

SELF-ESTEEM AND ADVERSITY QUOTIENT AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS, CLARIN DISTRICT, BOHOL

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ABSTRACT

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Self-esteem reflects an individual's sense of self-worth, while the Adversity Quotient (AQ) describes the capacity to cope with and overcome challenges. This study examined the levels of self-esteem and Adversity Quotient among Grade 12 senior high school students in the Clarin District, Bohol, during the School Year 2021–2022, and explored the relationship between these two constructs. A descriptive–correlational survey design was employed involving 170 Grade 12 students drawn from three public secondary schools:

Clarin National School of Fisheries, Nahawan National High School, and Danahaw Integrated School. Data were collected using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the AQ Profile. Findings revealed that the majority of respondents reported low levels of self-esteem and below-average Adversity Quotient. Statistical analysis further showed a significant association between learners' self-esteem and their Adversity Quotient, indicating that students with higher self-esteem tend to demonstrate stronger capacity to manage adversity. The results highlight the importance of supportive school environments in strengthening learners' confidence and resilience. Schools and teachers play



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a vital role in fostering psychosocial resources that enable students to cope effectively with academic and personal challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is an overall opinion of oneself that includes strengths and weaknesses. It is a person's belief in their worth and in their ability to earn others' respect. They do not regard their thoughts and feelings when they do not respect themselves. High self-esteem has been seen as a protective component of resilience; at the same time, strength is recognized as a booster of self-esteem. The adversity quotient (A.Q.), often known as the "science of resilience," gauges an individual's strength in the face of Adversity. It is defined as the capacity to recover quickly after being knocked down and helps students overcome obstacles and turn challenges into opportunities for personal success (Stoltz, 2000). Learners with a high adversity quotient will know how to find solutions to problems that may arise, cope directly with challenges, and be strong enough to face them. On December 16, 2021, Typhoon Odette struck Bohol Island, particularly Clarin, bringing torrential rain, strong winds, and landslides. The storm forced many families to flee their homes. Several modules were washed away, and many learners dealt with personal and familial difficulties. Aside from that, other factors that affected the learners included low-income families. These children were the victims of domestic violence, children who, on the one hand, fled their homes, those whose relatives had neglected them, and suffered sudden loss of loved ones. This situation can also have long-lasting implications on a person's mental health and self-esteem in the short term. The legislators in the Philippines passed a bill to address issues arising from poor conditions in learners' everyday lives. Because of this, the Department of Education adopted Republic Act 11036, often known as the Mental Health Law, as one of its signature projects.

According to Maslow, meeting one's self-esteem needs increases self-confidence, self-esteem, abilities, and emotions. It fosters a sense of usefulness and need in the world, among other positive outcomes (Maslow & Frager, 1987). Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Theory posits that self-esteem increases during adolescence as a result of comparisons with others. Students compare themselves to their peers to understand their worth. This is supported by Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954), which posits that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing themselves to others. This theory can positively or negatively affect learners' self-esteem, depending on the comparison they draw (Rosenberg, 1965). According to Self-Determination Theory, learners' sense of self-determination is greatly aided by their sense of being able to take immediate action that will lead to genuine change. More resilient learners believed they could handle life's challenges more effectively and positively because they were better prepared to do so. Furthermore, the Adversity Quotient Theory (A.Q. theory) developed by Stoltz (2000) assesses

an individual's resilience in the face of adversity. A person's ability to overcome adversity determines their happiness in life. The theory is used to understand how people respond to adversity, and successful people have been found to have a high adversity quotient. This theory will help learners understand their level of adversity and their strategies for overcoming setbacks (Stoltz, 2000).

Webster's Dictionary defines Self-esteem as having a positive view of one's dignity and worth. It is how you feel about yourself, which includes what you believe about and value in yourself, and how you interact with others. There is also a connection to how you think other people regard, weigh, and treat you. Because of this, victims of intimate partner violence or those who have been through traumatic experiences (especially when they were young) are more likely to struggle with poor self-esteem, both now and later. It has been observed that a learner's life experiences significantly shape their sense of self-esteem. Adolescents' demeanor and performance in the classroom and at home correlated with their sense of self-esteem. A child's early experiences, both favorable and unfavorable, significantly impact their sense of self-esteem. Self-esteem is said to be formed chiefly throughout adolescence, as stated by Mogonea & Mogonea (2014). Their parents' unconditional love bolsters a child's self-esteem and sense of worth. These emotions negatively impact a child's sense of Self. Healthy self-esteem is linked to parents who value their children's input when making significant decisions. According to Chen et al. (2018), "Self-esteem, accomplishment goals, and self-handicapping in higher education physical education in China." Higher self-esteem was found to have a protective effect against self-handicapping and negative consequences for performance-avoidance goals, in contrast to its positive benefits for mastery targets. Mastery goals negatively affected self-handicapping and were positively associated with performance-avoidance goals. Both direct and indirect effects of self-esteem on self-handicapping were found in undergraduate physical education, with mastery and performance-avoidance goals as mediators of the interaction between them. The results suggest that lowering self-handicapping can be essential for physical education courses at the university level. One way to accomplish this is to help students develop a higher sense of self-worth and focus more on their ability to master challenging tasks.

