

Teachers' Occupational Stress and Coping Mechanisms



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ABSTRACT: Teachers often experience high levels of stress in their work, but they are equipped with effective coping mechanisms to navigate through it. This study aimed to explore the relationship between teachers' occupational stress and coping mechanisms in public elementary settings. It sought to assess occupational stress based on working, living, and subject-related conditions while also evaluating teachers' emotion-focused and problem-focused coping mechanisms. Additionally, it aimed to establish significant relationships between occupational stress and these coping mechanisms. A descriptive correlational involving 145 public elementary teachers in Opol-West District, Misamis Oriental, utilized universal sampling. The study utilized an adapted and modified instrument from Cayao and Arenga (2021) and achieved a reliable Cronbach alpha of 0.855 to validate the survey questionnaire. Statistical tools, including mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation coefficients, were employed to analyze the data. Results showed that teachers feel some stress in their living conditions, but report challenges bring extreme stress. They also have moderate stress from subject-related conditions. It was concluded that teachers wanting to grow professionally can occasionally add stress to their overall work pressure. It was recommended that, implement strategies for teachers by coming up with better ways to submit reports.

KEYWORDS: Emotion-Focused Coping, Living Conditions, Problem-Focused Coping, Working Conditions

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most crucial elements for human survival is work. Due to the competitive nature of the workplace, most individuals spend their time working, which is very stressful. A minor stress can help the employee stay alert, motivated, and focused when they face obstacles at work. Long hours, strict deadlines, and rising demands can, nevertheless, leave workers stressed, exhausted, and overworked in today's busy environment.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines occupational stress as stress related to a job or occupation. It is regarded as the primary cause of adult stress and has an impact on all nations, professions, and worker categories. Moreover, The World Health Organization defines occupational stress as a series of reactions that happen when people are given work expectations that are not compatible with their knowledge, abilities, or capacities and that test their capacity to cope.

Teaching is the career that has been helping many individuals succeed in all aspects of life, even though other occupations might be seen as being equally significant for human development (Solomon et al., 2017). Notwithstanding the challenges they face, teachers and school administrators are expected to give the greatest quality of education, which has led to a tremendous deal of pressure, anxiety, and stress among them as well as the pupils and parents (Sagales et al., 2020).

Republic Act 10533, otherwise known as Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 or the 12 Years of Basic Education in the Philippines, causes a significant shift to the job description of teachers (Romero & Bantigue, 2016). With the changes that start the improvement of the educational system, it is seen that teachers are expected to perform well while doing the trend of heavy paperwork, teacher's workload, pupils' behavior management, sudden system changes, attending seminars and trainings are just a few examples of the many things that can contribute to stress. More so, in their regular duties, teachers are expected to perform a variety of jobs. Evaluator, curriculum planner, implementer, information supplier, role model, facilitator, and trainer are a few examples of these positions. Stress will always be an element of the teaching profession because of managing these numerous tasks.

Occupational stress has been linked to a high turnover rate, absenteeism, disengagement from work, and demotivation. It can influence teachers' efficacy in the classroom. Everyone may experience the adverse impacts of stress, and it

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is an unavoidable aspect of life. Recognizing that stress is an inevitable part of existence, it becomes essential to assess stress and the diverse coping strategies employed by teachers.

On the other hand, a coping mechanism refers to a method for managing and reducing stress and its impacts, encompassing cognitive, emotional, or behavioral approaches. Moreover, coping is the action that happens when a person has had time to consider the circumstances, evaluate his or her thoughts, and take a more objective or disengaged stance toward the issue. The researcher decided to focus on this study because it is important for teachers to be aware that stressors are always present as they carry out their duties.

The demanding nature of the teaching profession often leads to an accumulation of stressors that affect teachers' overall well-being. The researcher observed that teachers in Opol West District often find themselves juggling numerous responsibilities, such as developing lesson plans, evaluating pupils, attending meetings, conducting extracurricular activities, and fulfilling administrative duties. This heavy workload prevented them from adequately dedicating time to self-care and personal lives, leading to increased stress levels.

To address these concerns, the researcher aimed to explore the occupational stress and coping mechanisms experienced by public elementary teachers in Opol West District.

