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COPING BEHAVIOR AND LIFESTYLE PRACTICES OF SEAFARERS' WIFE

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the coping behaviours and life practices of seafarer's wife. Based on the results, generally the seafarer's wife-respondents were 41 to 50 years old, Roman Catholic, college level, married for more than six (6) years, with 1 dependent, self-employed and with more than 20,000 pesos income; The seafarer's wife have a very high degree of practice of the common coping behaviour during the family recreation, work and religious activities; and high degree during community involvement activities; They have a very high extent of coping behaviour in terms of the emotional aspect; and high extent in terms of the social and spiritual aspect; When grouped according their age, number of dependent / children, length of married years, occupation, income and religion, there was no significant difference between their degrees of practice of the common coping behaviour as well as between their extents of coping behaviour during the departure of the husband; however when grouped according to educational attainment, there were significant differences; There was a very high significant relationship between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviours of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices and their extents of coping behaviour during the departure of their husband.

It was recommended that: Seafarer's wife must know how to positively cope behaviourally during the different activities where they practice their personal lifestyles as well as during their husband's departure for sail; the husband of the respondents must identify the different factors that might influence their wife's way they coping; Shipping Industry administrators must increase their awareness in determining which part of their present programs for seafarer and their wife can be enhanced to be able to help them cope with the realities of seafaring life; Future researchers to use this study as reference.

Keywords

Coping behaviours, life practices, coping behaviours of seafarer's wife, life practices of seafarer's wife

1. Introduction

Seafaring is an interesting and rewarding occupation which economically attracted many ordinary Filipino especially men to sail in order to attain a better life. However, seafaring couples usually have to endure separation and associated problems which are part of the so-called "social costs of migration" where the wives usually make long journeys, sometimes across different continents, with their children or even extended family, to meet their husbands.

In her own experiences, the researcher being a seafarer's wife herself, have also been indulged with the thoughts from some co-seafarer's wife who amusingly mumbled over their difficulties to accept that in real life not every seafarer's wife can or wants to live up to being independent and responsible for everything once their husbands are away. Thoughts of this also made the researcher wonder how others have coped and managed their life especially during their husband's departure for sail in terms of emotional, social and spiritual aspect. She was also interested to know how their profiles influence their manner of coping. This is in lieu of the fact that during the times that her husband was seafaring, as his wife, the researcher was presented with female ideals that strengthened her image as a strong and enduring woman, who despite very harsh conditions managed to create a home for herself, her children and her roving husband. In addition, as a nurse and clinical instructor by profession, the researcher would like to develop a guideline for wellness enhancement for all seafarer's wife like herself in order for them to live a quality life despite the odds of being lonely and away from their beloved husbands and the sole in-charge of their own home and children.

Coping with stress is defined as all activities undertaken by a human in a stressful situation (Orzechowska, Zajączkowska, Talarowska, Gałęcki, 2013). As a seaman, coping means a period of a week or two, up to one month, adapting to the working and living conditions, multilingual crew and working environment. Some seafarers mentioned coping as part of their felt difficulties in social conditions; these would be caused by the cultural differences between the nationalities aboard. It is heightened together with high workloads, and results in feelings of loneliness; new joining crewmember to be welcomed and facilitated by many written instructions, rules, regulations and drills in which he has to participate after boarding the ship; On the other hand, the seaman's wife, coping meant that she must endure the times when she feels that she alone to do all the task that should be done by their husbands; that she must accept the fact that this life means more distant relationship rather than constant togetherness because of their need to be financially stable.

The period of adaptation of the seaman and his wife to normal life (as in the family and society after his return home) could not last longer than a month. Finally when the seaman was about to realize that he was back to normal life again, he has to leave for another six months or more. There were no written instructions, rules, regulations and drills he has to study and participate in order to feel as a normal member of his family and society, after such a long absence. In fact, the seafarer was well prepared to respond to any extraordinary situation at sea but was not able to handle a simple domestic situation at home especially how to deal with his wife and children.

According to a British master who have gone sailing for quite some time “a seafarer's life is all about freedom where he comes, he goes, he travels.” This British master even told that as a seafarer he still needs a base and without a base, he has nothing. By this, he means his family: wife and children. He's implying that his job affects his base that makes the social aspect of his life in jeopardy as he sail across every country from time to time leaving his family behind especially his wife, to take care of everything in his absence.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study was generally conducted to determine the coping behaviours and life practices of seafarer's wife. Specifically, it answered: what is the profile of the seafarers' wife in terms of: age, educational attainments, number of dependents/children, length of married years,

occupation, income, and religion; what is the common coping behavior of Seafarers' wife and its degree of practice according to their lifestyle practices during family recreation activities, work activities, community involvement activities and religious activities; what is the extent of coping behavior of seafarers' wife during the departure of the husband in terms of emotional aspect, social aspect, and spiritual aspect; is there a significant difference between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviors of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices when respondents are grouped according to profile; is there a significant difference between the extents of coping behavior of seafarers' wife during the departure of the husband when respondents are grouped according to profile; is there a significant relationship between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviors of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices and their extents of coping behavior during the departure of their husband.

3. Method of the Study

This study utilized the non-experimental, descriptive research design to determine the coping behaviours and life practices of seafarer's wife. This design is described by Polit and Beck (2012) as one which often directs the researchers to focus on the behaviours, conditions, and situations, and its goal was to describe the relationship among variables rather than to conclude cause-and-effect relationships.

4. Ethical Considerations

The human rights and ethical considerations were protected during the entire conduct of the study. The researcher obtained the ethical approval to use the study instrument. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and their right to withdraw without penalty at any time. To keep the anonymity, the questionnaires did not include any information regarding the participant identity. Return of completed questionnaires by the nurses was considered as a signed agreement to participate in this study. After filling the questionnaire by the participant it was coded by a number and kept in a secure place; no one has an access to the data except the researcher.

