




ORIGINAL

Level of work stress in teachers from several schools in the province of Santo Domingo

Nivel de estrés laboral en docentes de varios colegios de la provincia de Santo Domingo

Ruthr Calderón Landívar¹, María Angeline Carrera Macías¹, Erika Calazacón Aguavil¹, Fredy Jenrry Mariela Chávez-Arizala¹ 

¹Instituto Superior Tecnológico Adventista del Ecuador, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Ecuador.


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ABSTRACT

Introduction: stress is a condition that is currently common in the workplace, being a physiological reaction to difficult or demanding situations.

Objective: to determine the level of work stress in teachers from several schools in the province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, 2021.

Method: quantitative, applied research, the sample consisted of 120 teachers from different schools who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria; the ED-6 scale was applied, which consisted of 6 dimensions and 27 questions related to anxiety, depression, pressure, discouragement, etc.

Results: they indicated that stress is found in a high rate among teachers, correlating physiological responses, psychosocial and emotional factors to mental and physical demand, therefore, it was found that 39 % of the respondents suffer from tension at work corresponding to the anxiety dimension, being only surpassed by the dimension of stress due to poor coping with a percentage of 51 %.

Conclusions: teachers have normal stress levels due to anxiety and poor coping, and low levels due to depression, maladaptive beliefs, pressures and demotivation. Although stress can affect their adaptation to changes, the work environment is positive, which suggests that it does not significantly impact their performance or general well-being.

Keywords: Stress; Teachers; Variables; Work; Anxiety.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el estrés es una afección que en la actualidad es común padecerla en el ámbito laboral, siendo esta una reacción fisiológica frente a las situaciones difíciles o demandantes,

Objetivo: determinar el nivel de estrés laboral en docentes de varios colegios de la provincia de Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, 2021.

Método: investigación cuantitativa, aplicada, la muestra estuvo conformada por 120 docentes de los diferentes colegios quienes cumplían con los criterios de inclusión y exclusión; se aplicó la escala ED-6, que se conformó por 6 dimensiones y 27 preguntas relacionadas con la ansiedad, depresión, presión, desánimo, etc.

Resultados: indicaron que el estrés sí se encuentra en un alto índice entre los docentes correlacionando respuestas fisiológicas, factores psicosociales y emocionales a la demanda mental y física, por lo tanto, se obtuvo que el 39 % de los encuestados padecen tensión en el trabajo correspondiendo a la dimensión de ansiedad, siendo solamente superada por la dimensión del estrés por mal afrontamiento con un porcentaje del 51 %.

Conclusiones: los docentes tienen niveles de estrés normal por ansiedad y mal afrontamiento, y bajo

por depresión, creencias desadaptativas, presiones y desmotivación. Aunque el estrés puede afectar su adaptación a cambios, el clima laboral es positivo, lo que sugiere que no impacta significativamente en su desempeño ni bienestar general.

Palabras clave: Estrés; Docentes; Variables; Laboral; Ansiedad.

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO)⁽¹⁾ and the International Labor Organization (ILO)⁽²⁾, approximately 36 % of workers worldwide work more than 48 hours a week, leading to health and safety problems. Because of this, the organizations above are concerned since this problem is increasing; the concern expressed is related to a global population of 30 %, which suffers from this problem even more in industrialized countries.^(3,4)

Cleofes⁽⁵⁾ states that in Latin America, 40 % of workers suffer from stress; however, through a search for information, Ecuador was found to be the country with the second highest percentage of stress in Latin America, reaching a figure of 54 % Venezuela with a figure of 63 %, with women being more vulnerable to stress with a figure of 44,8 % and men with 36,7 %.

According to Bustillos et al.⁽⁶⁾ in Santo Domingo, the amount or percentage of the problem mentioned above in the teaching area is increasing a dangerously high way; there are 43 cases of Emotional Exhaustion EE (61 %), 23 cases of Depersonalization D (30 %), and 22 cases of Personal Accomplishment PA (8,57 %), currently there are no data on the problem in the Instituto Superior Tecnológico Adventista del Ecuador (ITSAE), which is why the present investigation will be carried out.