This study was anchored on the theory of Albert Bandura about Social Cognitive Theory (1986), which contends that learning takes place in a social setting because of a dynamic and reciprocal interplay between the person, their environment, and their behavior. The fundamental idea of this paradigm is referred to as triadic reciprocal determinism, which outlines how a person regulates in relation to shifting external conditions to achieve desired results (Schiavo et al., 2019).

There are numerous useful ideas in the Social Cognitive Theory, such as behavioral capability, observational learning, reinforcements, expectations, and self-efficacy. A person's actual capacity to carry out a behavior through necessary knowledge and abilities is referred to behavioral capability. The modeling of behavior can be used to demonstrate observational learning. Reinforcement can assist in ensuring that the advised behavior is maintained. Expectations include measures that convey details about the potential outcomes of the conduct and the most important personal trait for influencing behavior is believed to be self-efficacy (Devi et al., 2022).

In Social Cognitive Theory, coping self-efficacy is a critical self-regulatory cognition that drives the perception and belief in one's ability to control environmental demands and successfully implement coping mechanisms (Schiavo et al., 2019). When it comes to personality research and stress vulnerability, self-efficacy is considered as a resource. Moreover, according to Marcionetti & Castelli (2022), self-efficacy affects people's behaviors and ambitions. Particularly, efficacy beliefs affect the choices of activities, the amount of effort put into an activity, and how long a person would persist in the face of challenges. Those who have strong self-efficacy beliefs are, therefore, expected to put themselves in more demanding situations, which may also increase their success in both their professional and personal lives.

The fundamental ideas of teacher stress include its sources, effects, and coping mechanisms; all these things have an impact on how a teacher manages stress. The goal of this study is to ascertain the effects of teacher stress on elementary school teachers and the workplace environment. The researcher also wants to discover more about the relationship between self-efficacy and stress and look into how teachers' behavior, capacity, and expectations affect how they handle stress at work.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in the study was a descriptive correlational. This study design offers a precise representation or explanation of the traits of a specific person, circumstance, or group. Descriptive correlational research encompasses several forms of fact-finding studies and surveys. The goal of descriptive correlational research is to provide an explanation for the status of the circumstances (Mishra & Alok, 2022).

This approach relates to the scope of the phenomenon or qualities like emotion or attitude and provides a precise and methodical description of it. In addition, it provides a methodical portrayal of an individual, collective, or society. The teacher respondents completed a survey by answering questions about their sources of occupational stress related to their living, working, and subject-related conditions. This allowed them to identify their coping mechanisms, which included problem- and emotion-focused coping. The researcher administered the survey that was used to gather the data. This study involves value analysis and result interpretation in addition to data collection, tabulation, and computation. As a result, all of the data acquired from the respondents was arranged, totaled, tabulated, and displayed in a set of tables.

In addressing the research questions, the researcher applied the following statistical tools. To analyze Problems 1 and 2, Mean and Standard Deviation were employed to assess the extent of occupational stress and the coping mechanisms utilized by public elementary teachers. For Problems 3 and 4, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) was employed to ascertain the

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meaningful connection between occupational stress and emotion-focused coping, as well as the significant relationship between occupational stress and problem-focused coping.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What is the level of occupational stress of public elementary teachers based on the following:

- 1.1 working conditions;
- 1.2 teachers' living conditions; and
- 1.3 subject-related conditions?

Table 1. Overall teachers' level of occupational stress

Variables	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Working Conditions	2.71	0.89	Somewhat	Moderately stressed
Teachers' Living Conditions	2.79	0.89	Somewhat	Moderately stressed
Subject Related Conditions	2.47	0.85	Somewhat	Moderately stressed
Overall	2.66	0.88	Somewhat	Moderately stressed

Note: 1.00 – 1.74 Not at all stressed 1.75 – 2.44 occasionally stressed 2.45 – 3.24 Moderately stressed
3.25 – 4.00 Extremely stressed

Table 1 displays the collective level of occupational stress among teachers. It reflects an overall Mean of 2.66 with SD=0.88, characterized as somewhat and interpreted as a moderately stressed. This suggests that teachers are undergoing a moderate degree of stress with some individuals experiencing stress levels higher or lower than the average, highlighting the diversity of stress experiences among the teachers. It implies that many teachers are likely facing stress that could impact their well-being and potentially affect their work performance. This level of stress still warrants attention and intervention to support teachers' occupational well-being.

