Adversity Quotient, Resilience and Professional Effectiveness among Helping Professionals

Joan Kristel M. Adame
Lyceum of the Philippines University -Batangas
Corresponding Author: adame.joankristel@stcbauan.edu.ph

https://orcid.org/0009-0003-7365-2915

Abstract

The Philippines faces a growing mental health crisis, yet counselors contend with limited resources, cultural stigma, and high occupational stress. Understanding factors that support counselor well-being and effectiveness is critical. This quantitative correlational study examined adversity quotient (AQ) and its relationship with resilience and professional effectiveness among 358 counselors recruited through convenience sampling from school settings in a Philippine province. Participants completed the Adversity Quotient Scale (AQ-12), the Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA), and a self-evaluation questionnaire measuring professional effectiveness. Results revealed high overall AQ, particularly in the dimensions of ownership and reach; very high resilience; and moderate self-evaluated professional effectiveness. No significant differences in any variable emerged across demographic profiles (sex, age, education, experience). Significant positive correlations were found between AQ and resilience ($r = .766$, $p < .001$) and between AQ and professional effectiveness ($r = .657$, $p < .001$). Regression analyses confirmed AQ as a significant predictor of both resilience ($\beta = .766$, $p < .001$) and professional effectiveness ($\beta = .657$, $p < .001$), explaining 58.7% and 43.2% of variance respectively. Findings suggest that counselors' capacity to manage adversity is strongly associated with their psychological resilience and perceived professional effectiveness. Implications for counselor training, institutional support, and professional development programs are discussed.

Keywords: *adversity quotient; resilience; professional effectiveness; counselors; school counseling; Philippines*

1. Introduction

The Philippines is experiencing a mental health crisis. Although epidemiological evidence remains limited, a significant proportion of the population is affected (Lally et al., 2019). In 2010, 14% of the 1.4 million Filipinos with disabilities were diagnosed with a mental disorder, and mental illness ranks as the third most prevalent form of morbidity nationwide. Despite these statistics, reported cases of mental health problems amount to only 88 per 100,000 population, and a substantial deficit in community mental health care services persists (Billote & Ponce, 2020). Many Filipinos who struggle with mental health issues remain reluctant to seek treatment, citing cost and fear of societal stigma as primary barriers (Subingsubing, 2023). Approximately 65% of Filipinos hold stigmatizing attitudes toward mental health, which further deters individuals from seeking professional counseling services.

Within this context, the counseling profession faces numerous challenges. Counselors encounter demanding and emotionally charged situations daily, yet resources remain limited. Harrison et al. (2023) noted that counseling services in Philippine public schools are "generally poorly resourced and understaffed," with a "severe shortage of counselors" that "hampers the effective provision of school counseling." Lally et al. (2019) similarly observed that "mental health remains poorly resourced," citing overcrowding, poorly functioning units, chronic staff shortages, and funding constraints in public hospitals nationwide. Beyond resource limitations, cultural factors shape counseling practice. Filipino society's collectivist nature "values kinship and community over the values of expressiveness and autonomy" (Hohenshil et al., 2015), leading clients to confide in family members rather than counselors perceived as strangers. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these conditions, with mental health frontliners experiencing heightened anxiety from witnessing colleague and patient mortality while navigating the

transition to online service delivery (Unto et al., 2023).

Given these circumstances, understanding the factors that enable counselors to persist and remain effective is essential. One such factor is the adversity quotient (AQ), introduced by Stoltz (1997) as a measure of an individual's capacity to tackle problems, adversities, and challenges by employing intelligence and sensible behavior. AQ encompasses efficacy, achievement, innovation, adaptability, and the capability to foster well-being (Kumari & Arora, 2023). In counseling, a high AQ is crucial as practitioners regularly face demanding situations requiring resilience, self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and adaptability to support clients effectively.

The second variable, resilience, refers to positive adaptation—the capacity to preserve or recover mental health despite experiencing adversity. Counselors' work exposes them to stressors such as compassion fatigue, burnout, and vicarious trauma, which can impact personal life and professional capacity. Resilient counselors are better equipped to handle these challenges, sustaining effectiveness and preventing burnout. Research has demonstrated that resilience among mental health professionals is associated with greater job satisfaction and lower burnout rates (Lawson & Myers, 2011; Liu & Zhao, 2018).

The third variable, professional effectiveness, encompasses counselors' performance and impact, including the ability to establish rapport, make sound clinical judgments, deliver effective interventions, and achieve positive outcomes. Professional effectiveness reflects overall competence and success in practice. Research indicates that therapist intrapersonal variables, particularly professional interpersonal skills, significantly predict patient outcomes (Heinonen & Nissen-Lie, 2019), and that character strengths such as hope, love, and perspective are predictive of meaningful work and reduced burnout (Allan, Owens, & Douglass, 2017).

