

## ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ADAPTED ADVERSITY QUOTIENT PROGRAM IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

There is an assumption that certain kinds of schools such as schools for children with disabilities are challenging or problematic workplaces (Pratt cited in Nguyen, 2002). Freeman (1988) pointed out that for children with special needs, teachers have to play not only the role of a teacher, but also the role of a nurse and a mother. Due to this, special education teachers are prone to stress and burnout (Freeman, 1988). As special education teachers go through challenges, there is a need to enhance their ability to withstand adversity. Thus, there is a need to understand one's Adversity Quotient (AQ). The ability to withstand adversities is an important aspect in one's quality of life. Findings revealed that people with high AQ outperformed those with low AQ (Stoltz, 1997). An Adversity Quotient Program was developed and validated by three experts to increase the AQ of the special education teachers in a special education school in Manila. After the implementation of the developed AQ Program, the post test results significantly increased to moderately high. The Adversity Response Profile Quick Take (Stoltz, 1997) was used to measure their AQ. In the States, the Maricopa School District had an AQ Program to motivate teachers "to do more with less." The results of the present study imply that Adversity Quotient may be used as part of faculty development programs to make special education teachers more resilient and competent members of the workforce.

**Keywords:** Adversity Quotient, special education teachers, program development, modular program

## INTRODUCTION:

Special education teachers face a barrage of challenges in their daily life. Aside from doing their individualized education programs, administrative tasks and activities, they also have responsibilities at home as a son or daughter, brother or sister and/or as a parent. In this connection, it is important to understand one's ability to withstand adversities. Thus, this is where the role of Adversity Quotient (the ability to withstand adversities) plays an important role in one's life. Findings revealed that people with high AQ outperformed those with low AQ (Stoltz, 1997). Most studies on Adversity Quotient are conducted among sales agents and athletes (see Stoltz, 1997). This study may serve as an initial research that paves the way for researches to understand the Adversity Quotient (AQ) among Filipino special education teachers. This study sought to assess the effectiveness of the adapted Adversity Quotient Program from Dr. Stoltz.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS:

The type of school has an influence on teacher stress. The majority of studies in this area have considered the effects of teaching in special education (Pratt cited in Nguyen, 2002). Litt and Turk (1985) defined teacher stress as the experience by teachers of unpleasant, negative emotions and distress that exist when the problems confronting teachers threaten their well-being, and surpass their ability to resolve these problems. Freeman (1988) pointed out that for children with special needs, teachers have to play not only the role of a teacher, but also the role of a nurse and a mother. Within the school, the teachers are clearly challenged by the pupils' special needs. In addition to that, these teachers also have difficulties with interprofessional cooperation and parental participation.

Woods (1989) pointed out that a potentially stressful situation is set up when a teacher's personal interests, commitment or resources not only get out of line with one or more of the other factors, but actually pull against them. He argued that teachers experiencing stress are the ones driven to the limits of their personal resources, where they hover on the brink of breakdown. He further stated that teacher stress arises, when elements grate against each other and thus produce a special kind of difficulty which puts an excessive strain on a teacher's personal resources (cited in Nguyen, 2002).

According to Nattrass (1991), teacher stress has been described as the teacher's number one health problem. Although there have been many attempts to investigate the real causes and symptoms of teacher stress, often the results of such studies have not been consistent. The reason is the variety of ways in which people have studied teacher stress, and also the fact that teachers are often reluctant to admit the extent to which they experience stress due to the fear that it may be seen as a weakness (Travers & Cooper, 1996).

### *Faculty Development Programs*

Watson and Grossman (1994) mentioned that faculty development promotes improvement in the academy in large part through helping individuals to evolve, unfold, mature, grow, cultivate, produce, and otherwise develop themselves as individuals and as contributors to the academy's mission. Although there are numerous definitions of faculty development, the common theme is promoting the growth and effectiveness of faculty teaching and research (Heppner & Johnson, 1994). Nathan (1994) indicated that faculty development is no longer an optional or dispensable "add-on" to the list of benefits available to faculty at universities in the United States. Wilkerson & Irby (1998) stated that it is a tool for improving the educational vitality of academic institutions through attention to the competencies needed by individual teachers, and to the institutional policies required to promote academic excellence. According to Daigle and Jarmon (1997) faculty development is an important component of building and maintaining human capital, which in turn is part of the total capital assets of the university. Hitchcock & Stritter (1992), suggest that the concept of faculty development is evolving and expanding. Faculty development, originally defined as the improvement of teaching skills, had expanded to include all areas of a faculty member's responsibility. Based on the final report of the Commission of faculty development and careers, (1999), "faculty vitality, both from the perspective of professional expertise and from the perspective of enthusiasm and engagement, is a sine qua non of a successful university."

