions and body language, which are integral to forming trust and intimacy in relationships (Grossman,2022).

Theme 4: Meaning

"Nung pandemic, lahat ng tao natuto maging malinis" reflects the widespread adoption of hygiene practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. "In the early stages of the pandemic, there was heightened concern about the transmission of the virus through surfaces and contaminated objects" (Chaurasia, 2022). This prompted increased emphasis on cleaning and disinfection protocols in various settings, as well as a surge in public awareness regarding personal hygiene practices. The pandemic served as a catalyst for heightening awareness of the importance of hygiene practices not only in healthcare settings but also in everyday life. However, it's essential to acknowledge that while the pandemic may have instilled a newfound emphasis on hygiene, disparities in access to sanitation resources and infrastructure persist, particularly in underserved communities (UNICEF, 2021).

"So, binigyan ako ng time na makapag isip isip, ganyan. and then, nag pursue na ako ng psychology" reflects an individual's journey towards finding meaning and purpose in life, which is fundamentally linked to psychological well-being. According to Seligman (2011), having a sense of meaning contributes significantly to an individual's overall happiness and life satisfaction. This aspect of well-being extends beyond the pursuit of personal goals and encompasses contributing to something larger than oneself, fostering a deep sense of fulfillment and resilience. Research by Heintzelman and King (2014) supports the notion that individuals who perceive their lives as meaningful are more likely to experience positive mental health outcomes, including lower levels of depression and anxiety.

The statement "Ayun yung nakapagpabago sakin ng perspective ko na, kaya, na mag psychology nalang. so far, hindi ko naman siya pinagsisisihan" reflects the transformative impact of a career decision on the individual's perspective and sense of fulfillment. This sentiment can be examined within the context of career decision-making and its implications for well-being and personal satisfaction. A meaningful career not only fulfills economic needs but also aligns with personal values and contributes to a broader sense of

purpose (Duffy & Dik, 2013). During the pandemic, many people re-evaluated their career paths, seeking professions that provided greater personal satisfaction and a deeper sense of contribution to society. Psychology, as a discipline, offers opportunities to understand human behavior and help others, which can be profoundly fulfilling. This aligns with research suggesting that careers in helping professions are often associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and perceived meaning (Allan *et al.,* 2015).

Theme 5: Accomplishment

The statement "naglalim yung understanding ko sa course na to" indicates a deepening comprehension and engagement with the subject matter. This sentiment can be explored within the context of academic growth and the pursuit of knowledge, which are integral components of the "accomplishment" aspect of the PERMA profiler. Research has shown that the perception of accomplishment is linked to increased life satisfaction and happiness. When students achieve their academic goals, they experience a sense of fulfillment that positively impacts their mental health and overall well-being (Butler & Kern, 2016). This sense of achievement can serve as a motivator for continued effort and perseverance in their studies.

The statement "alam mo yun kahit ano mangyari lagi pa rin may business. Kumikita ka pa rin kahit ano mangyari. Kaya ito na yung pinursue ko as my college degree" reflects the individual's recognition of the resilience and financial stability associated with entrepreneurship, influencing their decision to pursue a college degree in business. The skills and experiences gained from entrepreneurship are transferable to various aspects of professional life. This entrepreneurial success can inform and enhance academic pursuits, leading to a more comprehensive educational experience (Komarraju *et al.,* 2009).

The statement "nakakapag isip isip ako. and, gusto ko na yung course ko" indicates a sense of introspection and satisfaction with the individual's chosen course of study. The sense of accomplishment in academic pursuits contributes to overall psychological well-being. Achieving goals and finding satisfaction in one's course of study enhances self-esteem and reduces stress. This positive psychological state is essential for maintaining motivation and resilience in the face of academic challenges (Bandura, 1997). Moreover, the feeling of accomplishment from liking and committing to a course can improve overall life satisfaction and happiness. It fosters a positive outlook on the future and encourages continued personal and professional growth. This holistic sense of well-being is central to thriving in both academic and non-academic domains (Seligman, 2011).