As observed, addressing occupational stress in teachers could involve implementing strategies such as stress management programs, fostering a supportive work environment, providing resources for coping mechanisms, and promoting work-life balance. Recognizing and addressing these stress levels is crucial to ensure the well-being and effectiveness of teachers in their roles.

The study by Cox et al. (2019) emphasized that it is an integral component of teachers' well-being that is connected to their physical health, the stability of the school, their efficacy, and the academic success of their pupils. The functioning and efficiency of an educational system are interdependent with the significance of teachers' health. To increase the overall effectiveness of education, tackling occupational stress should go hand in hand with advocating for mental health.

Moreover, the variable, *Teachers' Living Conditions*, has the highest Mean of 2.79 with SD = 0.89, which is described as somewhat and interpreted as moderately stressed. This means that teachers are experiencing a moderate level of stress in terms of their living conditions. It implies that various aspects such as the struggles when there were lots of reports to be submitted, the pressure to attain personal achievement, financial problems, or other factors influencing their living situations. As noticed, teachers appear to be under a great deal of stress in their living conditions, which may be related to their inability to manage their personal, professional, and well-being. Additionally, stress related to living conditions can impact their ability to focus on teaching effectively. Indeed, Ansley et al. (2018) asserted that teachers regularly contend with substantial stress, which resonates deeply within the teaching profession. Teachers consistently face numerous stressors resulting from various aspects of their roles.

On the other hand, the variable, *Subject-Related Conditions*, got the lowest Mean of 2.47 with SD = 0.85, which is described as somewhat and interpreted as Moderately stressed. It means that teachers experience moderate stress related to subject-related conditions. It implies that teachers experience moderate stress related to subject-related conditions. This stress could be associated with factors such as trainings and seminars related to the subjects, curriculum challenges, teaching materials, classroom dynamics, or difficulty in conveying subject matter effectively. It affects teachers' enthusiasm for teaching specific subjects or influence the learning experience for pupils in those subjects.

As noticed, the stress experienced by teachers, particularly related to subjects or specific aspects of their teaching, often emerges from a complex interplay of factors. Trainings and seminars, while intended for professional development, can sometimes add pressure due to increased workload or expectations to swiftly implement new methodologies. According to Cox et al. (2018) that occupational stress significantly impairs teachers' ability to perform their jobs underscores a widespread

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challenge within the teaching profession. Occupational stress manifests as a prevalent issue that profoundly impacts various aspects of teachers' roles and well-being.

Problem 2. What is the level of coping mechanisms used by public elementary teachers in terms of the following:

- 2.1 emotion-focused coping; and
- 2.2 problem-focused coping?

Table 2 exhibits overall teachers' level of coping mechanism. It reveals that it has an overall Mean of 3.08 with SD=0.91, which is described as Most of the time and interpreted as Frequently use coping mechanism. It means that teachers employ coping mechanisms quite frequently to manage stress or handle challenging situations in their professional lives. It implies that the use of coping mechanisms is common and prevalent among the surveyed teachers.

As stated, teachers frequently employ coping mechanisms as essential tools to navigate the multitude of stressors and challenging situations inherent in their professional lives. These coping strategies serve as adaptive responses to manage the demands of teaching, including heavy workloads, classroom dynamics, administrative pressures, and the ever-evolving landscape of education. From seeking social support among colleagues to practicing mindfulness, time-management techniques, or even using humor to diffuse tension, teachers draw upon a diverse array of coping mechanisms. These strategies enable them to mitigate stress, maintain resilience, and effectively handle the complexities of their roles. It suggests that many teachers resort to various coping strategies when faced with stressors or difficulties. Also, it signifies that the success of teacher's coping mechanisms has an impact on their health, happiness, and dedication to teaching (Gurvich et al., 2021).