5. Results and Discussions of the Study

5.1. Profile of the Seafarer's Wife

After the data gathering, the researcher found that most seafarer's wife-respondents were 41 to 50 years old, Roman Catholic, college level, married for more than six (6) years, with 1 dependent, self-employed and with more than 20,000 pesos income.

5.2. Common Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife and Its Degree of Practice According To Their Lifestyle Practices

To determine the common coping behaviour of Seafarers' wife and its degree of practice according to their lifestyle practices during family recreation, work activities, community involvement and religious activities, the researcher used Weighted Mean. The results showed that the seafarer's wife have a very high degree of practice of the common coping behavior during the family recreation (3.53 overall mean score), work activities (3.35 overall mean score); religious activities (3.32 overall mean score) and high degree during community involvement activities (3.11 overall mean score).

5.2.1. Common Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' wife and Its Degree of Practice According to their Lifestyle Practices during Family Recreation

Table 1: Degree of Practice of Common Coping Behavior during Family Recreation

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
1. I talked to my immediate family (ex. My parents, my brothers and sisters) about my worries and problems regarding my responsibilities at home during times when my husband is away.	3.68	2	Very High Degree of Practice
2. I project my weaknesses of having hard times being alone doing all the responsibilities through indulging in many family activities that would help me increase my strength and be motivated to move on.	3.60	4	Very High Degree of Practice
3. I displace my worries and problems through creating art works for my family like drawings, paintings, etc.	3.64	3	Very High Degree of Practice
4. I intentionally hide my feelings of uneasiness and worries and make others feel that I do not have any problems at all	2.84	5	High Degree of Practice
5. I keep distance with my family and try to solve things / problems by myself.	3.88	1	Very High Degree of Practice
Overall Mean Score	3.53		Very High Degree of Practice

Legend:

Weighted Mean Range	Degree / Extent of Coping Behavior
4.20 - 5.00	Very High
3.40 - 4.19	High
2.60 - 3.39	Moderate
1.80 - 2.59	Low
1.00 - 1.79	Very Low

The findings above illustrates that there was a very high degree of practice of the common coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife during the family recreation activities with 3.53 as its general weighted mean. This means that the respondents were practicing their common

coping behaviours to the greatest degree and that they considered this events part of their usual life which they do during the family recreation activities. As illustrated in the above table, items 1, 2, 3 and 5 have means as follows 3.68, 3.60, 3.64 and 3.68 respectively, all interpreted as very high degree of practice. In lieu of these results, these 4 items were considered as the common coping behaviours practiced by the respondents during the family recreation activities. The highest was item number 5 which was about the respondents keeping distance with their family and trying to solve things/problems by themselves. This can be supported by the verbalization of some respondents that they have been keeping distance from some of their relatives especially their parents whenever they have problems at hand. This was because they knew that they can handle the problems and that they do not want their family to worry so much and be involved also. This is also supported by the recent research of Thomas' (2003) that found out that the leisure activities that most seafarers' wives took in part were home and family-based and those not involving other persons.

The lowest was item number 4 which was about the respondents who intentionally hide their feelings of uneasiness and worries and make others feel that they do not have any problem at all, with mean of 2.84 and interpreted as high degree of practice. This was the lowest since the respondents have already adapted to their life as a wife of a seaman and that they were close to other people even inside Magsaysay Family Center thus they do not hide their feelings but they equally share their worries to lessen their burden. This can be supported by the study of Thomas (2003) which suggested that seafarer-partners learned to be independent and strong and that many seafarers' wives learnt to accept loneliness.

5.2.2. Common Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' wife and Its Degree of Practice According to their Lifestyle Practices during Work Activities

Table 2: Degree of Practice of Common Coping Behaviour during Work Activities

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
6. I ask the help and assistance of my immediate superior regarding their suggestions on how can I keep up with my life.	3.16	4	High Degree of Practice
7. I talk to my friends at work to share the things I have in mind and ask them for suggestions on how to solve my problems.	3.20	3	High Degree of Practice
8. I engrossed myself to so many workloads to forget that I have problems at hand.	3.92	1	Very High Degree of Practice
9. I keep away from other people at work and finish my task at once so I can go home at once to think	3.44	2	Very High Degree of Practice

all about the solutions to my problems by myself.			
10. I make myself absent or be at work late whenever I feel bad about my problems at hand.	3.04	5	High Degree of Practice
Overall Mean Score	3.35		Very High Degree of Practice

Table above shows that there was a very high degree of practice of the common coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife during work activities with 3.35 as its general weighted mean. This implied that the respondents have adapted to their life as a wife of a seaman and that during work activities where they deal with other people or many workloads, they passionately try to practice how to cope up with life even if they are doing things that were stressful to them. According to Brannon (2009) this coping can be considered as *meaning-focused coping*, in which the person concentrated on deriving meaning from the stressful experience" (Brannon, 2009).

As illustrated in the above table, items 8 and 9 with means of 3.92 and 3.44 respectively and both interpreted as very high degree of practice were considered as the common coping behaviours practiced by the respondents during their work activities.

Among its items, the highest was item number 8 which was about the respondents engrossing themselves to so many workloads to forget that they have problems at hand, with 3.92 as its mean, interpreted as very high degree of practice. This was the highest because as an individual who wants to cope, one should communicate with other people and seek new activities just like the seafarer's wife who was lonely with her husband but tried to cope up by doing more things at work. Engaging in other activities was considered simple strategies to have an easier time responding to stresses in life (Brannon, 2009).