While studies have examined relationships between these variables in various professional contexts—such as AQ and job satisfaction among managers (Paramanandam & Shwetha, 2013), AQ and organizational commitment among teachers (Virgana et al., 2022), and resilience and burnout among healthcare workers (Ferreira & Gomes, 2021)—limited research has explored all three constructs simultaneously among counselors, particularly in the Philippine context. Given the demanding nature of counseling, the diverse needs of clients, and the unique cultural and resource challenges in the Philippines, understanding the interplay between adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness is critical. Such understanding can inform targeted interventions, training programs, and support systems to enhance counselors' well-being and prevent burnout.

This study therefore aimed to explore counselors' adversity quotient and its relationship with resilience and professional effectiveness. Specifically, it sought to describe respondents' profiles (sex, age, education, license, experience, setting, specialization, employment status), assess their levels of adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness, examine differences based on profile variables, establish relationships among the three constructs, and determine whether adversity quotient predicts resilience and professional effectiveness.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Adversity Quotient: Conceptual Foundations and Dimensions

The concept of Adversity Quotient (AQ), introduced by Stoltz (1997), refers to an individual's capacity to navigate and overcome difficulties, with implications for personal and professional success. According to Kumari and Arora (2023), AQ encompasses efficacy, achievement, innovation, adaptability, and the capability to foster well-being. Stoltz conceptualized AQ as comprising four dimensions: Control (perceived ability to influence adverse situations), Ownership (accountability for improving outcomes), Reach (the extent to which adversity penetrates other life domains), and Endurance (the perceived duration of adversity). These dimensions collectively determine how individuals respond to challenges (Stoltz, 1997; An et al., 2014).

Subsequent work extended AQ's application to workplace contexts. Stoltz (2000) and Stoltz and Hafeez (2007) developed the Adversity Quotient Inventory (AQI) as a self-assessment tool, exploring how individuals navigate challenging work environments. Validation studies have demonstrated the instrument's reliability across diverse populations. An et al. (2014) validated the Adversity Quotient Profile (AQP) among Korean nurses, identifying the four-factor structure and reporting positive correlations with resilience. Similarly, Priya and Manickam (2020) developed and validated the Adversity Quotient Scale in the Indian context,

while Wang et al. (2022) re-developed the Adversity Response Profile for Chinese University Students, identifying a six-factor model encompassing control, attribution, reach, endurance, and transcendence.

Research has examined AQ across various professions. Juwita et al. (2020) conducted a literature review focusing on AQ in education, finding that AQ research significantly influences educational outcomes and skills development. Wang et al. (2021) analyzed AQ among undergraduate nursing students in Macao, reporting moderate scores and highlighting the importance of positive coping styles. Among Filipino helping professionals, Daloos (2015) reported that ownership emerged as the highest-scoring AQ dimension, though overall AQ was below average—a finding that may reflect sample composition, as medical professionals in Metro Manila demonstrated different AQ patterns (Atienza et al., 2018).

2.2 Resilience: Theoretical Perspectives and Professional Applications

Resilience has been conceptualized across multiple disciplines as positive adaptation or the capacity to preserve or recover mental health despite adversity. Masten (2001), in her seminal work "Ordinary Magic," framed resilience as a dynamic process influenced by individual characteristics, relationships, and environmental resources rather than a fixed trait. Subsequent theoretical developments emphasized resilience as a multi-level process requiring consideration of both individual and environmental factors (Van Breda, 2018; Yates et al., 2015; Rutter, 2012). Zimmerman (2013) advocated for a strengths-based approach, highlighting promotive factors such as assets and resources that counteract negative effects of risks.

Within healthcare, resilience research has proliferated. Matheson et al. (2016) identified personal resilience characteristics among primary healthcare professionals—including optimism, flexibility, and adaptability—alongside workplace promoters such as strong management support and teamwork. Robertson et al.'s (2016) systematic review highlighted the multifaceted nature of resilience, combining personal traits with social and workplace features. Cleary et al. (2018) evaluated interventions aimed at improving resilience among health professionals, suggesting that resilience training may be beneficial. Huey and Palaganas (2020) synthesized systematic reviews identifying individual traits (adaptability, self-determination) and environmental factors (workplace culture, supportive interventions) as critical resilience influencers.

Among mental health professionals specifically, Lawson and Myers (2011) investigated resilience among rural mental health counselors, emphasizing the unique challenges of rural settings. Liu and Zhao (2018) explored relationships between resilience, professional quality of life, and mediating factors, demonstrating positive correlations between resilience and enhanced well-being, with self-efficacy, self-esteem, social support, and job autonomy serving as mediators. Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison's (2016) "The Resilient Practitioner" provided insights into preventing burnout and promoting self-care in helping professions.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified interest in resilience. Gonçalves et al. (2021) found significant associations between individual resilience and occupational health indicators among healthcare workers, with organizational resilience moderating these relationships. Ferreira and Gomes (2021) demonstrated that higher resilience among Portuguese healthcare workers was associated with lower emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Simões de Almeida et al. (2023) emphasized the indispensable role of resilience and organizational support in coping with crises. This aligns with recent local findings among Filipino medical students, where high levels of psychological distress, including stress and burnout, were documented, with female students reporting higher stress and emotional exhaustion (Agang-Ang et al., 2025).