When faced with Adversity, we must deal with it effectively and constructively to succeed. In other words, the person can deal with problems, obstructions, and failures in their endeavors. Adversity Quotient predicts how well a person can handle a given situation and how they will fare (Wardani & Mahmudi, 2019). Adversity is a constant for humans, encompasses both self-inflicted and externally induced challenges, and is a root cause of stress. It is up to each individual to deal with it in their own way. That does not mean they think all decisions have the same effect on the outcome. Overcoming Adversity requires a certain amount of bravery. It refers to maintaining one's physical and psychological well-being in the face of Adversity. When faced with Adversity, those with a high Adversity Quotient fare the best. They

can not only learn from these difficulties but also react more quickly and effectively to them. The Adversity Quotient enhances our innate capacity to grow, change, and learn. Adversity Quotient rewired and improved, according to recent studies. People with a high capacity for transmitting AQ, productivity, innovation, low turnover, and a high work ethic are needed. The adversity quotient is the ability to survive obstacles in life and to make efforts to address them. Therefore, the adversity quotient can be defined as a person's response to overcoming obstacles or problems in his endeavors to attain success by employing his abilities. According to some research, there is substantial evidence linking resilience to mental health. Mentally healthy people can bounce back quickly from setbacks and remain resilient in the face of hardship. The term "adversity quotient" was developed by Paul Stoltz to describe a person's resiliency in the face of difficulty. Some professionals have used "resilience" to describe a person's capacity to overcome adversity. More resilient people are said to be better able to deal with setbacks in life and move forward with purpose. Stoltz identifies three distinct manifestations of Adversity: those associated with society, the workplace, and the individual. Societal challenges include a lack of faith in institutions and leaders, increased crime and violence, environmental concerns, and a redefinition of what it means to be a family. Workplace adversity results from increasing workplace pressures and a decrease in trust and control in the workplace. People are putting in more and more effort to get ahead, but they are getting less and less back in wages. According to Research by Khairani & Abdullah (2018), no statistically significant differences in mean adversity quotient scores between male and female undergraduates in Malaysia. When comparing the average adversity quotient scores of new, sophomore, and senior college students, the former group finds that their peers have experienced more hardship. Primary data analysis demonstrates a favorable relationship between adversity quotient and academic success.

Accumulated stress from societal and work-related Adversity causes individual Adversity (Stoltz, 2000). The pace of change is quickening, and keeping up is becoming more challenging. The cumulative effects of multiple levels of Adversity can cause people to lose hope. School leaders must respond to challenges at three levels: within their immediate families, in events occurring outside their close community, and to increased accountability and student achievement expectations imposed on education at the national and regional levels. To better understand how A.Q. responds to Adversity, there are four "CORE" dimensions.

Control. A person's belief that they have a say in what happens next is called "control." It means that people think they have some degree of control over a bad event. If they view Adversity as short-lived, external, and temporary, they are more likely to enjoy life's rewards (Canivel, 2010). It is more likely that a person will take beneficial action if they have more control over their fate (Canivel, 2010).

Ownership. To have rights, one must be willing to do whatever it takes to improve things, no matter how small one's role may be. Individuals must take responsibility for their actions regardless of the circumstances that led to Adversity or the amount of blame they bear (Canivel, 2010). If a meeting goes awry, the high AQ worker holds themselves responsible, while the low AQ worker sees themselves as powerless. Positive actions are more likely to be inspired by someone with a high AQ score, who will be more self-aware and more likely to take responsibility for the situation than someone with a low AQ score.

Reach. It means how far a lousy situation can spread and affect other parts or places outside the problem. People with a high AQ can see the bigger picture and are less likely to dwell on their mistakes. These led to a promise to improve. A person with an AQ would think that one failure proves that they are worthless and stupid. Frustration, anger, disappointment, and bad luck are all possible outcomes of this situation. It increases a person's workload, stress, energy, and effort.