According to Castillo et al., seven of the risk factors for the development of the problem above in teachers are facing major conflicts in their activities due to the increase of tasks in which they were not trained, poor recognition in the execution of assigned tasks, performing administrative functions and changes of roles to which they are constantly subjected, Sanchez⁽⁸⁾ also refers that there are socio-labor factors that affect the teacher, such as the labor condition that in some cases are hired for a short period and others who enjoy job stability, these are the ones who have higher levels of stress; In addition, they are overloaded at work and have little social support, which leads to dissatisfaction and stress.

Physical stress refers to the physiological reaction of the body to different triggers, and this type of stress often leads to psychological stress and, in turn, is often experienced as physical discomfort, while mental stress is produced by anguish and worries, in many cases of an economic or emotional nature, problems at work, among other things.^(9,10)

In turn, Chiang⁽¹¹⁾ reported that he conducted a research study whose purpose was to study the relationship between the level of job stress and job satisfaction, for which he used a cross-sectional, descriptive correlational empirical study and a questionnaire known as Karasek's Model, which was applied to a population of 184 workers. The results obtained using this instrument and study were, for job satisfaction between 0,656 and 0,923, for job stress, and that psychological demands or demands are negatively related to satisfaction and, therefore, to how the work is performed and satisfaction with autonomy. In conclusion, those individuals or work groups that have fixed-term contracts and suffer from excessive psychological demands have a greater negative impact on satisfaction; in other words, if there is an increase in psychological demands, job satisfaction decreases on a larger scale.

Chavarría et al.⁽¹²⁾ aimed to identify the presence of burnout syndrome in medical personnel dedicated to teaching work; the research population consisted of 36 physicians; their study was observational, cross-sectional, and descriptive, and in order to carry out the sex mentioned above, age, personal relationships, etc. were taken into account. The CBP-R questionnaire explored two antecedent factors and one of the consequences. The results were obtained from 12 undergraduate and four postgraduate physicians diagnosed with a high level on the burnout scale. In conclusion, burnout is deeply linked to personal concerns, lack of organization, and sociodemographic and organizational variables that significantly influence the appearance of this condition in teachers.

Objective: To determine the level of occupational stress in teachers of several schools in Santo Domingo, 2021.

METHOD

For the development of the project corresponding to stress, a maximum of 150 teachers from different institutions corresponding to the province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, with ages between 20 - 55 years and similar characteristics such as profession and clinical picture: fatigue, sleepiness, overwork, discouragement, pathologies, among others, were taken as the population.

To determine the sample, a non-probabilistic sampling by convenience was used, and for this purpose, 110 teachers from different schools were taken into account who met the inclusion criteria between 20 and 55 years

of age, with factors of mental fatigue, discouragement, job dissatisfaction, physical and mental pathologies, as well as the exclusion criteria in those under 20 years of age with teachers from other institutions related to factors of well-being, satisfaction and another type of profession.

Data collection instruments

Questionnaire ED-6

The questionnaire will be provided, which is a series of statements where the respondent must show his agreement on a Likert-type scale of five numbers to indicate to what extent he agrees or disagrees with each item on a five-point scale (1 = disagree, 5 = agree), with a total of 27 questions, for which dimensions are anxiety stress, depression stress, stress by maladaptive beliefs, stress by demotivation, stress by pressure and stress by poor coping; In addition, the total of the items will provide a total measure of the teachers' stress, which was also maintained for approximately 10 to 15 minutes after answering the survey.

Many definitions of stress have been offered, although they could be grouped into three approaches: stress as a stimulus, stress as a response, and the interactive approach. The first approach would define *stress* as an environmental condition and, consequently, would be devoted to identifying the different sources of pressure (stress) that impact individuals. Physiological, cognitive, and behavioral responses would be the stress responses resulting from stress.

The ED6 Scale was developed to measure the stress or discomfort of teachers to use it in a broader framework of research on this phenomenon; in addition to developing this Scale to measure the stress of teachers, its objective was to try to make it applicable in all stages of education that are Early Childhood Education, Primary, Secondary, Baccalaureate and Vocational Training.