In the Philippine context, resilience is considered a defining cultural characteristic. Garay et al. (2020) noted that one of the most outstanding characteristics of Filipinos is resilience. Callueng et al. (2020) investigated national resilience among Filipino adults during the COVID-19 pandemic, reporting no gender differences and higher resilience among older adults, possibly due to accumulated life experiences.

2.3 Adversity Quotient and Its Relationship with Psychological and Occupational Outcomes

Research has established relationships between AQ and various psychological and occupational outcomes. Studies examining AQ and emotional intelligence have found positive associations. Zhao and Sang (2023) reported that regulation of emotion predicted affective commitment, while personal competence influenced continuance and normative commitment. Verma et al. (2017) concluded that both EQ and AQ are important for managers needing to understand employee emotions and cope with adverse conditions. Wan and Omar (2012) found that higher emotional intelligence is associated with higher AQ, highlighting emotional regulation's importance in

coping with adversity. Anggresela and Sulistiyorini (2022) demonstrated that EQ and AQ together explained 46.2% of variance in anxiety among students facing corporate work transitions.

Regarding occupational outcomes, Paramanandam and Shwetha (2013) found a significant positive correlation between AQ and job satisfaction among textile industry managers, with AQ explaining 17% of variance in satisfaction. Virgana et al. (2022) reported direct effects of AQ on job satisfaction and organizational commitment among special needs teachers, with indirect effects through job satisfaction. Singh and Sharma (2017) identified a significant relationship between AQ and occupational stress among IT managers, suggesting individuals with higher AQ cope better with workplace challenges. Kumari and Arora (2023) found significant correlations between AQ, perceived mental health, and role stress among college teachers, suggesting higher AQ mitigates job-related stress. This is supported by research within the Philippine context, which found that among female medical students, burnout markers were positively associated with factors like screen time and snacking, while protective factors like sleep and physical activity showed inverse relationships with exhaustion (Agang-Ang et al., 2025).

Within mental health contexts, Guo et al. (2021) examined AQ and well-being among mental health workers, finding that those with higher AQ reported better psychological well-being and job satisfaction. Widodo et al. (2022) explored AQ, emotional intelligence, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and teachers' professional competence during COVID-19, finding that AQ exerted stronger influence on OCB and professional competence than emotional intelligence. Alifuddin and Widodo (2021) demonstrated significant direct and indirect effects of AQ on teachers' performance, mediated by psychological capital.

2.4 Professional Effectiveness in Counseling: Characteristics and Contributing Factors

Professional effectiveness among counselors encompasses rapport establishment, clinical judgment, intervention delivery, and positive outcomes. Kraus et al. (2011) documented significant variability in therapist effectiveness, with a notable proportion classified as ineffective or harmful, underscoring accountability's importance. Nissen-Lie et al. (2017) found that therapist effectiveness—encompassing skills, knowledge, and personal attributes—significantly predicted positive treatment outcomes.

Heinonen and Nissen-Lie's (2020) systematic review of 31 studies underscored the importance of therapist intrapersonal variables, particularly professional interpersonal skills rooted in therapists' personal lives and attachment history. Allan, Owens, and Douglass (2017) found elevated character strengths among counselors compared to normed samples, with prudence, hope, love, perspective, and zest predicting meaningful work and reduced burnout. Stargell (2017) demonstrated that the therapeutic relationship significantly predicted counseling outcome effectiveness over time.

Stress and burnout among mental health professionals have received attention. Pimble (2016) revealed complex interplay between perceived therapeutic effectiveness, perceived stress, and burnout, with perceived effectiveness emerging as significant for well-being and job satisfaction. Liu and Zhao (2018) demonstrated that resilience enhances professional effectiveness among counselors, a finding supported by Lawson and Myers (2011), who emphasized resilience as protective for rural mental health counselors. Prieto and Martos (2019) examined AQ and professional effectiveness, highlighting emotional intelligence's mediating role.

Cultural competence and therapeutic alliance contribute to professional effectiveness. Lambert and Shimokawa (2011) emphasized collecting client feedback to measure and improve effectiveness, promoting client-centered care. In the Philippine context, Harrison et al. (2023) documented the challenges school counselors face, including poor resourcing and understaffing. Tuason and Arellano-Carandang (2015) noted that Filipino culture's collectivist nature values kinship over expressiveness, shaping counseling approaches and client expectations.