The lowest was item number 10 which was about the respondents who make themselves absent or be at work late whenever they feel bad about their problems at hand, with mean of 3.04 and interpreted as high degree of practice. This was the lowest because the respondents were accustomed or adapted to their life and that they do not need to be absent nor come late because they actually used the time for work to deviate themselves from worries about their husband being away from them. Colquit (2009) said that an example of behavioural coping was an employee who was confronted with a strict, and quickly approaching deadline in relation to the respondents, this may be similar to their actions at work when being faced with problems about their husband's work as a seaman, they may choose to perform their work quicker and in a more rushed fashion, while another who was faced with the exact same situation avoided the situation

by coming in late, leaving early, or even skipping a day of work entirely. Both of these kinds of workers were great examples of how an individual may use behavioral coping to relieve the feeling of stress.

5.2.3. Common Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' wife and Its Degree of Practice According to their Lifestyle Practices during Community Involvement

Table 3: Degree of Practice of Common Coping Behaviour during Community Involvement

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
11. I seek the advices of community leaders about the problems I encounter and how will I solve them	3.20	1	High Degree of Practice
12. I talk with my friends in the community during meetings and activities to be able to release my tension about the difficulties I am having as a wife of a seafarer.	3.16	2.5	High Degree of Practice
13. I engaged myself to many community activities (ex. medical missions) every now and then to be able to forget temporarily the things that bother me.	3.16	2.5	High Degree of Practice
14. I socialize mostly and share my sentiments with people in the community who have the same difficulties / problems that I have	3.12	4	High Degree of Practice
15. I isolate myself from any community involvement especially when I have problems to think and solve at once.	2.92	5	High Degree of Practice
Overall Mean Score	3.11		High Degree of Practice

According to the findings above, there was only a high degree of practice of the common coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife during community involvement activities with 3.11 as its general weighted mean. In considering this result, it would mean that there was no / none was considered common coping behaviour practiced done during the respondent's involvement with the community activities since there were no items interpreted with very high degree of practice. This implied that the respondents did not practice to the greatest degree their coping behaviours while in these activities. Among its items, the highest was item number 11 about the respondents seeking the advices of community leaders about the problems they encounter and how will they solve them, with 3.20 as its mean, interpreted only as high degree of practice. This was considered only as high degree of practice since the respondents usually have contained to themselves the problems they have in mind and that they wanted to solve this alone (as verbalized by some of the respondents during the conduct of the study). The environment like the community may pose as vague place for the respondents to simply discuss any of their problems to anybody. They might ask for help but will choose whom to talk to. This can be supported by

the statement of Kucukalic *et al.*, (2003) that coping was a dynamic process and that it was reciprocally related between the individual and his environment.

The lowest was item number 15 which was about the respondents isolating themselves from any community involvement especially when they have problems to think and solve at once, with mean of 2.92 and interpreted as high degree of practice. This was interpreted as the lowest because the respondents for this study believed that they can share their problems and ask for help to be able to unwind and become less in burden. This strategy by the respondents was called problem-focused coping strategy that tries to deal with the cause of their problem (Worell, 2001). They do this by finding out information on the problem and learning new skills to manage the problem aiming at changing or eliminating the source of the stress and not running away from it.

5.2.4. Common Coping Behavior of Seafarers' wife and Its Degree of Practice According to their Lifestyle Practices during Religious Activities

Table 4: Degree of Practice of Common Coping Behaviour during Religious Activities

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
16. I seek the guidance of the Lord Almighty through the advices I get from our priest or head minister whenever I feel uncomfortable about the situations me and my husband have in relation to his job.	3.60	1.5	Very High Degree of Practice
17. I pray silently to the Lord Almighty about my problems during prayer meetings.	3.08	4	High Degree of Practice
18. I offer services like joining "pray-over" healing sessions with our community religious group / organization to relieve my mind of problems / things that bothers me most.	3.60	1.5	Very High Degree of Practice
19. I stayed quiet and isolate myself from anybody during our religious group meetings in order for me not to be asked about my problems.	3.28	3	Very High Degree of Practice
20. I use alibis and reasons for not attending religious meeting whenever I have problems to solve in relation to my husband's job as a seafarer.	3.04	5	High Degree of Practice
Overall Mean Score	3.32		Very High Degree of Practice

The very high degree of practice of the common coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife during religious activities implied that the respondents have been practicing to the greatest degree their coping behaviours during this period. This can be explained by the fact that the respondents mostly believed that they have to rely on their faith with God especially during times that they worry a lot for their husband's welfare and so as their relationship which was always at stake. According to Benson (2006) one set of religious coping methods identified

within adult samples dealt with efforts to gain control of a situation by spiritual means. These methods included collaborative religious coping defined as seeking control through a partnership with God; active religious surrender as defined by intentionally giving up control to God as a way to cope; passive religious deferral defined as passively waiting for God to control the situation; pleading for direct intercession wherein control was sought indirectly by pleading with God for a miracle or divine intercession.

As illustrated above, items 16, 18, and 19 with means of 3.60, 3.60 and 3.28 respectively, all interpreted as very high degree of practice were considered as the common coping behaviours practiced by the respondents during their religious activities. The highest were items number 16 and 18 which were about the respondents seeking the guidance of the Lord Almighty through the advices they get from their priest or head minister whenever they feel uncomfortable about the situations they and their husband have in relation to his job and about the respondents offering services like joining “pray-over” healing sessions with their community religious group / organization to relieve their mind of problems / things that bothers them most, both with 3.60 as their mean, interpreted as very high degree of practice. This was the highest because the seafarer’s wives find calmness and peace of mind through their religious affiliation with agencies and activities close to God. They have been verbalizing that one way to release their anger or worries is through attendance in prayer meetings and singing Lord’s prayer songs. As Sorajjakool (2006) said when many individuals like the seafarer’s wife, first encountered trauma or during life crises (e.g. terminal illness or loss or separation from spouse), they strongly desire divine intervention.

