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Stress and Coping Strategies Among Teachers: Inputs to the Development of a Wellness Plan

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational study examined occupational stress levels and coping strategies among teachers, both overall and across demographic profiles including age, sex, teaching experience, and educational attainment. It further investigated significant differences and relationships among these variables as a baseline for intervention. Using random sampling, 30 private school teachers completed adapted surveys based on the Teacher Stress Inventory (Fimian, 1984) and Brief COPE Inventory (Carver, 1997). Descriptive data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while inferential data were evaluated using independent samples *t*-tests, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson product-moment correlation. Findings revealed a predominantly young, female workforce with 0–10 years of experience and bachelor's degrees. Teachers reported high overall occupational stress, with workload identified as the primary stressor. Participants utilized coping strategies to a great extent, favoring problem-focused approaches. While no significant differences in stress levels were observed across demographic variables, coping strategies differed significantly by sex. A significant moderate positive correlation emerged between stress levels and coping strategies, indicating that higher stress prompted increased coping efforts. These empirical findings directly informed the development of a targeted Teachers' Wellness Plan.

Keywords: *Teacher Stress, Coping Strategies, Occupational Stress, Problem-Focused Coping, Teachers' Wellness Plan, Brief COPE, Teacher Stress Inventory*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is among the most demanding professions. Beyond instructional planning, teachers must handle several administrative duties, manage student behavior in their classrooms, and address learners' individual needs. Added to this is the expectation that teachers do all of this while still performing their duties and functions professionally. These demands have resulted in the teaching profession being highly stressful.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized that stress and burnout among teachers have risen across the globe and have a negative impact on the retention of teachers, the quality of instruction, and the climate of the classroom (Doan et al., 2023). This is in line with the findings of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that prolonged work-related stress resulted in teaching being less effective and learning outcomes being negatively impacted due to emotional exhaustion of teachers. Previous studies have identified workload, administrative responsibilities, classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and organizational conditions as important sources of teacher stress (Comia, 2022; Doria & Cruz, 2024; Ghasemi, 2025; Kotowski et al., 2022). Workload, in particular,

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has been associated with increased stress and emotional exhaustion among teachers, particularly when administrative duties, extended working hours, and preparation requirements become excessive (Comia, 2022; Tsubono & Mitoku, 2023).

Teacher stress can also be understood through the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which views stress as a dynamic process involving individuals' cognitive appraisal of demands and their perceived resources for managing those demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). From this perspective, occupational demands do not automatically produce the same level of stress in all teachers because individuals may evaluate and respond to similar situations differently. Classroom management and student-related concerns may likewise influence teachers' stress responses, while organizational support and professional relationships may contribute to teachers' occupational well-being (Duan et al., 2024; Nwoko et al., 2023). Thus, examining both sources of stress and teachers' responses to these demands is important in understanding occupational stress in educational settings.

Coping strategies are the cognitive and behavioral efforts used to manage stressful situations. The Brief COPE framework identifies various coping responses that can be broadly examined through problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-oriented strategies (Carver, 1997). Research among teachers suggests that planning, active coping, social support, and positive reframing may facilitate adaptation to occupational demands, whereas persistent reliance on avoidance may be associated with less favorable well-being outcomes (Aulén et al., 2021; Gómez et al., 2024; Herman et al., 2020). These findings suggest that teachers' coping strategies are an important consideration when examining occupational stress and developing interventions to support teacher well-being.

Despite the growing body of international research on teacher stress and coping, context-specific evidence among teachers in Philippine schools remains important. Understanding the stressors experienced by teachers and the coping strategies they employ can provide schools with empirical evidence for developing appropriate wellness interventions. A teachers' wellness plan based on identified stressors and coping patterns may provide a more responsive approach than relying solely on general wellness recommendations.

Anchored primarily in the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), with support from McGrath's Stress Theory, Cox's Model of Occupational Stress, and Hettler's Six Dimensions of Wellness Theory, this study aimed to determine teachers' stress levels and coping strategies as a basis for proposing a teachers' wellness plan.