2.5 Synthesis and Gaps

The literature reviewed establishes that adversity quotient is a measurable construct encompassing control, ownership, reach, and endurance, with demonstrated relationships to emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and occupational stress across various professions. Resilience emerges as a multi-level, dynamic process influenced by individual characteristics, relationships, and organizational resources, with robust evidence supporting its role in buffering burnout and enhancing well-being among healthcare and mental

health professionals. Professional effectiveness in counseling encompasses technical skills, personal attributes, therapeutic relationship quality, and cultural competence, with character strengths and resilience identified as contributing factors.

However, several gaps emerge from this review. First, while studies have examined relationships between AQ and resilience (Mathur & Jain, 2021; Chunin et al., 2018), and between resilience and professional effectiveness (Liu & Zhao, 2018; Lawson & Myers, 2011), no single study has investigated all three constructs simultaneously within the counseling profession. Second, research specifically examining AQ among mental health professionals remains limited, with only Guo et al. (2021) addressing this population directly. Third, within the Philippine context, while resilience has been examined among helping professionals (Lucero, 2021; Callueng et al., 2020), and AQ among selected helping professionals (Daloos, 2015), no study has comprehensively examined AQ, resilience, and professional effectiveness together among Filipino counselors working in school settings.

This gap is consistent with a recent thematic review of challenges in Philippine health professions education, which synthesized 142 studies to reveal interconnected systemic issues such as moral distress, faculty burnout, and the pressures of licensure culture, underscoring the need for systems-oriented research that links these factors to educator well-being and program viability (Bermido et al., 2025).

Given the demanding nature of counseling in the Philippines—characterized by resource limitations, cultural stigma, and increasing demand following the Mental Health Act—understanding the interplay between these constructs is essential for developing targeted interventions, training programs, and support systems that enhance counselor well-being and effectiveness. The present study addresses this gap by examining adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness among school-based counselors in the Philippines.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationships between adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness among counselors. The design was selected to provide a broad overview of the prevalence of these factors and the strength of associations between them.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

Participants were 358 counselors recruited through convenience sampling from school counseling settings within one province in Region IV-A (Batangas), Philippines. Inclusion criteria were: (a) counselors, guidance designates, or guidance advocates working part-time or full-time in school settings; (b) recognized qualifications (bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree) in counseling or related fields; (c) licensed or certified practitioners; and (d) minimum of one year of active counseling experience. The sample comprised predominantly female respondents (96.9%), with the largest age groups being 45–54 years (39.1%) and 35–44 years (31.0%). Most held bachelor's degrees (91.9%) and were licensed professional teachers (88.3%). The majority worked in public schools under the Department of Education (DepEd; 95.3%), specialized in school counseling (99.4%), and were employed full-time (97.5%). Years of experience ranged from less than one year (5.6%) to 16 years or more (39.7%).

3.3 Measures

Three instruments were used to measure the study variables.

1. Adversity Quotient. The Adversity Quotient Scale (AQ-12), originally developed by Stoltz (1997), was used to measure participants' capacity to respond to adversity. The scale assesses four dimensions: Control (perceived influence over adverse situations), Ownership (accountability for improving outcomes), Reach (extent to which adversity penetrates other life domains), and Endurance (perceived duration of adversity). Internal consistency for the scale in the present study was $\alpha = 0.88$, indicating high reliability. This is consistent with previous validation studies (An et al., 2014). For overall AQ scores, values below 55 were interpreted as low, 56–69 as moderate/medium, and 70 above as high.

2. Resilience. The Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA), developed by Friborg et al. (2003), was used to measure resilience. The RSA is a widely used measure assessing protective factors that facilitate adaptation to adversity. Total scores range from 28 to 168, with higher scores indicating greater resilience. Scoring categories were: 28–56 (low), 57–84 (average), 85–112 (high), and 113–168 (very high).

3. Professional Effectiveness. A self-evaluation questionnaire was developed for this study to assess professional effectiveness. The instrument comprised three sections: (a) Counseling Procedures and Methodology (e.g., rapport building, clinical judgment), (b) Professional Responsibilities, and (c) Professional Development. Respondents rated statements on a four-point scale: 1.00–1.49 (Not Sure), 1.50–2.49 (Rarely/Never), 2.50–3.49 (Sometimes), and 3.50–4.00 (Often/Always).

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection involved administering the standardized questionnaires to participants who met the inclusion criteria. All instruments were self-administered.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) to summarize demographic characteristics and levels of the three variables. Independent samples t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to examine differences in adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness across demographic groups (sex, age, education, license, years of experience, setting, specialization, employment status). Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine relationships between the three constructs. Finally, simple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether adversity quotient significantly predicted resilience and professional effectiveness. All statistical analyses were conducted with significance level set at $\alpha = .05$.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical guidelines of the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP) and Republic Act No. 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits, and participation was voluntary with informed consent obtained prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were safeguarded through participant coding and restricted dataset access, and findings were reported in aggregate form to prevent identification of individuals or institutions.