Collecting the different types of approaches over time:

The first approach would define *stress* as an environmental condition and, consequently, would be dedicated to identifying the different sources of pressure (stress) that impact people. The second approach, stress as a response, was pioneered by Selye in 1956 when he proposed his General Adaptation Syndrome and the interactive approach, represented by Lazarus' Transactional Model; it should be added that when constructing the Scale, items were included to collect the situations most frequently cited as a source of pressure in teaching and also items showing the most common stress responses. In addition, items were included that tried to measure intervening aspects within the interactive stress model, such as coping responses, beliefs about teaching, and motivation.⁽¹³⁾

The first step in the correction of this test is to add up the answers to each of the items of each subscale, so that, for example, all the answers to the items in the questionnaire that are shaded in purple and correspond to the Anxiety factor will be added up first, The resulting direct score to be placed in the corresponding box of the table at the end of the questionnaire, in the same way will proceed in the rest of the subscales, with the exception of the last three (Pressures, Demotivation and Poor coping) in which it can be observed, in some of the items, asterisks at the end of them, these asterisks indicate that these items are inverted, so that when adding the answers they must also be inverted, in this way, if in these items a 1 has been answered, 5 will be added, if 2 has been answered, 4 will be added, if 3 has been answered, 3 will also be added, if 4 has been answered, 2 will be added and, finally, if you answer 5, add 1 and once the direct scores of each subscale have been calculated, proceed to the sum of all of them, the resulting score being the one corresponding to the direct score of "teaching stress" and in this way, the totality of the first column of the result table will be completed.⁽¹³⁾

The next step would consist of consulting in the correspondence table the percentile to which this direct score is equivalent for each subscale and for the Scale as a whole (teacher stress) and thus, these percentiles will be placed in the second of the columns, once the percentiles have been established, In general, percentiles lower than 20 would indicate a very low level in the subscale or the Scale as a whole, between 21 and 40 would be a low level, between 41 and 60 normal, between 61 and 80 moderate and more than 80 high.⁽¹³⁾

The psychological instrument has proven reliable and valid for assessing teacher stress. It presents acceptable psychometric properties, taking into account that the Alpha Coefficient of all the factors is between 0,74 and 0,89, and the overall reliability of the Scale is 0,93.⁽¹³⁾

When applying the questionnaire (ED-6), the answers were kept anonymous in order to provide security, confidence, and freedom of expression when answering the questions. The objective of the research is to improve the quality of life of teachers, so the research to be carried out should provide results for decision-making and positive changes in the work and personal lives of the individuals involved in the project.

The fair choice of the subjects: When carrying out and sending the questionnaire to the teachers of several institutions in the province of Santo Domingo, it must be remembered that they are busy people, so no pressure should be exerted when asking them to complete the questionnaire. Respect is an important aspect since, as human beings, it is important to give the respect we wish to receive, not only for being professionals but also to keep in mind that they are people with a schedule, and when asking them for a favor to do it in the right way.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the percentages referring to marital status, gender, and age of the respondents. As for the marital status corresponding to the single category of the female gender corresponds to 33 %, of which 20 % are between 20 and 30 years of age, 6 % are between 30 and 40 years of age, and 7 % are over 50 years of age. Regarding the same marital status of the male gender, the first age range corresponds to 19 %; the second and third range corresponds to 2 %. Regarding marital status, 20 % of females are married, of which 7 % are between 20 and 30, 9 % are between 30 and 40, and 4 % are over 50. Related Male gender el 2 % The majority of these patients are between 20 and 30 years of age, 11 % between 30 and 40 years of age and 10 % over 50 years of age.