Table 2. Overall teachers' level of coping mechanism

Variables	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Emotion Focused Coping Mechanism	3.06	0.90	Most of the time	Frequently use coping mechanism
Problem Focused Coping Mechanism	3.09	0.91	Most of the time	Frequently use coping mechanism
Overall Mean	3.08	0.91	Most of the time	Frequently use coping mechanism

Note: 1.00 – 1.74 Rarely or never use coping mechanism 1.75 – 2.44 Occasionally use coping mechanism
2.45 – 3.24 Frequently use coping mechanism 3.25 – 4.00 Consistently and effectively use coping mechanism

Moreover, the variable, *Problem-focused coping mechanisms*, has the highest Mean of 3.09 with SD = 0.91, which is described as Most of the time and interpreted as Frequently use coping mechanism. This suggests that teachers often resort to problem-focused coping mechanisms. It indicates that the regular use of problem-focused coping strategies is a common practice among the surveyed teachers. While widely adopted, it may not be the predominant approach for every teacher in handling stressors.

As observed, the frequent consistency indicates that teachers recognize the value of directly addressing stressors but also acknowledge the relevance of other coping mechanisms in certain situations. The adaptability underscores teachers' ability to tailor their responses to the diverse demands of teaching, utilizing problem-focused strategies when needed while embracing a flexible approach that harnesses various coping methods to effectively navigate the complexities of their roles.

The study of Diponegoro (2021) supports the finding of the study as he emphasized that encouraging and fostering problem-solving skills, providing resources for effective problem-solving, and offering support in addressing the root causes of stressors could further enhance teachers' resilience and ability to manage stress effectively in various situations within the educational setting. It is anticipated that problem-focused techniques will mitigate the adverse impacts of the stressor.

On the other hand, the variable, *Emotion-focused coping mechanisms*, got the lowest Mean of 3.06 with SD = 0.90, which is described as Most of the time and interpreted as Frequently use coping mechanism. It means that teachers still frequently utilize emotion-focused coping mechanisms. It implies that the use of emotion-focused coping strategies is prevalent and consistent among the surveyed teachers. Despite having the lowest mean among the variables, it still suggests that many teachers regularly engage in these coping methods. Teachers often employ coping strategies not only to address the practical aspects of stressors but also to manage the emotional impact of these challenges in their professional lives.

Emotion-focused coping, as outlined by Raypole (2020), serves as a stress management technique aimed at mitigating the adverse emotional reactions triggered by stressors. This approach doesn't directly address the root causes of stress but rather concentrates on managing the emotional impact it generates. Strategies within emotion-focused coping encompass a

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range of techniques, such as seeking social support, practicing mindfulness or relaxation exercises, reframing thoughts to alter perspectives, or engaging in activities that alleviate emotional distress.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the occupational stress and emotion-focused coping?

Table 3. Test correlation on occupational stress and emotion-focused coping mechanism

Variables	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Level of Correlation	Decision	Interpretation
Working Conditions	0.6533	0.000	Moderate	Reject Ho	Significant
Teachers' Living Conditions	0.5116	0.001	Moderate	Reject Ho	Significant
Subject Related Conditions	0.6012	0.000	Moderate	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

Table 3 reveals the test correlation between occupational stress and emotion-focused coping mechanisms. It shows the *r*-values of the following variables: working conditions (0.6533), teachers' living conditions (0.5116), and subject-related conditions (0.6012). All three variables exhibit a description of a moderate positive correlation and are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This signifies a meaningful relationship between teachers' occupational stress and their utilization of emotion-focused coping mechanisms. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the particular facets of teachers' working conditions, living conditions, and subject-related conditions are significantly linked to the adoption of emotion-focused coping strategies in response to occupational stress.

As observed, amid mounting pressures from new administrative directives and an overwhelming workload, some of the teachers at a school collectively feel emotionally drained and stressed. Instead of having avenues to address the root causes of their stress, they find limited support in terms of workload management or structural changes. Feeling constrained by the circumstances, the teachers begin relying heavily on emotion-focused coping mechanisms. They engage in informal gatherings during breaks, where they discuss their shared stressors, express their emotions openly, and offer mutual support and empathy.