According to Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD, 2003), faculty development generally refers to those programs, which focus on the individual faculty member. The most common focus for programs of this type is the faculty member as a teacher. Faculty development specialist provide consultation on teaching, including class organization, evaluation of students, in-class

presentation skills, questioning and all aspects of design and presentation. A second frequent focus of such programs is the faculty member as a scholar and professional. These programs offer assistance in career planning, professional development in scholarly skills such as grant writing, publishing, committee work, administrative work, supervisory skills, and a wide range of other activities expected of faculty. A third area on which faculty development programs focus is the faculty member as a person. This includes wellness management, interpersonal skills, stress and time management, assertiveness development and a host of other programs which address the individual's well-being (POD, 2003).

#### *Stoltz's Adversity Quotient*

Filipino special education teachers working in a special education school in Malate, Manila were described according to Stoltz's Adversity Quotient (AQ). According to Stoltz, AQ determines one's success in work and in life. It was also found in a study of Stoltz (1997) that education majors in colleges and universities score lowest at the low end of the AQ continuum ([www.executiveforum.net](http://www.executiveforum.net)). That is why the researcher found it noteworthy to describe special education teachers in terms of AQ.

### **CO<sub>2</sub>RE DIMENSIONS OF ADVERSITY QUOTIENT:**

There are four CO<sub>2</sub>RE dimensions that make up Adversity Quotient: *Control, Origin and Ownership, Reach, and Endurance*. These dimensions point out what one needs to work on to raise his/her overall AQ. In the following paragraphs, these dimensions will be defined and interpreted according to Stoltz (1997).

**Control.** It measures the degree of control that a person perceives he/she has over adverse events (Stoltz, 1997). It is a strong gauge of resilience and health ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). Those with higher AQs simply perceive greater control over life's events than do those with lower AQs. As a result, they take more action which results in more control.

**Origin & Ownership.** According to Stoltz (1997), this dimension asks two questions: Who or what was the origin of adversity? And To what degree do I own the outcomes of the adversity? The lower one's origin score, the more likely he/she is to heap blame upon him/herself, beyond the point of it being constructive. On the otherhand, the higher the origin score, the greater one's tendency to consider other, external sources of the adversity and put his/her own role into perspective. Ownership measures the extent to which a person holds himself or herself accountable for improving a situation. It is a strong gauge of accountability and likelihood to take action ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). The higher one's ownership score, the more he/she owns the outcome, regardless of the cause. The lower the ownership score, the more one disowns the outcomes, regardless of their cause.

**Reach.** It is the perception of how far-reaching events will be. It is a strong gauge of perspective, burden and stress level ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). This dimension asks the question: How far will the adversity reach into other areas of my life? Lower AQ responses allow the adversity to bleed over into other facets of one's life. The lower the R score, the more likely one is to catastrophize bad events. On the otherhand, the higher the R score, the more one may limit the reach of the problem to the event at hand. A person with high R score effectively compartmentalizes or contains the reach of the adversity, thus making them feel more empowered and less overwhelmed (Stoltz, 1997).

**Endurance.** Stoltz (1997) defines it as the perception of time over which good or bad events and their consequences will last or endure. It is a strong gauge of hope or optimism ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). It asks two related questions: How long will the adversity last? And how long will the cause of the adversity last? People with a high score on this dimension, may view success as enduring, if not permanent. Likewise, he/she may consider adversity and its causes fleeting and temporary. The difference is that low AQ people tend to see the adversity as a permanent state, while high AQ people perceive the adversity as a temporary condition (Stoltz, 1997).