Endurance. We attribute long-term effects to both good and bad events and to their immediate and long-term consequences. One must see past even the most insurmountable difficulties to keep hope alive. With the ability to see past even impossible obstacles and maintain hope and optimism, no matter what happens, these people are exceptional. People with a lower AQ appear to endure Adversity indefinitely or even permanently.

This study is connected to Social Science because Self-Esteem can affect how students want to interact and be responsible citizens in society. Society can experience adversities that affect how it lives and functions as a community. An excellent social relationship helped the learners improve their self-esteem and their adversity quotient, enabling them to cope with their challenges.

This research aimed to determine the self-esteem and Adversity Quotient of Grade 12 Senior High Students in Clarin District from the three public schools, namely, the Clarin National School of Fisheries, Nahawan National High School, and Danahaw Integrated School. Specifically, the sub-problems are;

1. What is the learner's profile in terms of the ff?
 - 1.1. Age;
 - 1.2 Sex?
2. What is the learner's level of self-esteem?
3. What is the learner's adversity quotient on the following dimensions as measured by the AQ Profile:
 - 3.1. Control;
 - 3.2. Ownership;
 - 3.3. Reach;
 - 3.4. Endurance
 - 3.5. Overall Adversity Quotient?

5. Is there a significant correlation between respondents' self-esteem and their adversity quotient?
6. What are the recommendations based on the findings of this study?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is tested at the 0.05 significance level in this study.

Ho1: There is no significant correlation between the respondents' self-esteem and the level of Adversity Quotient.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher in this study used a descriptive-correlational methodology to examine the relationship between Grade 12 Senior high school students' self-esteem and their adversity quotient. After tabulating the respondents' profile questionnaire responses, we will use a quantitative approach to analyze differences in their demographic profiles when grouped by age and sex. The respondents of the study are Grade 12 Senior High School learners of Clarin National School of Fisheries, Nahawan National High School, and Danahaw Integrated School, enrolled during the school year 2021-2022, of which only one hundred seventy (170) learners among the two hundred fifty-six (256) total population of the Grade 12 learners were included in the study.

This research was conducted between October and December 2022 through an online survey with Senior High School respondents from the Clarin District. The sample group consisted of male and female learners, with an average age of 17-25 years, selected randomly from various schools to ensure a fair representation.

To determine the correlation between self-esteem and the adversity quotient, the researcher administered standardized self-esteem and adversity quotient tests to grade 12 senior high school learners. The test included the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Adversity Quotient Profile (AQP).

The RSES was a 10-item Likert scale questionnaire created by sociologist Dr. Morris Rosenberg in 1965. It was a commonly used tool in social science to measure self-esteem. The questionnaire consisted of ten assertions, five of which were positive and five of which were negative. On a 4-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement. The scores were calculated by adding the points for each statement, with five of the statements scoring in reverse order. The self-esteem score was continuous, and the results were interpreted using a table provided by the researcher.

Dr. Paul G. Stoltz developed the AQP to measure an individual's adversity quotient. The assessment was computer-based and consisted of

14 possible outcomes, of which ten were rated. Respondents were asked to rank the significance of each outcome using an interactive Likert scale with a range of 10-1. The scores were calculated by summing up the scores for each subscale. The AQP scores could range from 10 to 50 for each domain and from 40 to 200 for the overall AQP score. The results were interpreted using a table provided by the researcher, which listed the highest, middle, and lowest possible scores and their equivalents.

This study's authorization was obtained through the proper procedures, and the required permits were secured to ensure approval for the study's conduct. The researcher obtained approval from the Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Bohol, Dr. Atty. Teh, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Schools Division Superintendent at DEPED-Bohol, Dr. Bianito Dagatan, and the principals at Clarin National School of Fisheries, Nahawan National High School, and Danahaw Integrated School (refer to Appendix A-K).

To assess learners' self-esteem, the researcher used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, which is in the public domain and was used without permission. An online version of the scale was created using the web-based application AQ Profile from PEAK Learning Inc., with the researcher and the organization signing the agreement. The researcher sent letters of invitation to participate in the research and the URL connection to access the online survey to the teachers' email addresses obtained from the schools' official websites. The survey was promoted to increase the number of respondents.

Data collection took three months, and all data were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS. The AQ results were sent via electronic mail by a liaison officer from PEAK Learning.

A statistician analyzed the collected data to determine the relationship between self-esteem and the adversity quotient.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the Respondents. The survey was conducted during School Year 2021–2022 among Grade 12 students from three public secondary schools in the Clarin District: Clarin National School of Fisheries, Nahawan National High School, and Danahaw Integrated School. A total of 170 students participated in the study.