Additionally, they start practicing mindfulness exercises, encouraging each other to focus on relaxation techniques, meditation, or recreational activities to alleviate their stress levels. While these emotion-focused coping mechanisms help them momentarily alleviate stress and provide emotional relief, they do not address the underlying causes of their occupational stress, resulting in a reliance on these coping strategies to manage ongoing stress without fundamental changes to their work environment.

When working conditions are challenging—such as high additional assigned workload, extra-curricular activities, classroom management or additional ancillary works—it tends to influence how teachers cope with the stress they encounter. They rely more on emotion-focused coping mechanisms like seeking emotional support from colleagues, friends, or engaging in activities aimed at regulating their emotions to handle the stressors within their workplace.

As noticed in a school that undergoes severe budget cuts in MOOE, this leads to reduced funding for classroom materials and decreased support for teachers. The teachers, feeling overwhelmed by these changes that directly impact their ability to provide quality education, find themselves in a situation beyond their control. Recognizing the limitations imposed by the budget cuts, they turn to emotion-focused coping mechanisms to manage their stress. Teachers organize support groups among themselves, providing a safe space for sharing emotions, frustrations, and concerns. They engage in relaxation techniques, mindfulness exercises, and wellness programs to alleviate stress and anxiety.

Moreover, they establish informal social events and team-building activities to foster a sense of community and mutual support among the staff. While these coping mechanisms offer emotional relief and solidarity in the face of challenging working conditions, they do not directly address the root cause of the issue—the inadequate resources resulting from budget cuts. Aldrup et al. (2017) highlighted the significance of social support as a coping mechanism used by individuals to manage stress. When teachers discuss their challenges, concerns, or stressors with friends, family members, or coworkers, they are engaging in what is known as seeking social support. By talking about issues with friends, family, or coworkers, teachers can effectively manage stressors through the support, advice, and perspectives they receive. This social support plays a crucial role in maintaining emotional well-being and resilience within the teaching profession.

Aspects related to teachers' living conditions, such as the struggles when there are lots of reports to be submitted, the pressure to attain personal achievement, financial stability, or commute distance from home to work, significantly influence the strategies they use to cope with stress, particularly in an emotional context. As observed, some of the teachers in the district of Opol-West live in areas with high living costs, struggling to make ends meet due to relatively low take home pay. The financial strain leads to difficulties in affording basic necessities and causes stress and anxiety among the teachers. Feeling overwhelmed

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by their financial situation, they employ emotion-focused coping mechanisms to manage their stress. They form support groups among themselves where they discuss their financial challenges, share tips on budgeting, and provide emotional support to one another.

Additionally, they engage in stress-relief activities such as group exercise classes, meditation sessions, or social gatherings to alleviate the emotional toll of financial strain. While these coping mechanisms offer emotional support and a sense of community, they do not directly address the underlying issue of low salaries and high living expenses impacting the teachers' living conditions. If teachers face challenges related to financial stress, or have long commutes, these factors impact how they cope with stress emotionally. They may resort more frequently to emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking emotional support from friends or engaging in leisure activities to manage the emotional strain caused by their living conditions. Guanlao (2022) emphasizes the importance of teachers incorporating physical activity and various stress relief practices into their routines for the betterment of their emotional and physical well-being. It's essential to promote a supportive environment that values self-care and provides opportunities or resources for teachers to engage in these practices, ultimately benefiting their emotional and physical health.

When teachers encounter challenges related to their specific subject conditions—such as difficulty in teaching certain topics, lack of resources, low internet connectivity for researching various ideas or complex curriculum—it impacts their emotional responses to stress. In response to these subject-related stressors, they tend to rely more on emotion-focused coping strategies. These strategies could involve seeking emotional support, finding ways to regulate their emotional responses, or engaging in activities to alleviate stress specifically related to teaching those subjects.