Coping Strategies

Theme 6: Problem-Focus Coping

Research indicates that effective time management skills significantly influence academic success among students (Lee, 2020). The ability to set and adhere to a schedule is particularly highlighted as a key factor in improving academic performance and managing one's curriculum effectively (Williams, 2021). This assertion is supported by the participant's statement, "Siguro, isa sa pinaka nakatulong sa akin is yung magseset ako ng schedule," which underscores the perceived importance of scheduling in enhancing academic progress (Garcia *et al.,* 2021). Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing stressors and taking direct action to manage them (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Research by Thompson and colleagues (2018) suggests that students who effectively manage their stressors tend to experience lower levels of academic stress and perform better academically.

Engaging in hobbies has been recognized as a beneficial practice for enhancing mental health and overall well-being. "I started doing my hobbies more." Enjoyable leisure activities have been extensively studied in the literature, with findings consistently showing their positive association with various psychosocial and physical measures affecting health and well-being (Pressman *et al.,* 2009). Participating in hobbies not only

provides individuals with a source of enjoyment and fulfillment but also contributes to their overall sense of happiness and life satisfaction. Moreover, research by Mak et al. (2023) highlights the social benefits of engaging in hobby groups, emphasizing their role in fostering social support networks and reducing feelings of loneliness and social isolation. By dedicating more time to hobbies, individuals can proactively seek out enjoyable and meaningful activities that serve as effective distractions from stressors and contribute to their overall well-being. Problem-focused coping emphasizes the importance of focusing on solutions and taking control of one's circumstances, making engagement in hobbies a valuable strategy for coping with stress and promoting psychological resilience.

Engaging in activities such as journaling has been recognized as an effective coping strategy for managing stress and promoting psychological well-being. "I started journaling." This simple yet powerful statement reflects an individual's proactive approach to addressing their challenges and finding constructive ways to navigate through difficult experiences. Journaling allows individuals to express their thoughts and emotions, gain clarity on their feelings, and develop insights into their experiences (Klein & Boals, 2001). Through journaling, individuals can identify and confront their stressors, explore potential solutions, and develop effective coping strategies to deal with them. Studies have shown that regular journaling can lead to improvements in emotional well-being, stress reduction, and enhanced problem-solving abilities (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986). Moreover, journaling has been associated with increased self-awareness, self-reflection, and personal growth (Smyth, 1998).

Theme 7: Emotion-Focused Coping

The statement "kahit papaano naging lesson naman yung pandemic ngayon" reflects the process of positive reinterpretation, wherein individuals derive meaningful insights and growth from challenging experiences such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive reinterpretation involves reappraising stressful events to find positive aspects or lessons learned (Garnefski *et al.,* 2001). This coping mechanism allows individuals to transform adversity into opportunities for personal development and resilience. Research by Garnefski *et al.* (2001) supports the notion that positive reinterpretation facilitates cognitive reappraisal, enabling individuals to derive constructive meaning from stressful events. Viewing adversity through the lens of learning and growth contributes to emotional resilience, as evidenced by Tedeschi and Calhoun's work on post-traumatic growth (2004). By acknowledging the lessons gleaned from the pandemic, individuals adopt a constructive perspective that promotes emotional well-being and adaptive coping.

The statement "sobrang stressful nung pandemic" encapsulates the profound emotional toll experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The widespread disruption caused by the pandemic significantly heightened stress, anxiety, and uncertainty for individuals worldwide. This sentiment aligns with the findings of numerous studies "highlighting the unprecedented psychological challenges brought about by the pandemic" (Smith *et al.,* 2021). Emotion-focused coping strategies play a vital role in promoting psychological well-being by helping individuals manage and regulate their emotions amidst adversity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). By employing such strategies, individuals can mitigate the negative impact of stressors on their mental health.

The statement "napaka self-destructive ko that time." reflects a significant period of personal struggle and self-destructive behavior. Self-destructive tendencies can encompass a range of harmful actions or thoughts directed towards oneself, often stemming from underlying psychological distress or unresolved issues (Klonsky & Muehlenkamp, 2007). Individuals experiencing such behaviors may engage in patterns of self-sabotage or self-harm, exacerbating their emotional distress and compromising their well-being. Research suggests "that self-destructive tendencies often coincide with underlying mental health conditions such as depression or trauma" (Hawton *et al.,* 2015). Effective interventions may include psychotherapy, medication management, and support from mental health professionals (Linehan, 2018). Additionally, building coping skills and fostering self-awareness can empower individuals to recognize and address triggers for self-

destructive behaviors (Klonsky *et al.,* 2011).