Most respondents were within the typical age range for senior high school. Students aged 16–17 comprised the largest group (82 or 48.24%), followed closely by those aged 18–19 (78 or 45.88%). Eight respondents (4.71%) were aged 20–21, and two (1.18%) were aged 24–25. Other respondents were young. Despite the sample consisting of a significantly younger cohort than in earlier studies, which showed higher percentages of 18–19-year-olds, the overall age distribution is comparable to that of related research with students in their last year of high school or just beginning their college careers.

The sample was nearly balanced by gender, with females accounting for 51.76 percent of respondents and males for 48.24 percent. This trend is consistent with prior research reporting contradictory findings on gender differences in adversity and resilience. These findings suggest that responses to difficulties may vary by context rather than follow a consistent pattern across groups.

Level of Self-Esteem of the Learners. The results indicate that respondents generally exhibited low self-esteem, as indicated by their responses across the scale. Items reflecting self-doubt ranked higher, such as wishing for greater self-respect ($\bar{x} = 3.35$), having mixed feelings about oneself ($\bar{x} = 3.09$), and acknowledging some pThere were further markers that indicated persistent unfavorable self-perceptions, such as the perception that there was little to be proud of ($P = 2.56$) and the occasional opinion of oneself as a failure ($P = 2.44$). The items placed lower indicated weaker agreement with positive self-evaluations, such as a sense of being worthwhile ($r = 2.01$) and being content with oneself ($r = 1.82$).

Taken together, these patterns indicate that a significant number of students struggle with self-acceptance and confidence. This finding is distinct from findings obtained from research conducted in other settings. For example, Ferradás et al. (2019) found that Spanish college students exhibited higher self-esteem and greater willingness to learn, whereas Piñeiro (2016) found that self-esteem levels were average. These disparities shed light on the fact that context and a learner's history are associated with how an individual perceives themselves ($\bar{x} = 2.96$).

Learner's Level of Adversity Quotient. The Adversity Quotient (AQ) is composed of four dimensions: Control, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance (CORE). Findings show that most respondents fell within the lower-to-average range across these dimensions, suggesting moderate difficulty in dealing with challenges.

Regarding control, approximately one-third of respondents (34.12%) reported an average AQ, indicating a fair sense of control over their lives. A larger proportion, however, fell below this standard: 29.41% reported poor air quality and 24.71% reported air quality below average. The percentage of people who evaluated themselves as above average (9.41%) or high (2.35%) was relatively low. According to Borilla, who observed that the majority of respondents had average AQ levels in this dimension, this trend is comparable to the findings in Borilla's study.

When it comes to ownership, over half of the respondents (49.41%) reported having a low AQ, indicating that they have difficulty accepting responsibility for consequences and tend to ascribe issues to external causes. Again, 41.18 percent of the population fell below the norm, while only a tiny percentage reached average or higher levels. There is a significant disparity compared to the data Borilla (2022) found, which showed that special education teachers had average levels of ownership.

When it comes to Reach, 37.06 percent of respondents reported an

average AQ, indicating that problems were often perceived as under control and having a small impact. Despite this, a sizeable proportion of individuals still reported levels that were either below normal (27.65%) or low (22.35%), suggesting that difficulties frequently spread to other aspects of life. On the other hand, these findings differ from those reported in Borilla's (2022) study, which found lower reach scores among teachers.

Thirty-four point seven percent of those who participated in the survey had endurance levels within the average range, indicating a tendency to regard difficulties as temporary. In addition, respondents were frequently below average (28.24%) or low (23.53%), whereas only a tiny minority reported levels above normal or high. This tendency aligns with Borilla's (2022) findings and further exemplifies the resilience generally seen among students from the Philippines.

More than half of the respondents, 52.35 percent, reported having an Adversity Quotient below the norm, while 39.41 percent reported a low Adversity Quotient. Only a small percentage of the population exhibited AQ levels that were average or higher. Reach received the highest average score among the four dimensions, followed by Endurance and Control. Ownership was the dimension shown to be least capable of producing results. The findings of Fernando et al. (2018), who also observed below-average AQ levels among BEEed students, are consistent with ours. However, Borilla's (2022) findings among special education teachers differ. This highlights the differences between learner and professional contexts.

Correlation Between the Learner's Level of Self-esteem and their Adversity Quotient. The results reveal a statistically significant relationship between learners' self-esteem levels and their Adversity Quotient ($\chi^2 = 10.652$, $p = 0.014$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding indicates that self-esteem and adversity quotient are meaningfully associated among the Grade 12 learners in the Clarin District.