Stoltz (1997) developed the LEAD Sequence: (1) Listen to one's adversity response; (2) Explore all origins and one's ownership of the result; (3) Analyze the evidence; and (4) Do something in order to help people create enduring improvements in their AQs. The LEAD sequence is adapted from the work of several influential researchers rooted in Cognitive Psychology. Stoltz (1997) stressed that it is related to attributional retraining which is a therapeutic approach that helps people recognize, assess, and dispute their reactions to life's events. Learning to dispute, and thus alter, these reactions can result in enduring change through reprogramming one's responses. Stoltz (1997) pointed out "that unlike most training which loses impact over time, one of the more powerful findings from studies in Cognitive Psychology has been that the

effect of cognitive disputation skills seems to take on a life of its own, expanding and growing long after the training.”

### **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND MODULAR PROGRAM:**

Borromeo (2004 cited in Borromeo, 2005) suggests a four-phased process for program development which consists of (1) situational analysis; (2) prioritization and identification of areas of concern; (3) program formulation; and (4) program implementation and evaluation. Situational analysis includes data gathering on the status of the program and identification of the needs of the target participants. The results of the situational analysis can be analyzed to establish priority needs that must be addressed by the proposed program. Based on these priority needs and areas of concern, the program can be developed. After which is the implementation of the program and the final phase is the evaluation.

According to Wolff, S. J., & Copa, G. H. (2003), modularization is a way of organizing learning material in self-contained units that fit learner needs rather than the rigid boundaries of traditional courses, degrees, and academic calendars. Each module is a self-contained learning unit based on the achievement of a specified set of competencies or learning outcomes, and may be self – paced or teacher – led. Modules create greater access and flexibility to learning, to a variety of assessment tools, and to attainment of certification. Modules are self-contained, often having open entry and exit options and / or no pre – or co – requisites. Modules can be learned in a variety of places (e.g., workplace, at home, or in school). In addition, modularization requires and enforces more individual responsibility for learning and self – monitoring. Modularization favors high-ability students who can easily work independently and who are not social learners seeking a group experience. Modules offer more flexibility and choice in tailoring programs to individual needs and individual time schedules. The special education teachers in this study can complete modules at their own pace and have the option of repeating a module as needed, rather than an entire course.

### **THE PRESENT STUDY:**

Based on the data gathered, it was found that the Adversity Quotient (AQ) of the special education teachers was moderately low (77). Based on this result, an Adversity Quotient Program was developed with the objective of increasing their Adversity Quotient. Most of the time, the special education teachers work with limited resources, thus they express the need for a personal development program which would strengthen their ability to persevere through life's daily challenges. According to the Ohio State University Commission of faculty development (1999) “faculty vitality, both from the perspective of professional expertise and from the perspective of enthusiasm and engagement, is a sine qua non of a successful university”. Faculty development is an important component of building and maintaining human capital (<http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/445320/index.pdf>). An area on which faculty development programs focus is the faculty member as a person –personal development (Professional and Organizational Development, 2003). Personal development programs include programs which address the individual's well-being. Faculty development has high payoff potential; thus it is important to design effective programs (Hitchcock and Stritter, 1992).

As special education teachers continuously go through greater challenges there is a growing need to enhance their ability to withstand or surmount adversity. Thus, there is a need to understand one's Adversity Quotient. The ability to withstand adversities is an important aspect in one's quality of life. In the United States, Maricopa Community College used AQ to develop staff who thrive under the “do more with less” demands of the workplace. AQ is used to help individuals strengthen their ability to persevere through life's daily challenges (Stoltz, 1997). Also, in a growing school district, AQ training program was used to help teachers develop the resilience and fortitude to teach with meaning and purpose (Stoltz, 1997). For this action research, the Adversity Quotient (AQ) of the special education teachers was assessed and based on this an AQ Program was developed and validated.

### **METHOD:**

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN:**

This study used the descriptive developmental method as its research design. It sought to assess the effectiveness of the developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) Program in a special education school in Manila.

Triangulation or the collection of information from multiple sources using a variety of methods was utilized. The following sources and methods were used:

1. focus group session
2. One-on-one interview with the School Director
3. Adversity Response Profile Quick Take (1997)

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

This special education school was founded last 2008 and has a total of four (4) special education teachers. For purposes of protecting the identity of these special education teachers, pseudonyms have been used.