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, years of teaching experience, and educational attainment;
2. determine the stress levels of the respondents in terms of school environment, workload, and classroom management;
3. determine the coping strategies of the respondents in terms of problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance coping;
4. determine whether significant differences exist in teachers' stress levels when classified according to sex, age, teaching experience, and educational attainment;
5. determine whether significant differences exist in teachers' coping strategies when classified according to sex, age, teaching experience, and educational attainment;
6. determine whether a significant relationship exists between teachers' stress levels and coping strategies; and
7. propose a teachers' wellness plan based on the findings of the study.

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METHODS

Research Design

The research design used in this study was quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational. Quantitative research involves the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to discover relationships and patterns that can be generalized to a larger population (Cohen et al., 2018). It is especially useful for studying behavioral or psychological constructs, such as teacher stress and coping, because it permits an objective, measurement-based examination.

This design was employed for the present study to find out the levels of stress and coping methods among teachers. More specifically, the descriptive part identified and described the level of stress and the coping mechanisms used by teachers, without manipulating the variables. The comparative component investigated whether there were significant differences in levels of stress and coping when teachers were grouped based on demographic characteristics. The correlational component investigated the relationship between teacher stress and coping methods.

Data was collected through structured questionnaires that allowed for the systematic collection of numerical data on teachers' stress levels and coping methods. In comparative analyzes, T-tests were used for the comparison of two groups and ANOVA for the comparison of more than two groups. The study investigated several coping types such as problem-focused, emotion-focused, avoidance, and social support coping. It further investigated the effect of demographic variables, including age, sex, years of teaching and academic qualifications, on stress and coping methods (Nguyen & Le, 2022; Sandilos et al., 2023).

This quantitative research design enabled a more thorough comprehension of the patterns, differences, and relationships among teacher stress and coping methods within their real-world context and provided insights that can inform educational policies and support systems.

Context or Locale

The study was conducted in a private school in Dumangas, Iloilo, Philippines. The locale was selected because it provided access to the target teacher-participants and was appropriate for examining teachers' stress levels and coping strategies. The school's willingness to participate and its accessibility also facilitated the conduct of the study and the collection of the necessary data.

Participants

This study surveyed 30 private school teachers in Dumangas using random sampling, which ensured each eligible teacher classified by sex, age, years of teaching, and educational attainment had an equal chance of selection. Inclusion criteria required respondents to be 24–59 years old, male or female, and employed full-time as classroom teachers during the study period. Teachers who did not meet these criteria were excluded.

Instruments and Materials

The main instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire, utilizing Likert-type scales, and combining the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) of Fimian (1984) and the Brief COPE Inventory of Carver (1997), both recognized tools for assessing stress and coping. The survey comprised sections on demographics, teacher stress (across workload, classroom management, and school environment domains), and coping strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance). Content validity was ensured by a panel of three experts. A pilot test was conducted in a private school in Cabugao, Pavia, Iloilo, involving 30 teachers with similar characteristics to the intended respondents who were not part of the main study. This established reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.948 for stress and 0.823 for coping, confirming the instrument's strong internal consistency and suitability for the main study.

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Data Gathering and Analysis Procedure

The data collection procedure for this study followed a systematic sequence to ensure ethical compliance, accuracy, and data integrity. Before conducting the study, the researcher secured an endorsement from the dean, ethical clearance from Research Ethics Review Board and obtained permission from the school director through school principal of a private school in Dumangas.

The adapted questionnaire, based on the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) and Brief COPE Inventory, underwent validation and reliability testing, and ethical clearance was obtained. During the data collection phase, teachers who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate through the school's Guidance Counselor. After providing informed consent, respondents completed the questionnaire, which was expected to take 10–15 minutes. The questionnaires were distributed and collected face-to-face, with participation being voluntary and confidential. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness, encoded in Microsoft Excel, and stored in a secure, password-protected drive accessible only to the researcher, adviser, and statistician.