The study underwent ethical review by an institutional review board or ethics committee to ensure compliance with established standards, and appropriate approvals and permissions were secured from relevant institutions before data collection commenced. Cultural sensitivity was maintained by adapting research materials and procedures to the local context, with input from local experts where appropriate. Finally, participants who experienced distress during the study were provided with appropriate resources and referral information for counseling or support services.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 358 counselors participated in the study. The sample was predominantly female (96.9%), with male respondents comprising only 3.1%. In terms of age distribution, the largest groups were aged 45–54 years (39.1%) and 35–44 years (31.0%), followed by 25–34 years (19.6%), under 25 years (5.3%), and 55 years and above (5.0%).

Regarding educational attainment, the vast majority held bachelor's degrees (91.9%), while 6.7% had completed masteral degrees, 0.8% had bachelor's degrees with masteral units, and 0.6% held doctoral degrees. Most respondents were licensed professional teachers (88.3%), followed by registered guidance counselors (3.9%), those with no license (5.3%), those holding more than one Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) license (1.4%), and registered psychometricians (1.1%).

In terms of professional experience, 39.7% had 16 years or more of counseling experience, 27.7% had 11–15 years, 25.4% had 6–10 years, 5.6% had less than one year, and 1.7% had 1–5 years. Nearly all respondents worked in public school settings under the Department of Education (DepEd; 95.3%), with the remainder in private schools (4.7%). Specialization was almost exclusively school counseling (99.4%), with only 0.6% reporting other specializations. Employment status was predominantly full-time (97.5%), with part-time workers (0.8%) and designates only (1.7%) comprising the remainder. *(See Table 1 in Section 7)*

4.2 Levels of Adversity Quotient

Respondents demonstrated generally high adversity quotient across the CORE dimensions. Ownership and Reach ranked highest (M = 4.20, SD = 0.65 for each), indicating strong accountability for

improving outcomes and a capacity to contain setbacks so they do not broadly disrupt other life domains. Control ranked next (M = 3.73, SD = 0.45), suggesting that respondents perceived moderate influence over adverse situations. Endurance ranked lowest (M = 3.49, SD = 0.63), indicating comparatively weaker—but still substantive—optimism about adversity being time-limited. Overall, the pattern suggests that respondents' adversity response is strongest in accountability and boundary-setting (ownership and reach), while endurance remains the most development-sensitive domain.

4.3 Levels of Resilience

Resilience scores ranged from 28 to 168, with higher scores indicating greater resilience. The mean resilience score was 119.40 (SD = 15.53), which falls within the "very high" category. This indicates that counselors in this sample demonstrated strong capacity to preserve or recover mental health despite experiencing adversity, consistent with the characterization of resilience as a defining Filipino trait.

4.4 Levels of Professional Effectiveness

Professional effectiveness was self-evaluated across three dimensions. The composite mean was 3.37 (SD = 0.36), interpreted as "sometimes" on the four-point scale, indicating moderate self-perceived effectiveness.

Among the three subscales, Counseling Procedures and Methodology ranked highest (M = 3.49, SD = 0.34, interpreted as "sometimes"), followed by Professional Responsibilities (M = 3.29, SD = 0.53, "sometimes"), and Professional Development (M = 3.25, SD = 0.45, "sometimes"). The higher score in counseling procedures and methodology likely reflects respondents' specialization in school counseling, as theoretical knowledge and skills base constitute the core of professional competency in guidance counseling.

4.5 Differences in Variables Across Demographic Profiles

Adversity Quotient. No significant differences were found in any AQ dimension (control, ownership, reach, endurance) or overall AQ across any demographic variable examined, including sex, age, education, license type, years of experience, practice setting, specialization, or employment status (all p > .05). The homogeneity of the sample—predominantly female, bachelor's degree-holding, licensed professional teachers working full-time in public schools—may explain the absence of significant demographic effects.

Resilience. Similarly, no significant differences in resilience levels were found across any demographic profile (sex: t = .860, p = .390; age: F = .147, p = .964; education: F = .529, p = .663; license: F = .760, p = .552; years of experience: F = .386, p = .819; setting: t = -.868, p = .386; specialization: t = -.968, p = .334; employment status: F = .276, p = .759). All p-values exceeded the .05 significance level.

Professional Effectiveness. Analysis of professional effectiveness subscales and overall effectiveness revealed no significant differences across demographic profiles. For overall professional effectiveness, all comparisons yielded non-significant results: sex (t = .312, p = .755), age (F = .391, p = .815), education (F = 1.529, p = .207), license (F = .683, p = .604), years of experience (F = 1.332, p = .258), setting (t = -.129, p = .897), specialization (t = -.834, p = .405), and employment status (F = 1.328, p = .266).