### **INSTRUMENTS:**

Data for the study were gathered through a focus group session using a list of guide questions which was developed by the researcher. This list of guide questions was used to identify specific personal development needs of the teachers. A pretest of the guide questions was conducted on three (3) special education teachers from a different school who were not included in the final sample for the study. During the pre-test, the researcher probed for the special education teachers' understanding of the various questions. The special education teachers offered suggestions on a few questions that they felt should have been reworded. The list of guide questions was reworded to be more specific to be able to probe more information during the actual focus group session. An individual interview with the School Director was conducted to determine what the school needs in terms of personal development programs. The participants were also given the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997).

The Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take. The ARP Quick Take provided the researcher with ample information to measure and interpret the AQ of special education teachers. The researcher sought permission from the office of Dr. Stoltz for the use of this tool. The Adversity Response Profile (ARP), full version, is a self-rating questionnaire designed to measure an individual's style of responding to adverse situations (Stoltz, 1997). The ARP is highly reliable, with a reliability coefficient of .88 and no adverse impact based on gender or ethnic background (Stoltz, 1997).

For the ARP, internal consistency, that is, the consistency of answers to all questions within a scale, all four subscores (dimensions) were found to have high reliabilities. Cronbach's coefficient alpha – a measure of the internal-consistency reliability (N=837) of each scale score shows the following: Control = .77; Ownership = .78; Reach = .83; Endurance = .86 ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). Validity has two components: convergent and discriminant validity. Evidence from three validity studies indicates that the ARP is measuring some personal characteristics that relate to job performance and financial success. Thus, the ARP demonstrated good convergent validity. The second component is discriminant validity – two different scales on a questionnaire should measure different things if they have different names. The four scales of the ARP measure different, but somewhat related aspects of AQ. To justify having four subscores, the intercorrelations among those scores should be less than their corresponding reliabilities (Campbell, 1960 cited in [www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)). The highest correlation between scale scores is .55 between Control and Ownership. Next highest are .43 between Reach and Endurance. The other combinations of scale scores have low intercorrelations. None of the intercorrelations among scale scores is as high as the lowest scale reliability; thus, the four scales of the ARP demonstrated good discriminant validity ([www.peaklearning.com](http://www.peaklearning.com)).

### **DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE:**

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the School Director in the Special Education School. Once permission was granted, the first phase of data gathering was the conduct of focus group session with the special education teachers based on the Focus Group Sample Guide Questions. A friendly and non-threatening environment was established. The researcher asked permission to record the discussion on a tape recorder. However, the participants declined that is why note taking was done. If needed, the researcher modified, repeated and clarified or explained the questions and followed up responses with more questions or clarifications based on the purpose of the focus group session. The second phase was the conduct of an individual interview with the School Director based on the Interview Sample Guide Questions.



Again, the School Director declined to have the interview recorded so note taking was done. The next phase was the administration of the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997) to measure the Adversity Quotient (AQ) of the special education teachers. Once the results of the pre-test of the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997) was computed and found out to be *moderately low*, the development of the Adversity Quotient (AQ) Program was the next phase. Upon the completion and content validation of the developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) self-learning modular program, the next step was to distribute the developed AQ modular program to the participants. After a month, the post test was administered. The pretest allowed the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the intervention by comparing pretest and posttest results.

#### DATA ANALYSIS:

Qualitative analysis was utilized to describe the special education teachers in the special school in terms of their Adversity Quotient (AQ). Descriptive statistics was used in determining the Adversity Quotient of the special education teachers. Mean scores were computed per CO<sub>2</sub>RE dimension (control, origin & ownership, reach, and endurance) of AQ to be able to provide for basis in describing special education teachers in terms of (1) control, (2) origin & ownership, (3) reach, and (4) endurance. The average or mean score per CO<sub>2</sub>RE dimension was added together to arrive at the special education teachers' AQ. The participants' mean AQ was computed to be able to provide for basis in describing the special education teachers' AQ. The AQ of the special education teachers in the special school was measured or observed before and after being exposed to the intervention. The pretest or baseline observation allowed the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the intervention by comparing pretest and posttest results. The average scores of the pre test and post test were used as indicators of the AQ of the participants before and after the implementation of the developed AQ Program, and the difference between the two average scores as indicator of the variance of their AQ. The significance of the difference was determined using the test of the significance of the difference between means. The statistical treatment utilized was one-way repeated measures and item analysis also known as t-test for dependent samples (if 2 levels). The t-test of dependent / correlated means was used to determine whether or not there is a significant difference between two groups of correlated scores in terms of means.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