For data processing, all questionnaires were carefully reviewed, organized, tabulated, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize demographic profiles and determine overall stress and coping levels among teachers. Stress and coping levels were interpreted using established mean ranges. Inferential statistics were employed to examine significant differences and relationships: t-tests and one-way ANOVA assessed differences across demographic variables, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation evaluated the relationship between stress levels and coping strategies. The interpretation of Pearson's r followed standard guidelines for strength of association. Findings informed the development of a proposed teachers' wellness plan.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on determining the stress levels experienced by teachers and the coping strategies they employed. It aimed to provide valuable inputs for developing an effective wellness plan. The study was conducted from October 2025 to August 2026. This duration encompassed the entire research process, including data collection, analysis, reporting, and submission of the final output of the study.

The participants were selected according to the established inclusion criteria and according to their availability during the data collection period. The results may not be generalizable to teachers in other schools, institutions or geographical areas since the study was conducted in only one school and involved a relatively small number of participants. The study was limited to thirty (30) teachers of one private school in Dumangas, Iloilo, Philippines. The results may not be applicable to teachers in other schools or places because the sample size was small and the study only looked at one school. The study was of a quantitative, descriptive-comparative-correlational design, meaning it analyzed differences and relationships between variables, but did not demonstrate causality.

Data were collected using adapted self-report questionnaires based on the Teacher Stress Inventory and Brief COPE Inventory. Results were therefore dependent on the honesty and accuracy of the participants in responding to the instruments and may be subject to self-report bias. The study was limited to workload, classroom management, school environment as dimensions of stress and problem-focused, emotion-focused and avoidance coping methods. Other factors that might affect teachers' stress and coping were not considered.

Finally, the study findings were used to develop the proposed Teachers' Wellness Plan. However, the plan was not implemented or evaluated in the study. The effectiveness of the proposal will have to be evaluated in the future implementation and assessment.

Ethical Considerations

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This study adhered to ethical standards, securing approval from the CPU Research Ethics Review Board and the participating school. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained and the right to withdraw at any time upheld. The study posed negligible risk, maintained participant anonymity and confidentiality, and used data solely for research purposes. The research aimed to benefit teachers, school leaders, and policy makers by informing interventions to support teacher well-being and stress management. All data will be securely stored and disposed of after the study period. No conflicts of interest were declared.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study indicated that teachers experienced high occupational stress while using coping strategies to a very great extent in managing the demands of their profession. Participants showed that workload and classroom management were the most prominent sources of stress, while problem-focused coping was the most commonly used strategy. These coping strategies enabled teachers to actively manage work-related demands, address classroom challenges, and respond to stressful situations. The findings emphasize that teacher stress is closely connected to the everyday demands of the teaching profession and that effective coping plays an important role in maintaining teachers' well-being. The moderate positive relationship between stress and coping further suggests that teachers tend to increase their coping efforts as their perceived stress increases. These findings are consistent with the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which emphasizes that individuals respond to stress through cognitive appraisal and coping processes shaped by the demands and resources within their environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).
The Results and Discussion are organized according to the seven research objectives of the study. Each objective is presented and discussed in relation to the corresponding findings, relevant literature, and theoretical perspectives. The seven objectives examine: (1) the demographic profile of the respondents; (2) the level of teachers' occupational stress; (3) the coping strategies used by teachers; (4) differences in occupational stress according to selected demographic characteristics; (5) differences in coping strategies according to selected demographic characteristics; (6) the relationship between occupational stress and coping strategies; and (7) the development of a Teachers' Wellness Plan based on the findings of the study. This organization allows the results to be directly aligned with the research objectives while highlighting their practical implications for teacher well-being.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 showed the age, sex, educational level, and teaching experience of the respondents. The results indicated that most private school teachers were younger (70%), aged between 24 and 41 years, and 70% had 0-10 years of teaching experience. This demographic profile reflected a faculty that was predominantly young and in the early to mid-stages of their careers. The data also revealed that the teaching workforce was mainly female, with 86.67% women and 13.33% men.

Regarding educational attainment, half of the respondents held a Bachelor's Degree, while the rest were postgraduates—13.33% had earned a Master's Degree, and 36.67% had completed some Master's level coursework. Collectively, these findings suggested that the teaching staff at the private school stayed actively engaged in professional growth and continued to build their expertise through experience.