The significant correlation indicates that learners with higher self-esteem have a greater capacity to cope with obstacles, setbacks, and difficulties, as evidenced by higher Adversity Quotient scores. Low self-esteem, on the other hand, may be associated with a lack of confidence in handling difficult situations. This association underscores the role of self-perception in shaping students' responses to stress and challenges in academic and everyday settings.

Table 1. *Relationship Between Learners' Level of Self-Esteem and Adversity Quotient*

Variables	χ^2 Value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Learners' Level of Self-Esteem and Adversity Quotient	10.652	0.014	Reject H_0	Significant relationship

These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing

the relevance of psychological factors in resilience and coping. Jemina and Sulatra (2022) identified a strong relationship between Adversity Quotient and mathematics achievement, whereas Mathur and Jain (2021) discovered a correlation between higher adversity quotient and positive prosocial conduct. Similarly, Jumareng and Setiawan (2021) found a link between self-esteem and the pursuit of personal goals, implying that self-belief is important for persistence and adaptive functioning.

Overall, the results support the view that self-esteem is an important psychological resource that complements adversity-related competencies. Strengthening learners' self-esteem may therefore enhance their ability to manage challenges, persevere in difficult situations, and achieve positive educational outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study's result, the researcher concluded that;

1. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents are Grade 12 learners aged 16-17 years old. Regarding gender, male respondents were in the minority.
2. The majority of 12th graders suffer from low self-esteem, which manifests itself in a lack of belief in one's own abilities. The majority of 12th graders suffer from low self-esteem, which manifests itself in an inability to believe in one's own worth and abilities. Learners generally felt unsatisfied with themselves, unable to complete tasks to the same degree as their peers, not a person of worth, thinking they were not good at all, feeling worthless at times, and generally thinking they were a failure.
3. In terms of Ownership, most of the respondents were low in the level of Adversity, while in terms of Control, Reach, and Endurance, most of the respondents were average in the Level of Quotient. Moreover, the Overall Level of Adversity Quotient is below average.
4. There was no significant relationship between the learners' profiles in terms of age and sex to Self-Esteem and Overall Level of Adversity Quotient, which means that the Grade 12 learners in Clarin District were not influenced by their age and sex in their level of Self-Esteem and Level of Adversity Quotient. There was a significant correlation between the Learner's Self-Esteem and the Overall Level of the Adversity Quotient; hence, the level of self-esteem in Grade 12 learners in Clarin District increases, and their Adversity Quotient also increases. Grade 12 Males and Females showed no difference in their Level of Self-Esteem. Moreover, there was no degree of difference between the Grade 12 males and Females in the Overall level of Adversity Quotient.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. **Encourage Self-Confidence:** To help Grade 12 students in Clarin District build self-confidence and increase their self-esteem and ability to cope with hardship, teachers and parents should encourage them to participate in extracurricular activities and treat them fairly. Future research can include larger samples and tests to assess whether performance improves.
2. **Promote Positive Self-Worth:** The study showed that the 12th-grade students in Clarin District have low self-esteem. Teachers can play a crucial role in boosting students' self-worth by acknowledging their successes, whether through individual compliments, group applause, constructive criticism, or encouragement to reflect. Demonstrate to the students what it looks like to treat oneself with kindness, to admit one's flaws and successes, and to accept oneself just as they are. They will understand that a person's worth stems from their positive rather than their negative traits. That does not imply you should never deliver constructive criticism; instead, it means you should focus on praising others more often. Teachers should encourage kids to see their own value and potential. Moreover, stress the significance of introspection in the learning process. Give the students the impression that they have what it takes to succeed, that they are capable of doing things as well as anyone else, that they are valuable human beings, that they can feel good about themselves at times, that they can be of service to others, and that they are not failures in any sense. They should praise students more often and emphasize their value, potential, and positive traits.
3. **Increase Resilience:** Most 12th-grade students in Clarin District have low ownership levels and below-average Adversity Quotient levels, indicating a lack of resilience. Teachers can provide individualized training programs and coaching to help students increase their resiliency. They can also encourage students to take responsibility for their actions and have a say in their learning experiences.
4. **Further Research:** To widen the scope of the current investigation, future research can include male and female subjects from several senior high schools in District 2 of Bohol. The impact of gender and age on self-esteem and the adversity quotient can also be examined further.
5. **Tailored Education:** Using the adversity quotient in education can help students cultivate resilient personalities and tailor education and training to their specific needs. By applying the proposed intervention Measures, it can increase their ability to overcome adversity and cope

with difficult experiences.

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