##### THE ADVERSITY QUOTIENT (AQ) OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS:

Respondents were asked to answer the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997). Table 1: Individual and Group Means: The Adversity Quotient (AQ) of Special Education Teachers

Participant	Control	Origin & Ownership	Reach	Endurance	Overall AQ
1	20 low end	23 low end	25 mid-range	20 low end	88 moderately low
2	14 low end	20 low end	8 low end	22 low end	64 moderately low
3	15 low end	17 low end	9 low end	18 low end	59 low
4	20 low end	23 low end	25 mid-range	26 mid-range	94 moderately low
<b>Average</b>	<b>17 low end</b>	<b>21 low end</b>	<b>17 low end</b>	<b>22 low end</b>	<b>77 moderately low</b>

Based on the gathered data, the mean Adversity Quotient (AQ) of the special education teachers is moderately low (77). According to Stoltz (1997), having a moderately low Adversity Quotient (AQ) means that the participants are likely to be underutilizing their potential. The participants may battle a sense of helplessness and despair. They may escape this conundrum by raising their AQ. The CO<sub>2</sub> RE (Control, Origin & Ownership, Reach and Endurance) dimensions should be looked at more closely to fully understand one's AQ (Stoltz, 1997).

In relation to the *control dimension*, the researcher found that the mean score (17) of the participants fell in the low end. Scoring in the low end based on Stoltz's (1997) interpretation means that the participants are more likely to perceive that events are beyond their control and that there is little, if anything, they can do to prevent them or limit their damages (external locus of control). Low perceived control can have a highly detrimental effect on their sense of power to alter the situation. Stoltz (1997) further stressed that those with

significantly low perceived control often feel frozen in the face of adversity. This undermines their ability to ascend. In more severe cases, this may result in a resigned, fatalistic view of life. Scores on the lower end of the scale may indicate a dangerous vulnerability to adversity, increasing its potential toll on one's performance, energy, and soul. The lower score on this dimension, the more one may be worn down than necessary by life's daily vicissitudes. The data gathered from the focus group session with the special education teachers and interview with the School Director showed that they really feel the pressure of their job and the financial problems brought about by their chosen profession really affect them. Also, the special education teachers feel that their stressors are beyond their control. Low perceived control can have a highly detrimental effect on one's sense of power to alter the situation (Stoltz, 1997).

With regard to the second dimension of Adversity Quotient (AQ) which is *origin and ownership*, the researcher found that the mean score of the participants (21) fell in the low end. Stoltz (1997) pointed out that scoring in the low end indicates that the participants may view adversity as primarily their fault and good events as strokes of luck due to external forces. Stoltz (1997) added that perceiving oneself as the origin of bad events can be hard on one's stress level, ego and motivation. They may also deflect ownership, avoiding holding themselves accountable for working to solve the situation. The participants supported this finding as true as seen in the focus group session and interview. The participants said that they feel so emotionally exhausted that is why they need to have personal development programs that would motivate and remind them of their purpose in teaching. This is in harmony with Stoltz's (1997) finding that having a low score on this dimension can be hard on one's stress level, ego and motivation. This also supports the claim of Freeman (1988) that for children with special needs, teachers have to play not only the role of a teacher, but also the role of a nurse and a mother that is why they are prone to burn-out.