Theme 8: Avoidant Coping

The statement "Hindi ako nakikipag socialize talaga." reflects a profound reluctance to engage in social interactions, indicating potential challenges associated with avoidant coping strategies. Socialization, as defined by Maria (2019), entails the gradual transformation of an individual into a social being, involving exposure to diverse perspectives and behaviors. However, persistent avoidance of socializing activities may hinder this developmental process, limiting opportunities for interpersonal growth and connection. Daily reports suggest that repeated experiences play a crucial role in shaping individuals' attitudes towards social interactions (Sandstrom *et al.,* 2022). However, individuals grappling with avoidant coping may struggle to realize these benefits, perpetuating feelings of isolation and disconnection (Compas *et al.,* 2001).

Experiencing challenges in making friends during face-to-face interactions can significantly impact an individual's social and emotional well-being. "Nag struggle ako mag make friends nung face-to-face." Social interaction plays a crucial role in shaping one's learning experiences, with active participation in classroom discussions and group activities fostering collaborative learning environments (Hurst *et al.,* 2013). However, for some individuals, such as the participant mentioned, difficulties in socializing may result in avoidance of social situations, contributing to a pattern of avoidant coping. Avoidant coping involves efforts to escape or avoid stressors, often through withdrawal or avoidance behaviors (Compas *et al.,* 2001). When individuals struggle to make friends or engage socially, they may resort to avoiding social interactions altogether to protect themselves from potential rejection or discomfort. This avoidance behavior can further exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation, creating a cycle of social withdrawal and negative emotions.In light of the participant's struggle with making friends in face-to-face settings, it is essential to recognize the potential impact of avoidant coping mechanisms on their well-being (Compas *et al.,* 2001).

Struggling to engage in conversations even until now reflects ongoing challenges in social interaction that can profoundly impact an individual's sense of belonging and connection with others (Basaran & Demir, 2017). "Hanggang ngayon nag struggle pa rin ako makipag usap." Belongingness, as emphasized by Basaran and Demir (2017), is fundamental to human existence, facilitating connections with society and fostering meaningful relationships. However, individuals experiencing ongoing social difficulties may resort to avoidant coping mechanisms as a means of self-protection. Avoidant coping involves efforts to evade or minimize exposure to stressors, often through withdrawal or avoidance behaviors (Compas *et al.,* 2001). When individuals struggle with social interactions, they may adopt avoidant coping strategies to shield themselves from potential rejection or discomfort. This pattern of avoidance can perpetuate feelings of isolation and hinder opportunities for social connection, further exacerbating the sense of loneliness and disconnection experienced by the individual. Recognizing the profound impact of avoidant coping on an individual's well-being underscores the importance of targeted interventions and support systems (Compas *et al.,* 2001).

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative

The joint display table is a reliable and effective tool for sequential explanatory design, facilitating the integration of quantitative and qualitative data. Research by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) supports its utility in synthesizing diverse data sources, leading to deeper insights and more robust conclusions. Integration of the results below indicates high levels across all dimensions of PERMA, correlating with qualitative findings of enhanced well-being. Additionally, the Brief COPE dimension interpretation reveals high scores for problem-focused coping strategies and moderate scores for avoidant coping, further emphasizing positive psychological outcomes.