The study's demographic data confirmed that young, early-career teachers predominated, echoing the findings of Sandilos et al. (2023), who noted that age and years of teaching experience significantly affected teachers' perceptions of workload and professional strategies. The high proportion of female teachers further reflected the broader trend of feminization within the teaching profession, a pattern common in many educational institutions.

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Table 1.

Variable	Category (n = 30)	f	%
A. Sex	Male	4	13.33
	Female	26	86.67
B. Age	24–41 years old (Younger Teachers)	21	70.00
	42–59 years old (Older Teachers)	9	30.00
C. Teaching Experience	10 years below	21	70.00
	11 years and above	9	30.00
D. Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	15	50.00
	With Master Units	11	36.67
	Master Degree	4	13.33

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Teachers' Stress Level

Table 2 shows the results on teachers' stress levels associated with workload, classroom management, and school environment, and general stress levels, based on sex, age, teaching experience, and educational attainment. Teachers reported high levels of stress (M = 3.55, SD = 0.56). Among the three dimensions, the mean of workload was the highest (M = 3.73, SD = 0.58), suggesting workload was the most prominent source of stress among teachers. Next is classroom management (M = 3.58; SD = 0.69) which was also interpreted as high. However, the school environment recorded the lowest mean (M = 3.33; SD = 0.72) which was lower than the moderate level. The results show that teachers felt more pressure from their workload and classroom responsibilities than from the school environment.

The finding that teachers' occupational stress was generally high supported Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) who reported that teachers' stress and emotional exhaustion are strongly related to increasing demands of teaching, increasing administrative duties and problems with classroom management. In the same manner, Comia (2022) and Doria and Cruz (2024) found that the major causes of occupational stress for teachers are excessive workload and administrative tasks. These findings support the result , particularly workload (M = 3.73), which is relatively high. This might indicate that the increasing demands and responsibilities given to teachers may have a significant contribution to their experience of occupational stress. The high mean for classroom management (M = 3.58) also supports the finding of Skaalvik and Skaalvik that managing classroom demands adds to teachers' stress and emotional tiredness. Male teachers indicated higher overall stress (M = 3.76; SD = 0.51) than female teachers (M = 3.52; SD = 0.62).

Both groups were exposed to high levels of stress. The mean for workload was highest for male teachers (M = 3.85; SD = 0.37) followed by classroom management (M = 3.63; SD = 0.66) and school environment (M = 3.75; D = 0.74). Levels of stress were high on all three dimensions. The mean score was the highest among female teachers (M = 3.69; SD = 0.65), followed by classroom management (M = 3.58; SD = 0.72), both recorded high levels of stress. Their school environment (M=3.28; SD=0.76) indicated a moderate level of stress. Descriptively, the results suggest that workload was a relatively common source of stress for both male and female teachers. Younger teachers (24-41years) reported high overall stress level

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(M=3.47; SD=0.66). Workload (M = 3.60; SD = 0.63) and classroom management (M = 3.62; SD = 0.79) also depicted high stress level. Conversely, the school environment (M=3.21; SD = 0.83) had a moderate stress level. In contrast, older teachers (42-59 years) recorded a higher overall mean score of stress (M = 3.75; SD = 0.39). They also reported high levels of stress in workload (M = 3.98; SD = 0.53), school environment (M = 3.66; SD = 0.49) and classroom management (M = 3.50; SD = 0.48).

Therefore, older teachers were highly stressed in all three dimensions, especially in workload where the difference was maximum. When grouped according to teaching experience, teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience (M = 3.47; SD = 0.69) had high stress levels. Workload (M = 3.58; SD = 0.65), classroom management (M = 3.68; SD = 0.75) and the school environment (M = 3.21; SD = 0.85) showed moderate levels of stress. In contrast, teachers with 11 years and above of teaching experience had a higher overall stress level (M =3.73; SD = .32). Workload (M=4.02; SD=0.39) and school environment (M=3.64; SD=0.44) were particularly high. In contrast, classroom management was perceived as an average stress level (M = 3.35; SD = 0.53).