4.6 Correlations Between Variables

Significant positive correlations were observed among all three variables. The strongest correlation was between adversity quotient and resilience (r = .766, p < .001), which according to Mukaka (2012) represents a high positive correlation. This indicates that counselors with higher capacity to manage adversity tend to demonstrate greater psychological resilience.

A moderate positive correlation was found between adversity quotient and professional effectiveness (r = .657, p < .001), suggesting that higher AQ is associated with greater self-perceived professional effectiveness. The correlation between resilience and professional effectiveness was also positive and significant, though somewhat weaker (r = .453, p < .001), indicating a moderate association between these constructs. *(See Table 2 in Section 7)*

4.7 Adversity Quotient as Predictor of Resilience and Professional Effectiveness

Regression analysis indicated that adversity quotient significantly predicted resilience, $F(1, 356)$ = 505.48, p < .001, explaining 58.7% of the variance (R^2 = .587). Adversity quotient also significantly predicted professional effectiveness, $F(1, 356)$ = 270.37, p < .001, explaining 43.2% of the variance (R^2 = .432). These results indicate that higher AQ is associated with higher resilience and higher self-perceived professional effectiveness, within the limitations of a cross-sectional, self-report design. *(See Table 3 in Section 7)*

4.8 Discussion

This study examined adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness among counselors in Philippine school settings, focusing on the relationships between these constructs and the predictive role of AQ. The findings provide several

insights into how counselors navigate professional challenges.

Demographic Characteristics and Sample Homogeneity

The sample was predominantly female (96.9%), bachelor's degree-holding (91.9%), licensed professional teachers (88.3%), working full-time in public schools (95.3%), and specializing in school counseling (99.4%). This composition reflects the broader counseling workforce in the Philippines, where the Philippine Guidance and Counselling Association reports that 84% of registered guidance counselors are female (Harrison et al., 2023). The predominance of licensed professional teachers rather than registered guidance counselors is consistent with Harrison et al.'s (2023) observation of a severe shortage of qualified counselors, leading schools to designate teachers as guidance advocates or designates.

Adversity Quotient Among Counselors

Counselors demonstrated high overall AQ, with ownership and reach emerging as the strongest dimensions. This indicates that respondents take accountability for addressing situations regardless of cause and effectively compartmentalize adversity, preventing it from affecting other life domains. The finding that ownership ranked highest aligns with Daloos's (2015) study of Filipino helping professionals, where ownership also emerged as the highest-scoring dimension. However, Daloos reported below-average overall AQ, whereas the present sample showed high AQ. This discrepancy may be attributed to sample composition: Daloos included medical professionals (doctors, nurses) alongside psychological professionals, and Atienza et al. (2018) found that medical doctors in Metro Manila exhibited average AQ with reach as the lowest dimension. The present sample consisted exclusively of counselors working in educational settings, suggesting that psychological professionals may demonstrate different AQ profiles than medical professionals.

The finding that endurance ranked lowest, though still at a level indicating optimism that adversity will not persist indefinitely, is consistent with Wang et al. (2021), who reported that among Macao nursing students, ownership scored highest and endurance lowest. This pattern may reflect the nature of helping professions, where practitioners maintain hope for client outcomes while recognizing that some challenges require sustained effort.

Resilience in the Philippine Counseling Context

The very high resilience levels observed (M = 119.40) align with Lucero's (2021) findings among helping professionals in Cebu City and support Garay et al.'s (2020) characterization of resilience as a defining Filipino trait. This finding is also consistent with Lambert and Lawson's (2013) observation that counselors are called to build resilience to overcome workplace challenges. The high resilience scores may reflect both cultural factors and professional demands: Filipino counselors navigate resource constraints, heavy caseloads, and cultural stigma while maintaining professional functioning.

Professional Effectiveness: Moderate Self-Perceptions

Counselors rated their professional effectiveness as moderate (composite mean interpreted as "sometimes"), with counseling procedures and methodology scoring highest. This pattern likely reflects respondents' specialization in school counseling, as theoretical knowledge and skills constitute the core of professional competency in guidance counseling (Institute of Guidance Counselors, 2020). The lower scores for professional development and professional responsibilities may indicate areas where counselors perceive need for growth, consistent with the "sometimes" interpretation suggesting room for improvement.

Absence of Demographic Differences

No significant differences in AQ, resilience, or professional effectiveness were found across any demographic variable examined. For AQ, the absence of gender differences supports Daloos (2015), while the lack of age effects contradicts Daloos's finding that younger respondents displayed less control. The non-significance of years of experience aligns with Baroa (2015), who reported that length of service did not influence AQ among Philippine school administrators.