Table 2. Joint Display Table

Dimensions	Quantitative Data Result Description	Qualitative Data
PERMA Scale		
Positive Emotion	High	Finding motivation from within oneself can significantly impact one's overall well-being and sense of fulfillment. "I would say, mataas yung motivation ko since, nakakapag isip isip ako." This statement highlights the intrinsic motivation experienced by an individual, indicating a strong sense of drive and purpose derived from their internal thoughts and reflections. Internal motivation, characterized by a genuine interest and enjoyment in activities, is closely linked to positive emotions and psychological well-bein. "Na ma-motivate yung sarili ko". According to Davidovitch and Dorot (2023), "Motivation drives a person and leads them to achieve their goals and behave in a certain way" (p. X). This assertion encapsulates the essence of motivation as a dynamic force propelling individuals towards their objectives. Their research underscores that motivation is not merely a transient feeling but a deliberate choice individuals make to pursue their aspirations. "Nagkaron akong time for myself" underscores the importance of self-care and dedicating personal time to activities that nurture positive emotions (Smith et al., 2021). During times of heightened stress and uncertainty, such as the pandemic, self-care becomes essential for maintaining mental well-being. Engaging in self-care practices like relaxation, hobbies, and personal reflection can effectively enhance positive emotions and serve as a buffer against stressors (Smith
Engagement	High	"Nandun pa rin yung excitement ko na makipag usap sa ibang tao honestly"signifies an enduring eagerness for interpersonal communication amidst thesignificant changes in social environments. The importance of socializationin human development and adjustment to societal norms iswidely recognized by sociologists (Seda, 2016). The theme statement reflects an intrinsic motivation to engage in such interactions, indicating proactive involvement in social relationships. "Lahat fini friends ko ganon, parang lahat kinoclose ko" reflects the importance of friendship in fostering well-being and satisfaction in life. Choi et al. (2020) conducted a study demonstrating that individuals with friends and close confidants tend to report higher life satisfaction and lower rates of depression. Friendships provide emotional support, companionship,and a sense of belonging, which are essential for overall psychological health. The statement also alludes to the formation of new friendships during the pandemic, as individuals seek social connections to mitigate feelings of isolation and loneliness (Smith et al., 2021).

		The statement "Siguro yung.. naging coping strategy ko is..yung pag meet ng friends sa labas" suggests that socializing with friends outside serves asa coping mechanism for the individual. This coping strategy can be explored within the context of engagement in the PERMA profiler, particularly in how social interactions contribute to psychological well-being. Meeting friends outside provides opportunities for social support, which is crucial for coping with stress and adversity. Research indicates that social support buffers the negative impact of stressful life events and promotes psychological resilience (Thoits, 2011).
Relationship	High	The statement "Socially, I was dependent on my social friends" suggests a strong reliance on social relationships for support and companionship. Dependence on social friends can be an indicative of a supportive social network, which plays a crucial role in promoting psychological well-being. Research consistently demonstrates that social support from friends enhances relationship satisfaction, buffers against stress, and fosters emotional resilience. The statement "Nung nag post-pandemic, parang, sa school, like in terms of the people in school, gigil ako magkaroon ng, like, interaction with friends" reflects a desire for social interaction and connection following the pandemic, particularly within the school environment. The eagerness to interact with friends post-pandemic reflects resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms in response to social challenges.Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity and adapt positively to life changes (Masten, 2001). The statement "Nung nag F2F na, nung first meet na naming lahat, dun ko sila parang mas nakilala ganun. Mas nag-bond kami tas naging close" describes the experience of deepening social connections and forming closer relationships during an in-person meeting. Research suggests that face-to-face interaction plays a crucial role in relationship development, facilitating nonverbal communication, emotional expression, and interpersonal rapport (Tidwell & Walther, 2002).
Meaning	High	"Nung pandemic, lahat ng tao natuto maging malinis" reflects the widespread adoption of hygiene practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the early stages of the pandemic, there was heightened concern about the transmission of the virus through surfaces and contaminated objects (Chaurasia *et al.,* 2022). This prompted increased emphasis on cleaning anddisinfection protocols in various settings, as well as a surge in public awareness regarding personal hygiene practices. "So, binigyan ako ng time na makapag isip isip, ganyan. and then, nag pursue na ako ng psychology" reflects an individual's journey towards finding meaning and purpose in life, which is fundamentally linked to psychological well-being. According to Seligman (2011), having a sense of meaning contributes significantly to an individual's overall happiness and life satisfaction. This aspect of well-being extends beyond the pursuit of personal goals and encompasses contributing to something larger than oneself, fostering a deep sense of fulfillment and resilience.