The lowest was item number 20 which was about the respondents using alibis and reasons for not attending religious meeting whenever they have problems to solve in relation to their husband’s job as a seafarer., with mean of 3.04 and interpreted as high degree of practice. This was the lowest because the respondents need not need to have alibis to be able to isolate themselves from any religious meetings because in reality they really want to join and be associated with these kinds of meetings and gatherings that they knew would help them easily cope with life. Belief in miraculous intervention played a very significant role in the seafarer’s wife spiritual transformation. It sustained them and provided a sense of safety. There was something truly comforting in believing that there was Someone who was much bigger, who was all-knowing, and cares. This belief made it possible for the seafarer’s wife and their husband to

disengage from their anxious obsession with overwhelming events. Belief in divine intervention also makes it possible for the seafarer's wife and their husband to hold on to a sense of meaning based on his or her current belief system (Sorajjakool, 2006).

5.3. Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband

To determine the extent of coping behaviour of seafarers' wife during the departure of the husband as to emotional, social and spiritual aspects, the researcher used Weighted Mean. The results showed that the seafarer's wife have a very high extent of coping behaviour in terms of the emotional aspect (3.43 overall mean score); and high extent in terms of the social (3.15 overall mean score) and spiritual aspect (3.22 overall mean score).

5.3.1. Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Emotional Aspect

Table 5: *Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Emotional Aspect*

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
1. I cry every time I remember my husband	3.68	2	Very High Extent of Coping
2. I just think about the good things that our temporary separation can give us	3.60	4	Very High Extent of Coping
3. My past learning and experiences have kept me strong and hard at will	3.64	3	Very High Extent of Coping
4. The phone calls that me and husband had or any kind of communication that we have helps me reduce the sadness I feel	2.84	7	High Extent of Coping
5. I keep myself calm by trusting the times that me and husband have joyfully shared with love.	3.88	1	Very High Extent of Coping
6. I avoid thinking of bad things that my husband might do whenever his far from me like womanizing that will provoke me to be jealous.	3.16	6	High Extent of Coping
7. I avoid people who can be a cause for our marriage to be broken	3.20	5	High Extent of Coping
Overall Mean Score	3.43		Very High Extent of Coping

The very high extent of coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife in terms of the emotional aspect means that the respondents have been coping greatly during their husband's departure.

According to Gross (2008), emotion regulation is a process by which an individual is able to modulate his or her emotional experiences, unconsciously or consciously. It encompasses the ability to filter emotions and engage in healthy emotion management strategies (Gross & Barrett, 2011) and provides additional information about how individuals adapt to internal and external stressors. This can be related to the ways the seafarer and his wife cope strategically according to their own way of perception of the stress that comes along their worries and fears not being with

their loved ones for a long period of time. Difficulties in emotion regulation may be related to unhealthy coping. Therefore, it can be conceptualised as an important part of the coping process.

Among its items, the highest was item number 5 which was about the respondents keeping themselves calm by trusting the times that they and their husband have joyfully shared with love, with 3.88 as its mean, interpreted as very high extent of coping. This was the highest because the respondents have gone through all these things for how many times and she was used to the fact that as her husband works abroad, and that she will always endure the times that he will go away every now and then. As verbalized by some of the respondents, the time they spent together during her husband's vacation made them so happy and become conscious enough to realize that they would not think of any bad insights to make them worry when he depart again for another year of work at sea. This was why they keep themselves calm to minimize and tolerate the stress they feel during departures of their husbands. Weiten (2008) stated that coping was thus expending conscious effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize or tolerate stress or conflict.

The lowest was item number 15 which was about the respondents' phone calls which they had with their husband or any kind of communication that they have that helped them reduced the sadness they feel, with mean of 2.84 and interpreted as high extent of coping. Although interpreted as high extent of coping, item number 15 was the lowest because some of the respondents verbalized that the phone calls they had made them feel that they were with their husbands but once they have stopped the talking, the reality that he was really far away would just add to their feeling of loneliness or sadness. According Bauman (2003), the way of doing intimacy today tends to be self-centred: individuals maintained the bond only when it offered them enough satisfaction, and they have little intention to sacrifice self-development for the relation.

5.3.2. Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Social Aspect

Table 6: *Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Social Aspect*

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
8. I socialize with my neighbours	2.92	7	High Extent of Coping
9. I go shopping and socialize with other people	3.44	1	Very High Extent of Coping
10. I watch movies with my friends	3.04	6	High Extent of Coping
11. I work hard and engrossed myself to work	3.20	2	High Extent of Coping

12. I go to parties	3.16	3.5	High Extent of Coping
13. I go out-of-town trips with my children and/or my friends and other relatives	3.16	3.5	High Extent of Coping
14. I go for a walk in the park with my friends	3.12	5	High Extent of Coping
Overall Mean Score	3.15		High Extent of Coping

The high extent of coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife in terms of the social aspect implied that the respondents have been coping socially but not to the highest level or magnitude. This result can be supported by the verbalization of some of the respondents that they do not indulge so much with socializing to other people except when they have a meeting at Magsaysay Family Centre for an activity or gathering for seafarer's wife. They were satisfied with the ambiance that their homes and children can give to make them feel secured and confident about their relationship with their husbands. To a seafarer's wife enrichment can result from the achievement of many of life's major tasks-creating a family and watching one's children grow, and become independent, achieving a career goal, paying off a new mortgage, or succeeding in a personal, creative project in the absence of her husband (Davenport, 2003). This type of coping is an example of a positive coping strategy, "anticipating a problem was known as proactive coping" (Brannon, 2009). Anticipation was when one "reduce(s) the stress of some difficult challenge by anticipating what it was like and preparing for how (one was) going to cope with it". In terms of the seafaring husband and their wife, proactive coping meant that there should be programs for adaptation of seafarers to the social life which must be established. In the same way, programs for adaptation to the social life for their wife must also be established. These programs could be similar to those implemented for adaptation of professional soldiers of the army after the age of retirement.