As regards the *reach dimension* of AQ, the mean score (17) of the participants fell in the low end. Based on the interpretation of Stoltz (1997), scoring in the low end means that the participants view adversity as bleeding into other areas of their life. Stoltz (1997) stressed that allowing adversity to reach other areas of their life can greatly enhance the weight of the perceived burden and the energy required to make things right. It is interesting to note that two (2) participants scored at the mid-range and the other two (2) scored at the low end. The participants who scored at the low end both have a child that is why they really feel the burden of juggling work and family life. This is in line with Woods' (1989) claim that a potentially stressful situation is set up when a teacher's personal interests, commitment or resources not only get out of line with one or more of the other factors, but actually pull against them. The remaining two (2) participants are on the mid-range. It has been established from previous studies (Arnold and Feldman cited in Bautista, 1998) that stress, depending on how it is experienced, can be negative (distress) or positive (eustress). On the whole, the special education teachers' average score for the reach dimension is in the low end which implies that they allow their personal problems affect their work and/or vice versa. This is supported by the finding of Woods (1989) that teacher stress arises, when elements grate against each other and thus produce a special kind of difficulty which puts an excessive strain on a teacher's personal resources (cited in Nguyen, 2002).

Regarding the fourth dimension which is *endurance*, the mean score (22) of the participants fell in the low end. Based on Stoltz's (1997) interpretation, scoring in the low end indicates that the participants view adversity as enduring. This may, on occasion, delay them from taking constructive action. The narration of the participant with the highest score (26 mid-range) showed that with life's small to moderate challenges, he probably does a good job of keeping faith and forging ahead. Based on the interview, he said that there are days that he would really feel low and would like to give up but he would just remind himself that he cannot let his friends/co-teachers down and that would give him the push to carry on. This is in harmony with the claim of Brown and Ralph (1994), that stress is in the eye of the beholder. They explained that stress is specific to each individual. What one teacher might find to endure (like a problem) is not necessarily stressful for another or vice versa. On the whole, the score on this dimension is on the low end. The responses of the special education teachers which were generated from the focus group session reflect that the teachers perceive that their financial problems have been lingering for quite some time and appears to be a constant problem. This is in line with Stoltz's (1997) claim that people with low score in the endurance dimension perceive adversity to last for a long time.

The results of the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997) indicate that the special education teachers have a moderately low (AQ). Consequently, this implies that the participants are underutilizing their potential. The researcher, based on the gathered data, views this to be remarkable since it concurs with the

findings of Stoltz that at the low end of the AQ continuum are education majors in colleges and universities who score lowest ([www.executiveforum.net](http://www.executiveforum.net)). In the Executive Forum Series (2000), Stoltz stated that among people in the work force, AQ scores on the Adversity Response Profile range from a low of 40 to a high of 200. The international average of AQ is 144. Based on the results of the Adversity Response Profile Quick Take (1997), a self-learning Adversity Quotient (AQ) modular program was developed and validated. As a whole, the special education teachers strongly feel that the faculty development programs given to them should also address the need for personal development. They feel that the faculty development programs conducted in their school was leaning towards professional development. Moreover, based on the results of the focus group session with the special education teachers and interview with the school director, the participants suggest for a personal development program that would make them feel motivated and reinforce their sense of purpose in teaching. Since this special education school is working on a limited budget, they would like to have this passion or high spirits in “doing more with less or making do with what they have” since this is the constant reminder given to them by their School Director. This result is in harmony with the claims of Scott (1990) that faculty development goes beyond the dominant emphasis on teaching. According to him, faculty development is the theory and practice of facilitating improved faculty performance in a variety of domains, including the intellectual, the institutional, the personal, the social and the pedagogical. Based on this definition, it clearly shows that faculty development encompasses all aspects of one’s personality and is holistic. Faculty development has a critical role in promoting academic excellence and innovation. Steinert (2000) highlights that academic vitality is dependent upon faculty members’ interest and expertise. Furthermore, Watson and Grossman (1994) stressed that faculty development promotes improvement in the academy in large part through helping individuals to evolve, unfold, mature, grow, cultivate, produce, and otherwise develop themselves as individuals and as contributors to the academy’s mission.

Constraints for training or faculty development are : common time for the special education teachers, funding for materials/equipment and/or allowance for the special education teachers, and the limited space of the school. Since the school has financial constraints at present, not much funds can be allocated for faculty development as well as the materials and equipment that may be necessary for such activities. This is in harmony with the claims of Gonzalez (cited in Manila Bulletin, 2002) that lack of funds results in the following: lack of instructional materials, facilities, services, and staff development or training. Based on the data gathered and the needs of the respondents, a self-learning Adversity Quotient (AQ) modular program was developed, implemented and evaluated.