		The statement "Ayun yung nakapagpabago sakin ng perspective ko na, kaya, na mag psychology nalang. so far, hindi ko naman siya pinagsisisihan" reflects the transformative impact of a career decision on the individual's perspective and sense of fulfillment. This sentiment can be examined within the context of career decision-making and its implications for well-being and personal satisfaction. A meaningful career not only fulfills economic needs but also aligns with personal values and contributes to a broader sense of purpose (Duffy & Dik, 2013). During the pandemic, many people re-evaluated their career paths, seeking professions that provided greater personal satisfaction and a deeper sense of contribution to society.
Accomplishment	High	The statement "naglalim yung understanding ko sa course na to" indicatesa deepening comprehension and engagement with the subject matter. This sentiment can be explored within the context of academic growth and the pursuit of knowledge, which are integral components of the "accomplishment" aspect of the PERMA profiler. Research has shown that the perception of accomplishment is linked to increased life satisfaction andhappiness. When students achieve their academic goals, they experience a sense of fulfillment that positively impacts their mental health and overall well-being (Butler & Kern, 2016). This sense of achievement can serve as amotivator for continued effort and perseverance in their studies. The statement "alam mo yun kahit ano mangyari lagi pa rin may business. Kumikita ka pa rin kahit ano mangyari. Kaya ito na yung pinursue ko asmy college degree" reflects the individual's recognition of the resilience and financial stability associated with entrepreneurship, influencing their decision to pursue a college degree in business. The skills and experiences gained from entrepreneurship are transferable to various aspects of professional life. This entrepreneurial success can inform and enhance academic pursuits, leading to a more comprehensive educational experience(Komarraju et al., 2009). The statement "nakakapag isip isip ako. and, gusto ko na yung course ko" indicates a sense of introspection and satisfaction with the individual's chosen course of study. The sense of accomplishment in academic pursuits contributes to overall psychological well-being. Achieving goals and finding satisfaction in one's course of study enhances self-esteem and reduces stress. This positive psychological state is essential for maintaining motivation and resilience in the face of academic challenges (Bandura, 1997).
Brief Cope		
Problem-focused	High	Research indicates that effective time management skills significantly influence academic success among students (Lee, 2020). The ability to set and adhere to a schedule is particularly highlighted as a key factor in improving academic performance and managing one's curriculum effectively (Williams, 2021). This assertion is supported by the participant'sstatement, "Siguro, isa sa pinaka nakatulong sa akin is yungmagseset ako ng schedule," which underscores the perceived importance of scheduling in enhancing academic progress (Garcia *et al.*, 2021).

		Engaging in hobbies has been recognized as a beneficial practice for enhancing mental health and overall well-being. "I started doing my hobbies more." Enjoyable leisure activities have been extensively studied inthe literature, with findings consistently showing their positive association with various psychosocial and physical measures affecting health and well- being (Pressman *et al.,* 2009). Participating in hobbies not only provides individuals with a source of enjoyment and fulfillment but also contributes to their overall sense of happiness and life satisfaction. Engaging in activities such as journaling has been recognized as an effective coping strategy for managing stress and promoting psychological well-being. "I started journaling." This simple yet powerful statement reflects an individual's proactive approach to addressing their challenges and finding constructive ways to navigate through difficult experiences. Journaling allows individuals to express their thoughts and emotions, gain clarity on their feelings, and develop insights into their experiences (Klein & Boals, 2001).
Emotion-focused	High	The statement "kahit papaano naging lesson naman yung pandemic ngayon" reflects the process of positive reinterpretation, wherein individuals derive meaningful insights and growth from challenging experiences such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive reinterpretation involves reappraising stressful events to find positive aspects or lessons learned (Garnefski *et al.,* 2001). This coping mechanism allows individuals to transform adversity into opportunities for personal development and resilience. Research by Garnefski *et al.* (2001) supports the notion that positive reinterpretation facilitates cognitive reappraisal, enabling individuals to derive constructive meaning from stressful events. Viewing adversity through the lens of learning and growth contributes to emotional resilience, as evidenced by Tedeschi and Calhoun's work on post-traumatic growth (2004). The statement "sobrang stressful nung pandemic" encapsulates the profound emotional toll experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The widespread disruption caused by the pandemic significantly heightened stress, anxiety, and uncertainty for individuals worldwide. This sentiment aligns with the findings of numerous studies highlighting theunprecedented psychological challenges brought about by the pandemic(Smith et al., 2021). Emotion-focused coping strategies play a vital role inpromoting psychological well-being by helping individuals manage andregulate their emotions amidst adversity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). By employing such strategies, individuals can mitigate the negative impact of stressors on their mental health. The statement "napaka self-destructive ko that time." reflects a significant period of personal struggle and self-destructive behavior. Self-destructive tendencies can encompass a range of harmful actions or thoughts directed towards oneself, often stemming from underlying psychological distress or unresolved issues (Klonsky & Muehlenkamp, 2007). Individuals experiencing such behaviors may engage in patterns of self-sabotage or self-harm, exacerbating their emotional distress and compromising their well-being. Research suggests that self-destructive