Among its items, the highest was item number 5 which was about the respondents going shopping and socializing with other people, with 3.44 as its mean, interpreted as very high extent of coping. This implied that the seafarer's wife believed that social support promoted their well-being either directly, by promoting well-being regardless of the level of stress they experienced; or indirectly, by 'buffering' or attenuating the stressor. Social support networks seemed very helpful for lone wives and help them to be 'successful copers'. In order to have access to the long-established social network to lessen isolation, some seafarers' wives lived close to their families. Similarly, James' (2000) study showed that in New Iberia an off-shore oil worker community, it was common for native oil wives to live near to their relatives in order to acquire valuable support.

The lowest was item number 8 which was about the respondents socializing with their neighbours, with mean of 2.92 and interpreted as high extent of coping. This meant the respondents still socialize with their neighbours but not to the greatest extent as a source of coping that was why they marked it as lowest. This can be supported by Thomas' (2003) recent research which found that the leisure activities that most British seafarers' wives took in part were home and family-based and those not involving other persons.

5.3.3. Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Spiritual Aspect

Table 7: *Extent of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wife during the Departure of the Husband as to Spiritual Aspect*

Item	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
15. I pray to alleviate my worries and sadness	2.92	7	High Extent of Coping
16. I go to church to strengthen my faith and relieve my worries	3.60	1.5	Very High Extent of Coping
17. I read the bible to keep me abreast and informed about how the Lord God can help me always	3.08	4	High Extent of Coping
18. I put myself in the trust of the Lord so I will not worry	3.60	1.5	High Extent of Coping
19. I am affiliated with the organization in our community church and I am active in their activities	3.28	3	High Extent of Coping
20. I share my thoughts to priests, nun and ministers to keep myself calm	3.04	5.5	High Extent of Coping
21. I serve in the church or any other religious organizations	3.04	5.5	High Extent of Coping
Overall Mean Score	3.22		High Extent of Coping

The high extent of coping behaviour of the seafarer's wife in terms of the spiritual aspect implied that the seafarer's wife have used spirituality as part of their coping but not to the highest magnitude. Marking it high means that they believed that spirituality was a critical component of health and well-being and it becomes more important as a person grows older. According to some seafarer's wife spirituality also met a basic human need, helped during stressful life events, increased their individual's understanding of the meaning of life, helped in preparing for death and provided support during phases of multiple losses and grieving process.

Among its items, the highest were items number 16 and 18 which were about the respondents going to church to strengthen their faith and relieving their worries and put themselves in the trust of the Lord so they will not worry, both with 3.60 as their mean, interpreted as very high extent of coping. For the respondents, spirituality can provide comfort during times of loneliness or distress, bring relief from anxiety, and provide a sense of meaning,

purpose, productivity and self-integration. Religion provided the adult seafarer's wife with effective strategies for coping with personal difficulties and stress. Religious coping strategies included obtaining personal strength from God or a Higher Being, using prayer to help cope with difficulties and stress and seeking the guidance of a Higher Being when making important decisions (Heintz, 2001).

The lowest was item number 15 which was about the respondents praying to alleviate their worries and sadness, with mean of 2.92 and interpreted as high extent of coping. This result emphasized that the respondents used prayers to cope with their worries but not to the greatest extent because they also use other means to comfort themselves religiously. As verbalized by the respondents, attendance at religious services, prayer, bible study, or listening to religious radio or television programs also elicits good feelings, and provides comfort to them. Many of them believed in time of emptiness, their spirituality was central to whom they were as a person and that spirituality was a vital component of their entire well-being (Davenport, 2003). And according to Heintz (2001) prayer, in particular, provide with a sense of power to pray for friends in need, for health, and for strength during difficult times.

5.4. Significant Difference between the Degrees of Practice of the Common Coping Behaviours of Seafarers' Wife According To Their Lifestyle Practices When Respondents Are Grouped According To Profile

To determine the significant difference between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviours of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices when respondents were grouped according to profile as to age, educational attainment, number of dependents / children, length of married years, occupation, income and religion, the researcher used ANOVA or Analysis of Variance. Results found that when grouped according their age, number of dependent / children, length of married years, occupation, income and religion, there was no significant difference between their degrees of practice of the common coping behaviour, with the corresponding p-values greater than $\alpha = 0.05$: ($f = 1.196$, p-value of 0.322), ($f = 1.345$, p-value of 0.271), ($f = 1.447$, p-value of 0.234), ($f = 2.013$, p-value of 0.125), ($f = 0.776$, p-value of 0.125) and ($f = 1.755$, p-value of 0.184) respectively; however when grouped according to educational attainment there is a significant difference, with p-value lesser than $\alpha = 0.05$ ($f = 2.833$, p-value of 0.027).