For resilience, the absence of gender differences is consistent with Callueng et al. (2020), who found no gender differences in national resilience among Filipino adults during COVID-19, suggesting that Filipinos regardless of gender exhibit high resilience. However, this contradicts meta-analytic findings (Gök & Koğar, 2021) and studies reporting gender differences in other cultural contexts (Isaacs, 2014; Ferreira et al., 2019). The non-significance of age contradicts Eshel et al. (2019) and Gooding et al. (2011), who reported

older individuals as more resilient, and Callueng et al. (2020), who found higher resilience among older Filipino adults. These discrepancies may reflect differences in age group categorization and the unique cultural context of the present sample.

For professional effectiveness, the absence of gender differences contradicts Bryan et al. (2005), who found males rated themselves higher in professionalism among medical students. The non-significance of work experience contradicts Numminen et al. (2017) and Karami et al. (2017) among nurses, though Karami and Choupani (2018) found that counselors' perceptions of competency skill were qualitatively rather than quantitatively variable.

The consistent absence of demographic effects likely reflects the homogeneity of the sample. With nearly all respondents being female, bachelor's-degree-holding, licensed professional teachers working full-time in public schools and specializing in school counseling, restricted range may have obscured potential demographic influences that would emerge in more diverse samples.

Relationships Between Constructs

The strong positive correlation between AQ and resilience (r = .766) supports Mathur and Jain (2021), who found AQ strongly related to resilience among Indian young adults during COVID-19, and Chunin et al. (2018), who reported strong positive correlations among Thai secondary school teachers. Both cited studies used the same instruments (AQ-12 and RSA) and were situated in Asian contexts, enhancing comparability. This finding suggests that the cognitive and emotional processes underlying AQ—including perceived control, accountability, containment of adversity, and optimism about duration—contribute substantially to the capacity for positive adaptation.

The moderate positive correlation between AQ and professional effectiveness (r = .657) extends previous research linking AQ to occupational outcomes such as job satisfaction (Paramanandam & Shwetha, 2013), organizational commitment (Virgana et al., 2022), and professional competence (Widodo et al., 2022). The finding that AQ explains 43.2% of variance in professional effectiveness suggests that how counselors perceive and respond to adversity substantially influences their self-rated effectiveness in counseling procedures, professional responsibilities, and development.

The correlation between resilience and professional effectiveness (r = .453) aligns with Liu and Zhao (2018) and Lawson and Myers (2011), who demonstrated that resilience enhances professional effectiveness among counselors. This moderate association indicates that while resilience contributes to effectiveness, other factors—including AQ itself—also play important roles.

Adversity Quotient as Predictor

Regression analyses confirmed AQ as a significant predictor of both resilience (explaining 58.7% of variance) and professional effectiveness (explaining 43.2% of variance). From a psychological perspective, this aligns with stress coping and positive psychology theories suggesting that individuals who perceive adversity as manageable and controllable are more likely to adapt successfully and maintain high functioning. AQ reflects cognitive and emotional processes such as perseverance, problem-focused coping, and optimism, all of which contribute to resilience and effective workplace behavior. These findings support the conceptual framework positioning AQ as a foundational capacity that enables both psychological resilience and professional effectiveness.

4.9 Limitations

Several limitations should be considered. First, the convenience sampling method and homogeneous sample—predominantly female, public school-based, licensed professional teachers from one Philippine province—limit generalizability to counselors in other settings (private practice, hospitals, other regions) and to male counselors. Second, professional effectiveness was measured through self-report, which may be subject to social desirability bias and may not correspond to objective measures of effectiveness or client outcomes. Third, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences; while AQ predicts resilience and effectiveness, longitudinal research is needed to examine directionality and potential bidirectional relationships. Fourth, the absence of demographic differences may reflect restricted range rather than true population effects; more diverse samples might reveal moderating effects of age, experience, or educational background.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

First, counselors in Philippine school settings are predominantly female, bachelor's degree-holding licensed professional teachers working full-time in public schools with specialization in school counseling. This profile reflects the current state of the counseling workforce, where teacher-designates

often fulfill counseling roles due to the shortage of registered guidance counselors.

Second, counselors demonstrate high overall adversity quotient, particularly in the dimensions of ownership (accountability for addressing situations) and reach (ability to contain adversity). They exhibit very high levels of resilience, consistent with cultural narratives of Filipino resilience. Professional effectiveness is self-evaluated as moderate, with counseling procedures and methodology rated highest among the three dimensions assessed.

Third, adversity quotient, resilience, and professional effectiveness do not vary significantly across demographic characteristics such as sex, age, education, license type, years of experience, practice setting, specialization, or employment status. The homogeneity of the sample may account for the absence of demographic differences, suggesting that within this specific population, these constructs function independently of demographic variation.

Fourth, significant positive relationships exist among all three constructs. Adversity quotient is strongly correlated with resilience and moderately correlated with professional effectiveness. Resilience and professional effectiveness are also positively correlated, though the association is more modest. These interrelationships indicate that counselors' capacity to manage adversity is closely linked to their psychological resilience and their perceived professional effectiveness.