	Single				Married			
	F		M		F		M	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30	26	20 %	25	19 %	9	7 %	3	2 %
30-40	8	6 %	3	2 %	12	9 %	14	11 %
More than 50	9	7 %	3	2 %	5	4 %	13	10 %
Total	43	33 %	31	24 %	26	20 %	30	23 %

In table 2, the percentages are detailed and are related to each of the questions of the anxiety stress dimension: 48 % of the respondents agree that they spend the day thinking about things at work, 39 % of the respondents agree that in many moments of the day, they feel tense, 35 % of the respondents agree that the tension of work alters their sleeping habits, 31 % of the respondents are indifferent because it is difficult for them to concentrate at work, 28 % disagree because they easily lose their patience with work things, 17 % disagree because work problems make them aggressive, and 17 % disagree because work problems make them aggressive work problems make him aggressive.

	Totally agree		Agreed		Indifferent		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	1. I spend the day thinking about work stuff.	63	48 %	38	29 %	13	10 %	11	8 %	5
2. At many times during the workday I feel tense.	41	32 %	51	39 %	29	22 %	5	4 %	4	3 %
3. The stress of work is disrupting my sleep habits.	27	21 %	46	35 %	34	26 %	14	11 %	9	7 %
4. I find it hard to concentrate when I get to work.	19	15 %	34	26 %	40	31 %	25	19 %	12	9 %
5. I believe that work problems are affecting my physical health.	19	15 %	40	31 %	37	28 %	20	15 %	14	11 %
6. Work problems make me aggressive.	14	11 %	25	19 %	37	28 %	32	25 %	22	17 %
7. I easily lose patience with things at work.	9	7 %	31	24 %	34	26 %	36	28 %	20	15 %
8. The stress at work is altering my eating habits.	18	14 %	37	28 %	37	28 %	27	21 %	11	8 %

In table 3, it can be evaluated that the percentages related to each of the questions of the depression stress dimension, 8 % of the respondents feel like crying, as well as they tend to be pessimistic before the work problems; they also feel sad very often and also the work problems weaken them, 29 % of the respondents agree that they have the feeling that they are emotionally broken down, 35 % of the respondents have a lack of energy to face the work of the teacher, 28 % of the respondents disagree because they feel that work problems weaken them and 23 % of the respondents disagree that they have the feeling that they are emotionally broken down.

About the question of the dimension of stress due to maladaptive beliefs, 17 % (22) of the respondents agree that the teacher's salary is not very motivating, 34 % (44) of the respondents agree, 25 % (32) are indifferent, 18 % (24) disagree, and 6 % (8) disagree.

In table 4, it can be analyzed that the percentages related to each of the questions of the pressure stress dimension: 21 % of the respondents say that in their classes, there is a good climate, 30 % of the respondents agree that they end the work days exhausted, 32 % of the respondents are indifferent because they find it difficult to carry out curricular programs, 32 % of the respondents are also exhausted and feel consumed by the work, 19 % of the respondents disagree that they find it difficult to carry out curricular programs and 12 % of the respondents disagree because as the workday progresses, they feel more and more the need for it to end.

Table 3. Depressive stress

	Totally agree		Agreed		Indifferent		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
9. I often feel like crying.	11	8 %	30	23 %	33	25 %	27	21 %	29	22 %
10. I get too sad about problems at work.	9	7 %	29	22 %	35	27 %	30	23 %	27	21 %
11. I tend to be pessimistic about problems at work.	11	8 %	26	20 %	34	26 %	31	24 %	28	22 %
12. I feel sad more often than what was normal for me.	11	8 %	30	23 %	33	25 %	28	22 %	28	22 %
13. I have the feeling of falling apart emotionally.	9	7 %	38	29 %	34	26 %	19	15 %	30	23 %
14. I feel that problems at work weaken me.	10	8 %	30	23 %	34	26 %	36	28 %	20	15 %
15. I lack the energy to face the work of a teacher.	7	5 %	27	21 %	46	35 %	29	22 %	21	16 %

Table 4. Pressure stress

	Totally agree		Agreed		Indifferent		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
17. I find it difficult to carry out Curricular Programs.	13	10 %	36	28 %	42	32 %	25	19 %	14	11 %
18. As the workday progresses, I feel more and more the need for it to end.	13	10 %	37	28 %	40	31 %	25	19 %	15	12 %
19. In my classes there is a good working atmosphere.	27	21 %	35	27 %	38	29 %	21	16 %	9	7 %
20. I finish my work days exhausted.	15	12 %	39	30 %	42	32 %	25	19 %	9	7 %
21. I feel consumed by work.	14	11 %	37	28 %	41	32 %	24	18 %	14	11 %

Table 5 shows the percentages related to each of the questions of the demotivation stress dimension: 10 % of respondents strongly agree that they feel reluctance before many work tasks, 30 % of respondents agree and are indifferent that their work is monotonous, 24 % of respondents disagree that they feel reluctance before many work tasks and 22 % of respondents strongly disagree because they have lost motivation for teaching.