Table 8: Significant Difference between the Degrees of Practice of the Common Coping Behaviours of Seafarers' Wife According To Their Lifestyle Practices When Respondents Are Grouped According To Profile

Variable		Mean	F computed	df1	df2	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	20-30	3.18	1.196	3	46	0.322	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	31-40	3.34						
	41-50	3.30						
	51 & above	3.33						
Educ. Attainment	Elem. Grad	3.70	2.833	5	44	0.027	Reject Ho₁	Significant Difference
	HS Level	3.37						
	HS Grad	3.28						
	College Level	3.30						
No. of Dependent Children	1	3.33	1.345	3	46	0.271	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	2-3	3.33						
	4-5	3.19						
	More than 5	3.20						
Length of Married Years	< 1 year	3.19	1.447	4	45	0.234	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	1- 3 years	3.39						
	4 – 6 years	3.33						
	More than 6 years	3.28						
	None	3.00						
Occupation	Gov't Employee	3.16	2.013	3	46	0.125	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	Private Company Employee	3.23						
	Self-Employed	3.24						
	None	3.28						
Income	5,000-10,000 Pesos	3.24	0.776	2	47	0.125	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	10,000 – 20,000 Pesos	3.32						
	More Than 20,000	3.24						
Religion	R. Catholic	3.24	1.755	2	47	0.184	Accept Ho₁	No Significant Difference
	Protestant	3.32						
	Iglesia ni Kristo	3.41						

In terms of age, the finding on the table above infers that the practice of coping behaviours of the seafarer's wife did not differ when they were grouped according to age. This can be explained by means of how a person's age is defined, such that in terms of individual's maturity of personality and disposition, in relation to the attainment of developmental tasks, specific to each developmental phase and its influence to individual's perception of the situations as stressful or otherwise. In relation to the respondents of this study, most of them belonged to the 41- 50 years bracket wherein they can be described as individuals with more experiences about the life of being wife of a seaman. In lieu of this, it can be deduced that their developmental tasks have influenced their perception of the stressful situations they had with their husbands thus they were more mature to cope and easily get away from these problems. Age was found to positively affect the stress-coping scores. Women in the age range of 40-60 years scored significantly higher than the women in the younger age range on all the dimensions of

coping i.e. logics, involvement, social support, task strategies, time management, home and work relations. Studies in the past also indicated that as the workers grow older they tend to cope better (Dua, 2006).

The table above also illustrates that there was a significant difference between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviours when respondents were grouped according to their educational attainment. This implies that educational attainment of the seafarer's wife has an influence on the way they practice their common coping behaviours. This is because her education or learning from school helps her build skills and foster traits that are important throughout her life as a wife of a seafarer, such as endurance and perseverance (that she must endure the times when she feels that she alone to do all the task that should be done by them, that she must accept the fact that this life means more distant relationship rather than constant togetherness because of their need to be financially stable); or a sense of personal control and flexibility (becoming stronger to adapt to changes). Education may strengthen coping skills that reduce the damage of stress. Greater personal control may also lead to healthier behaviors, partly by increasing knowledge. Those with greater perceived personal control are more likely to initiate preventive behaviours.

It was observed that the respondents living in urban areas, who had higher levels of education and lower parity or fewer dependents, and more assets (used as a proxy for income), have less stress and more positive coping behaviours. This was a reflection of the fact that, irrespective of their needs, only people from higher economic or educational groups have the capacity to handle stress more carefully and appropriately (Cooper et al., 2001).

In terms of the number of dependent /children, findings in the above table imply that it does not affect the respondent's ways of coping as a seafarer's wife. This can be explained by the fact that they were traditionally the care-provider of the family and that this duty or responsibility included that they have to take care of their children and they should maintain family stability always even if their husband was away for work abroad. As partner of the one who goes abroad for family financial stability meant that they have to plan and anticipate what problems they could have in order to know which strategies to use to relieve stress or worries as they face the problems alone. According to Brannon (2009) anticipation was when one "reduce(s) the stress of some difficult challenge by anticipating what it was like and preparing

for how (one was) going to cope with it". It was one positive coping strategy known as proactive coping.

In relation to the length of married life of the seafarer's wife, their practice of coping behaviour was not affected by it. This can be explained by the result of this study that most of the respondents have more than 6 years of marriage with their husband and still they have coped well with their life. This was they knew what to expect from life before they married a seafarer and that they knew that they would have to cope with a life spent, at least in part, separated from their partners. As verbalized by some respondents, they were adapted to the life that they will have two sets of scenarios, one with their husband when they were on vacation and the other when they were away for work. The life goes on for them from the time they got married until the present where they have learned a lot of experiences on how to move on with this kind of relationship. According to Kaijser (2003) the periodicity and recurring departures results in 'the wife leading one life when the husband was away and one when he was at home. The constant adjustment between being alone and together led the women to feel they led two separate lives.

The result above in terms of occupation implies that the respondent's occupation did not influence their degree practice of their common coping behavior. As some respondents verbalized to the researcher, their work was just a part of their diversion and although this helped them to unload their mind of the problems they have at home or in relation to their husband's work abroad for them it was just a part of themselves being employed and not for any other reason. This kind of coping varies among the seafarer's wives as nowadays, working has become an individual implement for personal growth or survival. According to Allvin (2006) in order to become independent, the individual seafarer as well as his wife has to be dedicated. They have to adapt it in order to become employable.

Being a seafarer's wife, their income did not also influence the degree of practice of their coping behaviours. This can be explained by the fact that the work and income they have in addition to the income of their husbands was just an anticipation for future planning or their "fall-back" if in case their husbands have decided to stop working as a seaman. This did not affect their coping behaviours because they have been handling the same stressful situations over and over again and that this had made them more inclined to anticipate to have more things to do to divert them from thinking it all again. Coping was intimately related to the concept of cognitive appraisal and, hence, to the stress relevant person-environment transactions. The

coping mechanism that they have as an individual greatly depended on how strongly they believed, that the specific coping mechanism addressed their problem (Colquitt, 2009).

The type of religion that the respondents have did not affect the way they cope with the stressful situations they have. This can be supported by the verbalization of some of the respondents that part of their personal life is having faith in God that provided them with the inner strength needed develop their emotional resilience. Whatever religion they have been affiliating with provided them with effective strategies for coping with personal difficulties and stress. Personal life was the course of an individual's life, especially when viewed as the sum of personal choices contributing to one's personal identity (Baker, 2007). A lifestyle typically reflected their individual attitudes, values or world view. Therefore, their lifestyle was a means of forging a sense of themselves and to create cultural / religious symbols that resonate with their personal identity.