### **THE DEVELOPED ADVERSITY QUOTIENT (AQ) PROGRAM:**

The researcher sought permission from Dr. Stoltz regarding the creation of a self-learning modular program for the special education teachers. The program contents were organized based on the studies and researches of Stoltz (1997) on Adversity Quotient. The developed program for special education teachers was content validated by 3 people who are knowledgeable about Adversity Quotient (AQ). Two (2) are graduate students in Master of Science in Industrial/Organizational Psychology in De La Salle University- Manila and the other is a professor in CEU who holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics with specialization in Applied Linguistics from Philippine Normal University –Manila and is an expert in Critical Thinking. These 3 assessed the developed Adversity Quotient program’s validity, as well as each module’s organization and quality.

The developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) self –learning modular Program entitled *Adversity Quotient: Turning Struggles into Success* is divided into 5 modules. The participants would read 1 module per week, except for Modules 1 & 2 which are very light modules and could be read for 1 week. The main components of the program are namely: (1) CORE Human Drive, (2) Three Levels of Adversity, (3) Building Blocks of AQ, (4) CO<sub>2</sub>RE Dimensions and (5) the LEAD Sequence. Each module has the following format: (1) a motivation question or quote, (2) reading input, (3) comprehension check, (4) personal application, (5) reinforcement activity, and (6) assignment. The rationale of the program is to enhance the special education teachers’ resiliency (an ability to recover from or adjust easily to change or misfortune). Its objective is to increase the special education teachers’ Adversity Quotient (AQ) within one (1) month.

### **THE ADVERSITY QUOTIENT (AQ) OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AFTER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEVELOPED AQ PROGRAM:**



After the implementation of the developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) program, a post test was given to the special education teachers. Results of the post test showed that the special education teachers' AQ has improved. Prior the implementation of the developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) Program, the special education teachers' AQ was found to be *moderately low* (77). After the implementation of the developed program, the score in the post test was found to be *moderately high* (147). The t-test for dependent samples was used to determine whether or not there is a significant difference between two groups of correlated scores in terms of means. The results of the pre-test and post test revealed that there was a significant difference in the test scores between the pre-test and post test ( $p=.05$ ).

Table 2: Individual and Group Means: The Adversity Quotient (AQ) of Special Education Teachers after the implementation of the developed AQ Program

Participant	Control	Origin & Ownership	Reach	Endurance	Overall AQ
1	29 mid-range	37 mid-range	40 high end	46 high end	152 moderately high
2	29 mid-range	30 mid-range	43 high end	38 high end	140 moderately high
3	25 mid-range	33 mid-range	41 high end	40 high end	139 moderately high
4	29 mid-range	34 mid-range	48 high end	45 high end	156 moderately high
Average	28 mid-range	34 mid-range	43 high end	42 high end	<b>147 moderately high</b>

Based on the results of the post test, the mean Adversity Quotient (AQ) of the special education teachers was *moderately high* (147). According to Stoltz (1997), having a moderately high Adversity Quotient (AQ) means that the participants are probably doing a fairly good job in persisting through challenges and tapping a good portion of their growing potential on a daily basis. Stoltz (1997) further added that people who have a moderately high AQ can increase their effectiveness by fine tuning certain aspects of their AQ. *The CO<sub>2</sub>RE* (Control, Origin & Ownership, Reach and Endurance) dimensions should be looked at more closely to fully understand one's AQ (Stoltz, 1997).

In relation to the *control dimension*, the researcher found that the mean score (28) of the participants fell in the mid-range. The score in the pre test was in the low end (17). There is an increase of 11 points in this dimension. Scoring in the mid-range based on Stoltz's (1997) interpretation means that the participants may respond to adverse events as at least partially within their control. They are probably not easily disheartened. But according to Stoltz (1997), for people scoring in the mid-range it may be more difficult for them to maintain a sense of control when faced with more serious setbacks or adversities. The data gathered from the focus group session with the special education teachers and interview with the School Director showed that they really feel the pressure of their job and the financial problems brought about by their chosen profession. An increase in score in this dimension shows that their control orientation (internal locus) was strengthened. Some literature (Rotter's cited in Hiele and Ziegler, 1992; Ortigas, 1996) stress that people with internal locus of control feel that they have more influence over their reinforcements than people with an external locus of control orientation. By having an increase in score in the control dimension, this reflects some positive change from having an external locus of control to having an internal locus of control. Greater perceived control leads to a more empowered, proactive approach. The higher the control score, the more likely one is to persist through difficulties. Low perceived control can have a highly detrimental effect on one's sense of power to alter the situation (Stoltz, 1997).