Table 5. Stress due to demotivation

	Totally agree		Agreed		Indifferent		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
22. I have lost my motivation for teaching.	7	5 %	36	28 %	37	28 %	22	17 %	28	22 %
23. In many of my work tasks I am overwhelmed with reluctance.	13	10 %	29	22 %	37	28 %	31	24 %	20	15 %
24. I find my work monotonous.	9	7 %	39	30 %	39	30 %	28	22 %	15	12 %

Table 6 evaluates the percentages related to each of the questions in the dimension of stress due to poor coping: 26 % of respondents strongly agree that their social relations outside the institution are good, 51 % of respondents agree that they cope effectively with the problems that sometimes arise with colleagues, 19 % are indifferent because they easily solve work problems, 12 % disagree that they easily solve work problems and 7 % strongly disagree that social relations in the institution are not good.

Table 6. Stress due to poor coping

	Totally agree		Agreed		Indifferent		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
25. I am an easy problem solver at work.	28	22 %	55	42 %	25	19 %	15	12 %	7	5 %
26. My social relationships outside the institution (family, partner, friends, etc.) are very good.	34	26 %	52	40 %	25	19 %	10	8 %	9	7 %
27. I deal effectively with problems that sometimes arise with colleagues.	23	18 %	66	51 %	22	17 %	11	8 %	8	6 %

DISCUSSION

The general objective of this research was to determine the level of Stress in teachers of several schools in the province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas. The results showed that Stress is present in a high degree index among teachers of educational institutions in Santo Domingo; because of this, it was decided to support the Roy model since it defines *Stress* as a response to a situation that involves a colossal physical and mental demand. Finally, the results obtained were corroborated by the original article by Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾ entitled

Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America, and Europe, published by Purposes and Relationships, in Lima, Peru, in which they also conclude the presence of Stress at a high level among teachers, since the data from that research were similar to the figures acquired in the present study.

A higher index of 48 % in the first question related to thinking about work during the day, and in the second question, the alteration of sleep habits with 35 %. Therefore, the results obtained from the first objective were corroborated with the thesis of Pazán Torres⁽³⁾ entitled Burnout syndrome and the emotional affectations of high school teachers of the 05D01 2018 educational district, for obtaining a master's degree in human talent management, at the Technical University of Ambato, in Ecuador, where he refers to Stress and emotions, so anxiety was determined as a key part for the development of this condition; This section also included Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾ who in his original article entitled Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America and Europe, published by Purposes and Relationships, in Lima, Peru, obtained figures which indicate a significant correlation between teacher stress and psychosocial components ($p=,000$); prevailing several factors among them anxiety, however, despite the results of the investigations of Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾ and Pazán Torres⁽¹⁴⁾ mentioned above, where anxiety is found in a high percentage, but the results of the unpublished thesis of Parihuamán-Aniceto,⁽¹⁵⁾ differ from the previous research works, since in this thesis the development of Stress is not linked to a higher degree to anxiety, in other words, there is no presence of a key correlation with this condition.

The lack of energy to face the work of a teacher was higher with a level of 35 %, followed by the feeling of emotional collapse with an index of 29 %, which leads to determining that discouragement is present in greater proportion in the workplace, it is worth mentioning that this factor is one of the most common in this problem and therefore is closely linked to Stress; Therefore, concerning the above mentioned, Roy's hypothesis is accepted since, for depression to be generated, the excessive presence of mental Stress is necessary; due to the above mentioned, the data were confirmed by Alvites-Huamani, five who in her original article entitled Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America and Europe, published by Purposes and Relationships, in Lima, Peru, obtained results, which indicate the significant correlation between teachers' Stress and psychosocial components, ($p<. 001$); prevailing several factors among them depression.