5.5. Significant Difference between the Extents of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wives during the Departure of the Husband when Respondents are grouped according To Profile

To determine the significant difference between the extents of coping behaviour of seafarers' wives during the departure of the husband when respondents were grouped according to profile as to age, educational attainment, number of dependents / children, length of married years, occupation, income and religion, the researcher used ANOVA or Analysis of Variance.

Results found that when grouped according their age, number of dependent / children, length of married years, occupation, income and religion, there was no significant difference between their extents of coping behavior of seafarers' wives during the departure of the husband with the corresponding p-values greater than $\alpha = 0.05$: ($f = 1.139$, p-value of 0.343), ($f = 1.394$, p-value of 0.257), ($f = 1.420$, p-value of 0.243), ($f = 1.833$, p-value of 0.154), ($f = 0.703$, p-value of 0.500) and ($f = 1.955$, p-value of 0.153) respectively; however when grouped according to educational attainment there is a significant difference, with p-value lesser than $\alpha = 0.05$ ($f = 2.927$, p-value of 0.023).

Table 9: Significant Difference between the Extents of Coping Behaviour of Seafarers' Wives during the Departure of the Husband when Respondents are grouped according To Profile

Variable	Mean	F computed	df 1	df2	p-value	Decision	Interpretation	
Age	20-30	3.17	1.139	3	46	0.343	Accept Ho₂	No Significant

	31-40	3.32						Difference
	41-50	3.28						
	51 & above	3.32						
Educ. Attainment	Elem. Grad	3.69	2.927	5	44	0.023	Reject Ho₂	Significant Difference
	HS Level	3.34						
	HS Grad	3.28						
	College Level	3.29						
	Postgrad Grad	3.00						
No. of Dependent Children	1	3.33	1.394	3	46	0.257	Accept Ho₂	No Significant Difference
	2-3	3.31						
	4-5	3.17						
	More than 5	3.19						
Length of Married Years	< 1 year	3.18	1.420	4	45	0.243	Accept Ho₂	No Significant Difference
	1- 3 years	3.39						
	4 – 6 years	3.31						
	More than 6 years	3.27						
	None	3.00						
Occupation	Gov't Employee	3.16	1.833	3	46	0.154	Accept Ho₂	No Significant Difference
	Private Company Employee	3.22						
	Self-Employed	3.35						
	None	3.23						
Income	5,000-10,000 Pesos	3.23	0.703	2	47	0.500	Accept Ho₂	No Significant Difference
	10,000 – 20,000 Pesos	3.31						
	More Than 20,000	3.23						
Religion	R. Catholic	3.23	1.955	2	47	0.153	Accept Ho₂	No Significant Difference
	Protestant	3.31						
	Iglesia ni Kristo	3.40						

In the findings shown above, it displays that age did not influence the extent of coping behaviour of the respondents during the departure of the husband. This can be explained by the previous results of this study that most of the respondents belonged to the 41 to 50 years old bracket which according to Dua (2006) scored significantly higher than the women in the younger age range on all the dimensions of coping i.e. logics, involvement, social support, task strategies, time management, home and work relations. This meant that they were more adjusted to changes in their life and as grow older they tend to cope better that was why their coping remained the same in spite of all the odds that happened between them and their husband's work or status. This can also be explained by the statement by Mundell (2002) that according to his research, the older a person get, they kind of realize that "hey, it's not worth getting upset about the small things."

The result above also shows that the extent of coping of the seafarer's wife was affected or influenced by their level of education. This meant that education played as an important factor in the extent of use of coping behaviours of the respondents during their husband's departure for work. The more knowledgeable they were, the more capable they were to handle stress because they can understand cognitively the reasons for their husband's departure for work. Being

educated means they possess the ability to recognize these reasons and tie it up with their own reasons so as to handle the different stressor accordingly. According to Friedman (2000) the findings for sources of stress by age and education were as expected based on life span career development roles. It was postulated that older workers learned to use coping resources, thus enhancing their ability to experience reduced strain given equal amounts of stress. Also according to Kiecolt-Glaser (2001) women having attained more education than their spouse were expected to show influence in the relationship and was likely to be more supported by their husband thus they were more stable and able to cope well during stress period.

The results above implied that the number of dependent/children did not influence the extent of use of coping behaviours by the respondents during their husband's departure for work abroad. This was because the wife and their children have adjusted to the departure of the primary caregiver as they were having this kind of relationship for more than how many years being married. The family knew about their primary caregiver's work status and that seafaring was more than an occupation than a particular lifestyle for him. It was a lifestyle that involved a constant series of partings and reunions with associated transitions from shore-based life to the unique work environment of the ship according to Thomas, Sampson and Zhao (2003). In lieu of this the wife knew how to get along with the things she have to do for her children and her children understood the fact that they have to help their mother cope because she was the only one they got for that time period. When partners were absent, all the domestic responsibilities fall on wives. According to Thomas (2003) in her study of British seafaring families, if they had children, especially young babies whose care was time and energy-demanding, the wives' social role as mothers made them prioritize child care rather than worrying to much about their problems.

The length of married years and occupation also did not influence the extent of use of coping behaviours by the respondents during their husband's departure for work abroad. This can be explained also by the reason above for the number of dependent / children wherein the wife and their children have adjusted to the departure of the primary caregiver as they were having this kind of relationship for more than how many years being married. In lieu of this the wife knew how to get along with the things she has to do (especially during her work at home or in the office). Her children understood the fact that they also have to help their mother to cope because she was the only one they got for the time period. The basis for this viewpoint was that

people were free to choose and that they possess sufficient knowledge that guided them in their decisions. By focusing on the positive, and reassuring themselves of the positive, an employee may have a much easier time remaining focused on the positive, and less so on the negative, resulting in lower stress levels. These wives use positive self-talk to be able to go on and cope with their lives. According to Colquitt (2009) by using positive self-talk and being very self-encouragement and individual may be able to very effectively reduce their own stress levels without relying on the help or assistance of the people around them.