These findings indicate that teachers with more experience reported higher levels of overall stress, particularly in terms of workload and school environment. Educational attainment, teachers with bachelor's degree (M = 3.49; SD = 0.55) and teachers with master's units (M = 3.46; SD = 0.73) had high stress level. However, the highest mean of the total stress was obtained by teachers with a master's degree (M = 4.02; SD = 0.14). Workload (M = 4.30, SD = 0.29) was recorded as a very high level of stress and classroom management (M = 3.92, SD = 0.35) and school environment (M = 3.78, SD = 0.30) were recorded as high levels of stress. Teachers with master's degree had the highest stress levels in all three dimensions especially in workload.

To summarize, the results revealed that workload (M=3.73) was the most significant factor leading to stress for teachers, followed by classroom management (M=3.58) and school environment (M=3.33). The results show consistently high workload scores for all demographic groups, which is in line with Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021), Comia (2022) and Doria and Cruz (2024) in relation to the fact that the increasing demands of teaching, administrative duties and overwork are significant sources of occupational stress for teachers. The results highlight the relevance of workload and work-related demands for the development of the proposed teachers' wellness plan.

Table 2. *Teachers' Stress Level in Terms of Workload, Classroom Management, and School Environment*

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Note: Levels of stress were interpreted based on the following ranges of mean scores: very high 4.21–5.00, high 3.41–4.20, moderate 2.61–3.40, low 1.81–2.60, and very low 1.00–1.80.

Teachers' Use of Coping Strategies

Table 3 presents the extent of teachers' use of problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance coping strategies across sex, age, teaching experience, and educational attainment. Overall, teachers used coping strategies to a great extent (M = 2.98, SD = 0.26). Problem-focused coping obtained the highest mean (M = 3.34, SD = 0.34) and was used to a very great extent, followed by emotion-focused coping (M = 3.03, SD = 0.29) and avoidance coping (M = 2.65, SD = 0.42), both used to a great extent.

Across all demographic groups, problem-focused coping consistently ranked highest, indicating that teachers generally managed stress through planning, problem solving, and direct action. Avoidance coping was consistently the least used strategy. These findings suggest that teachers tend to respond to work-related stress through active and adaptive approaches, providing a strong basis for incorporating problem solving, planning, and active stress management into the proposed Teachers' Wellness Plan.

This finding is consistent with Gómez et al. (2024), who emphasized the value of active coping strategies in helping teachers manage workplace stress and maintain resilience. Differences observed across demographic groups are descriptive and should be interpreted alongside the corresponding t-test and ANOVA results to determine their statistical significance. The predominance of coping that is problem focused is in line with the research of Gómez et al. (2024). They were of the opinion that teachers who deal with planning, problem solving, and the managing of stress at work, are more resilient and flexible in managing stress at work.

Category (*n* = 30)	Workload			Classroom Management			School Environment			Overall		
	SD	***M***	**Int.**	***SD***	***M***	**Int.**	***SD***	***M***	**Int.**	***SD***	***M***	**Int.**
Entire Group	0.58	3.73	High	0.69	3.58	High	0.72	3.33	Moderate	0.56	3.55	High
A. Sex												
Male	0.37	3.85	High	0.66	3.63	High	0.74	3.75	High	0.51	3.76	High
Female	0.65	3.69	High	0.72	3.58	High	0.76	3.28	Moderate	0.62	3.52	High
B. Age												
24–41 years old (Younger)	0.63	3.6	High	0.79	3.62	High	0.83	3.21	Moderate	0.66	3.47	High
42–59 years old (Older)	0.53	3.98	High	0.48	3.5	High	0.49	3.66	High	0.39	3.75	High
C. Teaching Experience												
10 years below	0.65	3.58	High	0.75	3.68	High	0.85	3.21	Moderate	0.69	3.47	High
11 years and above	0.39	4.02	High	0.53	3.35	Moderate	0.44	3.64	High	0.32	3.73	High
D. Educational Attainment												
Bachelor' Degree	0.45	3.7	High	0.71	3.56	High	0.8	3.2	Moderate	0.55	3.49	High
With Master Units	0.78	3.52	High	0.79	3.5	High	0.82	3.37	Moderate	0.73	3.46	High
Master Degree	0.29	4.3	Very High	0.35	3.92	High	0.3	3.78	High	0.14	4.02	High