Fifth, adversity quotient significantly predicts both resilience and professional effectiveness, explaining 58.7% of the variance in resilience and 43.2% of the variance in professional effectiveness. This suggests that how counselors perceive, respond to, and contain adversity substantially influences their ability to adapt positively and function effectively in their professional roles.

5.2 Recommendations

Practical and Policy Recommendations

For basic education institutions, implementing interventions that enhance counselors' adversity quotient may help prevent burnout and compassion fatigue, which can lead to job dissatisfaction and poor mental health. Since school counselors perform multiple functions related to maintaining student (and sometimes faculty) mental health, measures supporting their well-being benefit educational institutions as whole. These interventions might include structured debriefing sessions, mentorship programs, and regular wellness assessments.

For universities offering psychology and guidance counseling degrees, incorporating AQ-building components into curricula may better prepare future counselors for the demands of the profession. Educational institutions' offices of student affairs could also conduct regular resilience-building sessions for practicing counselors, providing ongoing support beyond pre-service training.

For professional organizations such as the Philippine Guidance and Counseling Association, implementing continuing professional development programs that strengthen counselors' counseling procedures and methodology, professional responsibilities, and professional development may enhance overall professional effectiveness. These programs should be accessible, affordable, and responsive to the specific challenges counselors face in Philippine settings.

For government agencies, exploring financial support mechanisms for counselors' professional development is recommended. The finding that professional development was the lowest-rated effectiveness dimension, coupled with evidence that professional development enhances both resilience and effectiveness, suggests that removing financial barriers could improve counselor well-being and practice quality. Such support might also encourage more individuals to pursue counseling careers, addressing the current shortage of qualified counselors in the country.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should employ more diverse samples that include counselors from private practice, hospital settings, other Philippine regions, and male counselors to examine whether demographic differences emerge in more heterogeneous populations. Longitudinal research designs would clarify the directionality of relationships among AQ, resilience, and professional effectiveness, and whether changes in AQ precede changes in resilience and effectiveness over time.

Research incorporating objective measures of professional effectiveness—such as client outcome data, supervisor ratings, or observed counseling sessions—would address the limitations of self-report and provide more robust evidence regarding

the AQ-effectiveness relationship. Qualitative studies exploring how counselors experience and navigate adversity, and how they perceive AQ and resilience operating in their daily practice, would complement quantitative findings with rich contextual understanding.

Finally, intervention studies examining whether AQ can be enhanced through training, and whether such enhancements lead to improved resilience and effectiveness, would provide practical guidance for counselor development programs. Given the strong predictive relationships observed, AQ represents a promising target for intervention efforts aimed at supporting counselor well-being and professional functioning.

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7. Tables

Table 1. Frequency Table for the Respondent's Demographic Profile (n=358)

Characteristics	f	%
Sex		
Male	11	3.1
Female	347	96.9
Age		
Under 25	19	5.3
25 – 34	70	19.6
35 – 44	111	31.0
45 - 54	140	39.1
55 and above	18	5.0
Education		
Bachelor's Degree	329	91.9
Bachelor's Degree with Masteral Units	3	0.8
Masteral Degree	24	6.7
Doctoral Degree	2	0.6
License		
Not applicable/No license	19	5.3
Registered Psychometrician (RPm)	4	1.1
Registered Guidance Counselor	14	3.9
Licensed Professional Teacher	316	88.3
More than one PRC license	5	1.4
Years of Experience		
Less than a year	20	5.6
1 – 5 years	6	1.7
6 – 10 years	91	25.4
11 – 15 years	99	27.7
16 years or more	142	39.7
Setting of Practice		
DepEd	341	95.3
Private School	17	4.7
Specialization		
School Counseling	356	99.4
Other specialization	2	0.6
Employment Status		
Part-time	3	0.8
Full – time	349	97.5
Designate only	6	1.7
TOTAL	358	100.0

Table 2. Correlation Matrix of the Variables of the Study (n = 358)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Adversity Quotient	—		
2. Resilience	.766***	—	
3. Professional Effectiveness	.657***	.453***	—

Note. *** p < .001.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Models Predicting Resilience and Professional Effectiveness from Adversity Quotient (n = 358)

Dependent Variable	β (std.)	t	F(1, 356)	R²	p
Resilience	.766	22.48	505.48	.587	< .001
Professional Effectiveness	.657	16.44	270.37	.432	< .001

Note. β values are standardized coefficients. R² represents explained variance.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix of the Variables of the Study
n=358

	Adversity			Resilience			Professional Effectiveness		
	r_{xy}	p-value	Int.	r_{xy}	p-value	Int.	r_{xy}	p-value	Int.
Adversity	-	-	-	.766	.000	S	.657	.000	S
Resilience	.766	.000	S	-	-	-	.453	.000	S
Professional Effectiveness	.657	.000	S	.453	.000	S	-	-	-