With regard to the second dimension of Adversity Quotient (AQ) which is *origin and ownership*, the researcher found that the mean score of the participants (34) fell in the mid-range. The score in the pre test was in the low end (21). There is an increase of 13 points in this dimension. Stoltz (1997) pointed out that scoring in the mid-range means that one may respond to adverse events as sometimes originating from without and sometimes from oneself. A person, may on occasion blame oneself unnecessarily for bad outcomes of the adversity, but may limit one's accountability to only those things for which one was the direct cause, being unwilling to contribute in a larger way. As seen in the focus group session with the special education teachers and interview with the School Director, the participants said that they feel so stressed and emotionally exhausted that is why they need to have personal development programs such as courses or seminars that would increase their motivation and remind them of their purpose in teaching. This shows that they are aware that they have to address this need and that they should do something about it. Some literature (Weiskopf, 1980; Freeman, 1988) point out that the work of special education teachers is

truly stressful. The suggestion of the special education teachers to have a personal development program shows some accountability on their end to improve their situation. Thus an increase in score in this dimension would be more helpful in terms of ownership for improving situations they had nothing to do with causing.

For the *reach dimension* of AQ, the mean score (43) of the participants fell in the high range. The score in the pre test was in the low end (17). There is an increase of 26 points in this dimension. Based on the interpretation of Stoltz (1997), scoring in the high range means that the higher one's AQ and one's score in this dimension, the more one may respond to adversity as specific and limited. Stoltz (1997) added that the more effectively one contain or compartmentalize the reach of the adversity, the more empowered and less overwhelmed one is likely to feel. Researches (Woods, 1989 cited in Nguyen, 2002; Natrass, 1991) suggest that stress is caused when teacher's personal interests, commitment or resources are conflicting with or among each other. Thus, one's ability to compartmentalize or limit problems makes life's difficulties and challenges more manageable (Stoltz, 1997).

Regarding the fourth dimension which is *endurance*, the mean score (42) of the participants fell in the high end. The score in the pre test was in the low end (22). There is an increase of 20 points in this dimension. Based on Stoltz's (1997) interpretation, scoring in the high end indicates that the participants view success as enduring, if not permanent. Likewise, one may consider adversity and its causes to be temporary. The responses of the special education teachers which were generated from the focus group session reflect that the teachers perceive that their financial problems have been lingering for quite some time and appear to be a constant problem. Thus an increase in score in this dimension would be helpful in terms of their disposition in life. Stoltz (1997) pointed out that a high score in this dimension would enhance one's energy, optimism, and likelihood to take action. He further added that a high score in this dimension indicates a healthy and natural tendency to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

The results of the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) Quick Take (1997) after the implementation of the developed Adversity Quotient (AQ) Program indicate that the special education teachers have a *moderately high AQ* (147). Consequently, this implies that the participants are probably doing a fairly good job of persisting through challenges and tapping a good portion of one's growing potential on a daily basis. Results of the post test showed that the participants' AQ has improved, from moderately low (77) to moderately high (147). In interpreting one's overall AQ, Stoltz (1997 p. 105) stressed that "because AQs fall on a continuum, these cut offs are somewhat arbitrary. There is not a discernible difference between someone with an AQ of 134 and someone with an AQ of 135. There is, however, a difference between people with low, moderate, and high AQs." In this study, the results of the pre test and post test revealed that there was a significant difference in the test scores between the pre test and post test ( $p=.05$ ).

The present study forwards the recommendation that special education schools may use the theory and practice of AQ as part of their faculty development programs to instill individual adversity awareness as well as to determine the areas for enhancement of their teachers in order to make them more resilient and competent members of the school.

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