Table 3. Teachers' Use of Coping Strategies

Category (*n* = 30)	Problem-Focused			Emotion-Focused			Avoidance Coping			Overall		
	SD	***M***	***Int.***	***SD***	***M***	***Int.***	***SD***	***M***	***Int.***	***SD***	***M***	***Int.***
Entire Group	0.34	3.34	Very Great Extent	0.29	3.03	Great Extent	0.42	2.65	Great Extent	0.26	2.98	Great Extent
A. Sex												

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Male	0.21	3.54	Very Great Extent	0.2	3.5	Very Great Extent	0.22	2.67	Great Extent	0.15	3.24	Great Extent
Female	0.39	3.4	Very Great Extent	0.31	3.16	Great Extent	0.45	2.38	Moderate Extent	0.26	2.98	Great Extent
B. Age												
24–41 years old (Younger Teachers)	0.39	3.47	Very Great Extent	0.34	3.23	Great Extent	0.43	2.51	Great Extent	0.28	3.07	Great Extent
42–59 years old (Older Teachers)	0.33	3.31	Very Great Extent	0.28	3.15	Great Extent	0.39	2.18	Moderate Extent	0.16	2.88	Great Extent
C. Teaching Experience												
11 years and above	0.34	3.33	Very Great Extent	0.28	3.16	Great Extent	0.39	2.17	Moderate Extent	0.16	2.89	Great Extent
D. Educational Attainment												
Bachelor's Degree	0.36	3.46	Very Great Extent	0.32	3.2	Great Extent	0.48	2.49	Moderate Extent	0.28	3.05	Great Extent
With Master's Units	0.41	3.3	Very Great Extent	0.3	3.11	Great Extent	0.37	2.39	Moderate Extent	0.26	2.94	Great Extent
Master Degree	0.21	3.63	Very Great Extent	0.23	3.48	Very Great Extent	0.49	2.21	Moderate Extent	0.2	3.11	Great Extent

Note: The extent to which coping strategies are used is interpreted based on the following mean score ranges: 3.26–4.00 indicates a very great extent, 2.51–3.25 a great extent, 1.76–2.50 a moderate extent, and 1.00–1.75 a lesser extent.

Difference in Teachers' Stress Level According to Demographic Profile

Table 4 presented statistical analysis that revealed a no significant difference in teachers' stress levels across any demographic variable. The p-values for Sex (0.058), Age (0.943), Teaching Experience (0.649), and Educational Attainment (0.320) all exceeded the 0.05 threshold for significance. Consequently, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis. This finding suggests that the high levels of occupational stress identified in the school are a universal experience among the faculty, regardless of their gender, age, or professional background. It underscores that stressors like heavy workload and classroom management challenges impact the entire teaching staff relatively equally.

Sandilos et al. (2023) also supported this finding by noting that teachers, irrespective of demographic characteristic differences, are subject to similar organizational and occupational demands that can explain similar experiences of work-related stress. Thus, the present findings suggest that the stress experienced by teachers may be more a function of shared workplace conditions and job demands than of their demographic characteristics. Thus, the findings support the development of an inclusive wellness plan that can be generalized to teachers of all demographic groups, and not one designed for a specific age group, sex, experience, or educational background.

Table 4. *Difference in Teachers' Stress Level According to Demographic Profile*

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Demographic Variable	Category (n = 30)	M	df	t/F-Value	p-value	Significance
A. Sex	Male	4.06	28	$t = 1.97$	0.058	Not Significant
	Female	3.47				
B. Age	Younger Teachers	3.47	28	$t = 1.18$	0.248	Not Significant
	Older Teachers	3.75				
C. Teaching Experience	10 years and below	3.47	28	$t = 1.07$	0.294	Not Significant
	11 years and above	3.73				
D. Educational Attainment	Between Groups	0.40	2	$F = 1.19$	0.320	Not Significant
	Within Groups	0.34	27			

Note. $n = 30$. df = *degrees of freedom;* t = *t-test statistic;* F = *ANOVA F-ratio. Tests for sex, age, and teaching experience were conducted using t-tests, while educational attainment was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. Significance is set at* $p < .05$.