		tendencies often coincide with underlying mental health conditions such as depression or trauma (Hawton *et al.,* 2015). Effective interventions may include psychotherapy, medication management, and support from mental health professionals (Linehan, 2018).
Avoidant Coping	Moderate	The statement "Hindi ako nakikipag socialize talaga." reflects a profound reluctance to engage in social interactions, indicating potential challenges associated with avoidant coping strategies. Socialization, as defined by Maria (2019), entails the gradual transformation of an individual into a social being, involving exposure to diverse perspectives and behaviors. However, persistent avoidance of socializing activities may hinder this developmental process, limiting opportunities for interpersonal growth and connection. Daily reports suggest that repeated experiences play a crucial role in shaping individuals' attitudes towards social interactions(Sandstrom *et al.,* 2022). Experiencing challenges in making friends during face-to-face interactions can significantly impact an individual's social and emotional well-being. "Nag struggle ako mag make friends nung face-to-face." Social interaction plays a crucial role in shaping one's learning experiences, with active participation in classroom discussions and group activities fostering collaborative learning environments (Hurst *et al.,* 2013). However, for some individuals, such as the participant mentioned, difficulties in socializing may result in avoidance of social situations, contributing to a pattern of avoidant coping. Avoidant coping involves efforts to escape or avoid stressors, often through withdrawal or avoidance behaviors (Compas *et al.,* 2001). Struggling to engage in conversations even until now reflects ongoing challenges in social interaction that can profoundly impact an individual's sense of belonging and connection with others (Basaran & Demir, 2017). "Hanggang ngayon nag struggle pa rin ako makipag usap." Belongingness, as emphasized by Basaran and Demir (2017), is fundamental to human existence, facilitating connections with society and fostering meaningful relationships. However, individuals experiencing ongoing social difficulties may resort to avoidant coping mechanisms as a means of self-protection. Avoidant coping involves efforts to evade or minimize exposure to stressors, often through withdrawal or avoidance behaviors (Compas *et al.,* 2001). When individuals struggle with social interactions, they may adopt avoidant coping strategies to shield themselves from potential rejection or discomfort. This pattern of avoidance can perpetuate feelings of isolation and hinder opportunities for social connection, further exacerbating the sense of loneliness and disconnection experienced by the individual. Recognizing the profound impact of avoidant coping on an individual's well-being underscores the importance of targeted interventions and support systems.

The qualitative insights gleaned from students' narratives provide a rich understanding of how university students in Metro Manila cope with stress and maintain their psychological well-being across various dimensions.

DISCUSSION OF INTEGRATED FINDINGS

By combining quantitative results with qualitative insights, the researchers gained a comprehensive understanding of how university students in Metro Manila coped with stress and maintained their psychological well-being. The quantitative data provided a broad overview of coping strategies and psychological well-being, while the qualitative data offered depth and context to these patterns (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Smith & Johnson, 2022). Understanding the nuances of how engagement and relationships enhanced well-being informed targeted interventions. For example, the quantitative data highlighted high levels of engagement, but the qualitative data revealed that students often engaged in extracurricular activities and hobbies as coping mechanisms, which provided them with a sense of accomplishment and community. This insight suggested that promoting involvement in campus activities could be beneficial for student well-being (Seligman, 2020). The mixed-methods approach allowed the researchers to identify not only the prevalence of different coping strategies but also the underlying reasons for their use. Quantitative data indicated that students used emotion-focused coping strategies frequently, while qualitative insights highlighted "specific techniques such as seeking emotional support from peers, venting, and using positive reframing to manage stress" (Raypole, 2022). Integrating these data sources enabled the researchers to develop a nuanced understanding of the coping mechanisms and well-being of university students in Metro Manila. This comprehensive analysis informed the development of effective support systems and interventions tailored to their needs, such as stress management workshops, enhanced counseling services, and initiatives to foster peer support networks (Taylor & Stanton, 2021).