In addition to the above explanation, income of the respondents also does not affect or influence their coping behaviour. However, according to some of the respondents the need for cash remained a concern to facilitate procurement of basic needs, transport etc. To manage this, respondents told the researcher that family financial planning was their general preventive strategy that helped them thereby enhancing their family's well-being (Fox, 2000). These individuals tried not to stress themselves out about the problem, but rather find a way to fix, correct, or address the problem in the most efficient manner. Resources were used to meet the most basic needs and if resources were plentiful, they can be easily allocated to satisfy the comforts and luxuries they desire. The level and management of resources can be sources of stress or comfort. For the respondents resources can result in stress when there was (a) disagreement about their use and (b) concern about their availability. Comfort can be derived from resources not only when they are in abundance but also when they can be relied on to help solve problems and provide a sense of security.

Religion according to Lauder, Mummery and Sharkey (2006) is an important part of the lives of many people, especially older adults and can serve as a type of coping mechanism for them. For the seafarer's wife, spirituality and not specifically their religion met their basic human need as it helped them cope during stressful life events, increased their individual's understanding of the meaning of life, helped in prepare for their husband's departure to work. As Heintz (2001) stated, spirituality was a critical component of health and well-being for every person and it becomes more important as the individual person desire for personal growth and stability no matter what their religion was.

In terms of maintaining a healthy spiritual self, the seafarer's wife uses methods which include collaborative religious coping as defined by Benson (2006) as seeking control through a partnership with God active religious surrender defined as intentionally giving up control to God

as a way to cope; passive religious deferral defined as passively waiting for God to control the situation; pleading for direct intercession wherein control was sought indirectly by pleading with God for a miracle or divine intercession.

According to Sorajjakool (2006) belief in miraculous intervention played a very significant role. This is also true with the seafarer's wife spiritual transformation. It sustained them and provided a sense of safety. There was something truly comforting in believing that there was Someone who was much bigger, who was all-knowing, and cares. This belief made it possible for the seafarer's wife and their husband to disengage from their anxious obsession with overwhelming events. Belief in divine intervention also makes it possible for the seafarer's wife and their husband to hold on to a sense of meaning based on his or her current belief system.

5.6. Significant Relationship between the Degrees of Practice of the Common Coping Behaviours of Seafarers' Wife According to Their Lifestyle Practices and Their Extents of Coping Behaviour during the Departure of Their Husband

Table 10: *Significant Relationship between the Degrees of Practice of the Common Coping Behaviours of Seafarers' Wife According to Their Lifestyle Practices and Their Extents of Coping Behaviour during the Departure of Their Husband*

Pearson's r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
0.998	<0.05	Reject H_0	Very High Significant Relationship

The findings above illustrates that there was a statistically very high significant relationship between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviors of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices and their extents of coping behavior during the departure of their husband with 0.998 as its p-value. The magnitude of relationship was very high positive which indicated that as the strength and direction of the linear relationship of the degree of practice of the common coping behaviors of the seafarer's wife according to their lifestyle practices increases, the extents of coping behavior during the departure of their husband also increases. This means that whatever stressful experience an individual (seafarer's wife) might have, their body tends to seek for balance in order to surmount the pressures being encountered (Neuman, 2008). This is in congruent with the statement according to Bhanawat (2017) that seafarers and their families have equal share in the grief and anguish they have been subjected to. However, a mariner's wife passionately copes by taking various jobs as part of her duty (socializing with vexing relatives, handling household jobs) in order to deal with the emotional

ups and downs while their husbands are away. Thus, according to Carver (2010) the coping responses were partly controlled by personality (habitual traits) as the seafarers wife indulged herself to many activities at home or in work to cope, also partly by the social context (mingling with friends and relatives) particularly if the nature of the environment is stressful. In the absence of her husband, the seafarer's wife forefront to fulfill innumerable domestic tasks such as paying bills or managing finances and investments on behalf of their husbands; settling repairs at home; decorating the house and gardening. In addition to her tasks, the seafarer's wife also socialize as she is also required to look after her parents and that of her husband, attending and assisting in their medical needs and daily care.

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that there were significant differences between the Seafarer's wife-respondent's degrees of practice of the common coping behaviour as well as between their extents of coping behaviour during the departure of their husband when grouped according to educational attainment; there was a very high significant relationship between the degrees of practice of the common coping behaviours of seafarers' wife according to their lifestyle practices and their extents of coping behaviour during the departure of their husband.

One positive coping strategy, "anticipating a problem was known as proactive coping" (Brannon, 2009). Anticipation was when one "reduce(s) the stress of some difficult challenge by anticipating what it was like and preparing for how (one was) going to cope with it". In terms of the seafaring husband and their wife, proactive coping meant that there should be programs for adaptation of seafarers to the social life which must be established. In the same way, programs for adaptation to the social life for their wife must also be established. These programs could be similar to those implemented for adaptation of professional soldiers of the army after the age of retirement.

7. Recommendations

The study recommended that: Seafarer's wife must know how to positively cope behaviourally during the different activities where they practice their personal lifestyles as well as during their husband's departure for sail; the husband of the respondents must identify the different factors that might influence their wife's way they coping; Shipping Industry

administrators must increase their awareness in determining which part of their present programs for seafarer and their wife can be enhanced to be able to help them cope with the realities of seafaring life; Future researchers to use this study as reference.

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