Difference in Teachers' Coping Strategies According to Demographic Profile

Table 5 presents that most demographics showed no significant difference in how they cope, Sex emerged as a statistically significant factor (p = 0.038). The analysis resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis for this variable, showing that Male teachers (Mean = 3.23) employ coping strategies with significantly higher frequency than Female teachers (Mean = 2.93). For all other variables— Age (p = 0.460), Teaching Experience (p = 0.309), and Educational Attainment (p = 0.406)— there was no significant difference. This suggests that while personal maturity or academic level does not fundamentally change how often a teacher uses coping mechanisms, gender roles or perceptions may influence the frequency of coping responses within this specific school environment.

The findings largely support Carver's (1997) Stress-Coping Model, which defines coping as the cognitive and behavioral effort of individuals to manage stressful circumstances. The literature in the study depicts coping mechanisms as ways that instructors adapt to pressures of work and try to keep a psychological equilibrium. The current data imply that teachers generally used coping responses across demographic categories, however disparities in the extent of coping were seen across sex.

Table 5. *Difference in Teachers' Coping Strategies According to Demographic Profile*

Demographic Variable	Category (n = 30)	M	df	t/F-Value	p-value	Significance
A. Sex	Male	3.23	28	$t = 2.18$	0.038	Significant
	Female	2.93				
B. Age	Younger Teachers	3.07	28	$t = 1.90$	0.068	Not Significant
	Older Teachers	2.88				
C. Teaching Experience	10 years and below	3.07	28	$t = 1.80$	0.083	Not Significant
	11 years and above	2.89				
D. Educational Attainment	Between Groups	0.06	2	$F = 0.93$	0.406	Not Significant
	Within Groups	0.06	27			

Note. $n = 30$. df = degrees of freedom; t = t-test statistic; F = ANOVA F-ratio. Tests for sex, age, and teaching experience were conducted using t-tests, while educational attainment was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. Significance is set at $p < .05$.

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Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Stress Level and Coping Strategies

The findings showed a significant, moderate, positive relationship between teachers' stress levels and coping strategies ($r = 0.461$, $p = 0.010$). Since the p-value was below the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that as teachers' stress levels increased, their use of coping strategies also increased.

The result suggests that teachers tend to respond to greater work-related stress by using coping strategies to manage the challenges they encounter in their profession. This may indicate that coping is an active response to stressful situations rather than simply a reflection of well-being. The finding also highlights the importance of providing teachers with appropriate support and strengthening their coping skills.

Thus, the result supports the need for the proposed Teachers' Wellness Plan, which aims to promote effective coping and improve teachers' overall well-being.

The significant positive relationship between stress and coping strategies also supports the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which explains that individuals actively use coping strategies when dealing with stressful situations.

Similarly, the finding is consistent with Herman et al. (2020), who emphasized that teachers with adaptive coping skills are better able to manage work-related stress while maintaining their emotional well-being and professional effectiveness.

Table 6. Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Stress Level and Coping Strategies

Variables	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*r*	*p*-value	Significance	Interpretation
Stress Level	3.54	0.57	30	0.461	0.010	Significant	Moderate Positive Relationship
Coping Strategies	2.98	0.27					

Note. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was interpreted based on the following scale: ±0.00–0.19 = very weak, ±0.20–0.39 = weak, ±0.40–0.59 = moderate, ±0.60–0.79 = strong, and ±0.80–1.00 = very strong. A p-value of < .05 indicates a significant relationship. The results showed a significant, moderate, and positive relationship between teachers' stress level and coping strategies (r = .461, p = .010).

Proposed Teachers' Wellness Plan

The developed Teachers' Wellness Plan uses the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, Carver's (1997) Stress-Coping Model and Occupational Stress Theory. Theories suggest that teachers experience occupational stress when they feel that the demands of their workplace exceed their ability to cope with the workload. These theories further suggest that coping mechanisms and the provision of workplace environments conducive to well-being counteract workplace stressors and increase resilience. Participants reported high levels of occupational stress, sources of stress in order of preference were: workload, classroom management and the school environment. The majority of the teachers reported the use of primarily problem-focused coping methods, which indicated positive perceptions of work-related stress through adaptive and solution-oriented coping methods.