The joint display analysis is reported to give depth and emphasis on the related findings which provide the key context for answering the why and how of the quantitative or qualitative data (Nessle *et. al.,* 2023). In addition, in a study by Haynes-Brown and Fetters, they provided key information for their detailed process of how joint display was built and interpreted. Thus in this research, it revealed that college students in Metro Manila primarily used coping strategies such as problem-focused, which is definitely associated with the dimensions of psychological well-being. By integrating both methods, this research provides a refined understanding of these coping strategies and their impact on psychological well-being.

There is a significant positive relationship between problem-focused coping and various dimensions of psychological well-being, such as life satisfaction, positive affect, and reduced stress and anxiety. (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2021). Participants report that they feel more in control and more optimistic about their future when they engage in problem-focused coping.

In conclusion, the integration of quantitative and qualitative data provides a comprehensive understanding of the coping mechanisms used by college students in Metro Manila and their impact on psychological well-being. By highlighting the majority and effectiveness of problem-focused coping strategies, this study offers valuable understanding for developing targeted support systems and interventions. These can significantly enhance the well-being and academic success of students, contributing to a healthier and more resilient student population.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated post-pandemic coping strategies and psychological well-being among college students in Metro Manila, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. For the quantitative survey portion of the study, the researchers targeted college students enrolled in universities within Metro Manila. This survey was administered through an online Google Form. For the qualitative phase, the researchers conducted focus group discussions with 10 participants. These discussions involved structured interviews to gather qualitative insights. The qualitative phase took place at the Lyman C. Ogilby Hall at Trinity University of Asia. By examining how students perceive and experience changes due to the

pandemic, we aimed to understand the psychological impacts and how demographics affect their recovery experiences and attitudes. The ultimate goal was to enhance students' mental health through focused interventions and support, addressing information gaps, and improving post-pandemic outcomes.

Our study revealed that the combination of quantitative results with qualitative insights provided a comprehensive understanding of how university students cope with stress and maintain their psychological well-being. The quantitative data offered a broad overview, indicating high use of problem-focused coping strategies and high engagement in positive relationships. The qualitative data added depth by uncovering specific challenges and contexts that prompted these strategies. Students reported actively planning and seeking instrumental support to manage academic pressures and personal issues, frequently engaging in extracurricular activities, and relying on friends and family for emotional support.

The mixed-methods approach, Sequential Explanatory Design, highlighted a significant positive correlation between problem-focused coping and various dimensions of psychological well-being, such as life satisfaction, positive affect, and lower levels of stress and anxiety. This nuanced understanding informed the development of targeted interventions, such as stress management workshops and enhanced counseling services, aimed at enhancing student well-being and academic success.

These findings have important implications for both brief cope Scale and PERMA Scale. For Brief Cope Scale, the effectiveness of problem-focused coping in managing stress and improving psychological well-being suggests that interventions promoting these strategies can be particularly beneficial. For PERMA Scale, the high engagement and positive relationships observed among students underscore the critical role of engagement (E) and relationships (R) in enhancing overall well-being. The research emphasizes the need for interventions that foster these elements, supporting the holistic development of students in alignment with the principles of PERMA Theory.

Additionally, these findings have significant implications for future research, policy, and practice. Future research should continue to use mixed-methods approaches to capture the complexity of coping mechanisms and psychological well-being, exploring specific coping strategies across diverse student populations. In terms of policy, educational institutions may consider incorporating structured stress management programs and peer support initiatives into their wellness policies to promote a supportive campus environment. Practically, counselors and educators can leverage these insights to design tailored interventions that address the unique challenges faced by students, thereby fostering resilience and enhancing overall student well-being. This comprehensive approach ensures that interventions are grounded in a robust understanding of student needs, ultimately contributing to more effective support systems and healthier academic communities.

Despite the valuable insights gained, this study is not without its limitations. The primary limitations include the selection of participants, which covered a sample population of college students within Metro Manila who experienced at least a two-year quarantine stay in the Philippines and were enrolled in the same university for two or more consecutive years. These eligibility requirements were established as they may potentially have a significant impact on the psychological well-being of the participants and may elicit symptoms of various psychological problems. Conversely, the exclusion criteria included students classified as returnees, shiftees/shifters, those who took a gap year during the pandemic, and students whose current curricula involve internships or duties abroad. These limitations were set as they may affect the validity and reliability of the research findings.

Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of post-pandemic coping strategies and psychological well-being among college students within Metro Manila, highlighting the need for ongoing inquiry and development in this field.

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