The highest percentage, 34 % of the respondents, agreed that the salary was not very motivating, and 25 % were indifferent to the salary being not very motivating, so the relationship between salary and the development of Stress is closely linked to both factors. Therefore, Roy's model is accepted since if the salary is not very motivating and the work activities are very demanding, this leads to mental Stress, which is why an adequate salary is needed to support the family and pay debts. These results refer to the article by Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾ entitled Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America, and Europe since maladaptive beliefs are correlated with psychosocial components and, therefore, to Stress.

Thirty percent of the respondents agree that they finish their workdays exhausted, and 32 % of the respondents are indifferent to making curricular programs, find it difficult, also finish their workdays exhausted and feel consumed by the work, showing that depending on the activity to be performed, the pressure is easier to cope with or more complicated. Therefore, Roy's Model is accepted since fatigue is a natural physiological reaction to the great physical and mental demands of being under pressure. The results were corroborated by the research work of Pazán Torres⁽¹⁴⁾ in her unpublished thesis entitled Burnout Syndrome and the Emotional Affectations of High School Teachers in the Educational District, in which she shows that 29,6 % feel tired at the end of the workday, with a higher percentage in the educational units of the city of Santo Domingo, thus correlating pressure and Stress.

Thirty percent of those surveyed agree and are indifferent to the fact that their work is monotonous; 24 % of those surveyed disagree and feel reluctance before many work tasks, so it can be understood that monotony and reluctance are the main factors related to the lack of motivation of teachers. Due to the results obtained, Roy's model is accepted since it relates to the psychological field where demotivation is a participating factor in the field above, and monotony is the triggering factor. These results are intrinsically linked to Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾, which, in his original article entitled Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America, and Europe, shows that these psychosocial factors affect the mood and psychological state of the teacher.

It can be understood that a higher percentage of teachers maintain good relationships and manage to cope with situations, which leads to identifying that there is no bad coping in the face of events. Therefore, despite being related to the emotional environment, Roy's Model is discarded in this case since there is a positive behavior and no triggers to generate a higher stress index. The results obtained were corroborated by Alvites-Huamani⁽⁵⁾ entitled Stress in teachers and psychosocial factors in teachers in Latin America, North America, and Europe, which shows that having an adequate level of coping with these situations is very low; however, the teachers of the educational institutions to which the questionnaire was applied are in a higher percentage concerning an adequate confrontation with this condition.

Limitations and topics for future research

The present research work was carried out successfully; however, there were limitations to its correct development, among them bias, since there is the possibility that in any of the stages, an error may be present, and therefore, the results obtained from the study, the data collected, as well as the conclusions derived from it, may be erroneous; Lack of representativeness, because the population with which the research was intended to be carried out would be much larger, but due to the lack of cooperation from the individuals of the different institutions, the population was reduced in such a way that the same number of individuals was the total of the sampling, this led to a decrease in the amount of information that needed to be obtained; scarce scientific knowledge on the part of the researchers since they lacked more scientific inquiry and a little more understanding of the subject being treated. For future research, it is expected that the data obtained from this study may be useful, so it is recommended that future researchers address topics such as the effects of Stress and its impact on health, how to prevent the effects of Stress, psychological Stress, physical Stress and anxiety, Stress, and its disorders.

CONCLUSIONS

The teachers present varied levels of stress: normal due to anxiety and poor coping and low due to depression, maladaptive beliefs, pressures, and demotivation. This indicates that, although stress due to anxiety and poor coping may affect their adaptation to change, their work climate is generally positive. It does not significantly impact their performance or well-being.

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AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Data curation: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Formal Analysis: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Research: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Methodology: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Project Administration: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Resources: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Software: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Supervision: Calderon R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Validation: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Visualization: Calderon R, Carrera MA, Calazacon EM, Chavez JF.

Drafting - original draft: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.

Writing - proofreading and editing: Calderón R, Carrera MA, Calazacón EM, Chávez JF.