Furthermore, it was observed that a moderate positive correlation was determined between the stress level and the use of the coping strategy through the use of coping methods. The findings highlight the necessity of a school-based structured wellness initiative to help lower organizational stress and improve coping mechanisms and resilience among the teaching staff. The Teachers' Wellness Plan under development is based on the aforementioned theories and findings, with a strong emphasis on mental health, workplace supportive systems, professional well-being and enhancing a resilient and healthy collaborative school environment.

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Objective

To develop a school-based Teachers' Wellness Program that offers resources and tools to improve teachers' mental health and adaptive coping mechanisms, reduce work related stress, and promote a healthy, supportive and resilient work culture for teachers.

Identified Problem	Goal	Specific Objectives	Proposed Activities	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Expected Outcome
High workload and time pressure	Reduce occupational stress associated with workload.	Improve teachers' workload management, time management, and work-life balance.	• Time Management and Productivity Workshop • Workload Audit and Redistribution • Quarterly Wellness Breaks	School Head, HR Office, Department Heads, Teachers	Quarterly	Improved workload management, reduced stress, and better work-life balance.
Classroom management challenges	Strengthen teachers' classroom management competencies.	Enhance teachers' confidence and effectiveness in managing student behavior and classroom discipline.	• Classroom Management Training • Peer Observation and Coaching • Behavior Management Workshop	School Head, Guidance Counselor, Master Teachers	Quarterly	Improved classroom management skills and reduced classroom-related stress.
Limited workplace support and collaboration	Strengthen collegial support and professional relationships.	Promote mentoring, collaboration, and peer support among teachers.	• Teacher Mentoring Program • Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) • Monthly Team-Building and Reflection Sessions	School Administrator, Master Teachers, Teachers	Monthly	Increased collaboration, stronger peer support, and improved workplace climate.
Need to strengthen teachers' emotional well-being and resilience	Promote teachers' mental health and emotional resilience.	Enhance adaptive coping skills and emotional well-being through structured wellness initiatives.	• Mental Health and Stress Management Seminar • Individual and Group Counseling Sessions • Mindfulness and Relaxation Activities • Wellness Day Celebration	Guidance Counselor, School Head, HR Office, Mental Health Professionals	Monthly	Improved emotional well-being, increased resilience, and greater use of adaptive coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

1. The profile of respondents showed a dynamic workforce, although many had relatively little teaching experience. The finding highlighted the important role of school leadership in establishing specialized

support systems, mentoring initiatives and professional development programs that address the identified needs and build on the strengths of teachers.

2. The study identified the demands and pressures associated with the teaching profession that can be hard to cope with and can have detrimental effects on teachers' personal well-being and professional functioning.
3. Results showed that occupational stress was experienced by different demographic groups. This means that sex, age, teaching experience and educational attainment might be associated with teachers' experience and reactions to occupational stress.
4. Respondents seem to use primarily adaptive and problem-focused coping methods to cope with work-related stress. The high level of problem-focused coping means that teachers tended to actively cope with stressful situations by taking appropriate actions, managing work demands, and seeking solutions to problems encountered in their professional responsibilities.
5. The results indicated that age, teaching experience and educational attainment did not have a significant effect on teachers' coping methods, whereas a significant difference was found based on sex. Thus, other personal and contextual factors such as teachers' attitudes, emotional and physical conditions, workplace environment, and availability of resources may also contribute to the differences in how teachers cope with stress.
6. The positive relationship between occupational stress and coping methods implied that teachers used coping methods more frequently when they experienced more stress. Thus, the higher the perceived stress in teachers' occupations, the higher the teachers' efforts to cope and respond to work demands. The findings support the need to improve adaptive coping mechanisms and implement school-based wellness programs that promote mental health, resilience, and overall professional wellness among teachers.

Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles for research involving human participants and was reviewed and approved by the Central Philippine University Research Ethics Review Board (CPU RERB), under RERB Protocol No. 2026-162-MS-TORRE. The study received ethical approval prior to data collection.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study. The participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, their voluntary participation, their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and the confidentiality of the information they provided.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest. The study was conducted independently, and no external funding organization had any role in the study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation of results, or decision to publish the findings.

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