As noticed, teachers work in a school with minimal resources for technology-based subjects. Lacking adequate computers, software, and updated technology, the teacher finds it challenging to deliver comprehensive lessons and practical applications to the pupils. Frustrated by the constraints, the teacher feels emotionally drained and stressed, knowing the pupils are missing out on vital learning experiences. To cope with these subject-related conditions, the teacher engages in emotion-focused coping mechanisms. They seek solace by connecting with online communities or forums for computer science educators, where they share their challenges, seek advice, and find emotional support from peers facing similar resource limitations.

Additionally, the teacher practices mindfulness exercises and relaxation techniques to manage stress and maintain a positive mindset while navigating the constraints of delivering the subject effectively. While these coping mechanisms offer emotional support and a sense of solidarity, they do not directly address the fundamental issue of resource scarcity, which affects the teacher's ability to teach the subject comprehensively. Holland (2020) points out that while some stressors are beyond direct control, individuals can employ various practices to manage their responses to stress effectively. Practices like meditation, introspection, and fostering positive self-dialogue play a vital role in empowering individuals to navigate stress more effectively. Teachers can also find solace in accepting sympathy and understanding from someone, such as a co-teacher.

Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between the occupational stress and problem-focused coping?

Table 4. Test correlation on occupational stress and problem-focused coping mechanism

Variables	r-value	p-value	Level of Correlation	Decision	Interpretation
Working Conditions	0.6773	0.000	Moderate	Reject Ho	Significant
Teachers' Living Conditions	0.4322	0.018	Weak	Reject Ho	Significant
Subject Related Conditions	0.5611	0.000	Moderate	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

Table 4 displays the correlation test results between occupational stress and problem-focused coping mechanisms. The variables present the following r-values: working conditions (0.6773), teachers' living conditions (0.4322), and subject-related conditions (0.5611). Among these, working conditions and subject-related conditions demonstrate a moderate positive correlation with occupational stress, while teachers' living conditions show a somewhat weaker but still positive association with occupational stress. All values are deemed significant at the 0.05 level, indicating a meaningful relationship between teachers' occupational stress and problem-focused coping mechanisms. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that all three factors—working conditions, teachers' living conditions, and subject-related conditions—are associated with increased levels of occupational stress, although to varying degrees.

As observed, in a school that implements a new curriculum that demands substantial changes in teaching methods and content delivery, The teachers, initially overwhelmed by the increased workload and the pressure to adapt, recognize the need

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for immediate action. They form task forces and committees to systematically analyze the new requirements and share strategies to efficiently integrate the changes into their teaching. Collaboratively, they attend specialized workshops and professional development sessions focused on the new curriculum.

Moreover, they allocate regular team meetings to discuss challenges and brainstorm effective solutions. Teachers proactively communicate with administrators, advocating for additional support and resources needed to implement the changes effectively. Their problem-focused coping mechanisms involve a structured approach to tackle the root causes of stress, aiming to adapt and excel within the new curriculum framework by actively problem-solving and seeking solutions collaboratively.

When teachers face challenges in their working conditions—such as high additional assigned workload, extra-curricular activities, classroom management or additional ancillary works—it influences their approach to problem-solving in response to stress. They are more likely to employ problem-focused coping strategies, aiming to directly address the root causes of stress or difficulties within their work environment.

As noticed, in a school facing a surge in pupil enrollment, specifically in the big schools, teachers find themselves in overcrowded classrooms, and some big schools have two-shift classes, which are morning and afternoon, making it challenging to provide individual attention and maintain a conducive learning environment. Recognizing the immediate need to address this issue, the teachers convened to implement problem-focused coping mechanisms. They organize meetings with school administrators to discuss the impact of overcrowded classrooms on student learning and teacher workload. Collaboratively, they propose solutions such as rearranging schedules, advocating for additional teaching assistants, or requesting modular classrooms to alleviate overcrowding.

Additionally, teachers actively engage parents and the local community, advocating for support and resources to improve classroom conditions. Their problem-focused coping mechanisms involve proactive actions aimed at addressing and resolving the root cause of the challenging working conditions—the overcrowded classrooms. Purnawati et al. (2021) emphasize the effectiveness of problem-focused coping stress management programs in addressing stress both in the workplace and classroom settings. This approach targets the root causes of stress and aims to equip individuals with effective coping mechanisms. Implementing problem-focused coping stress management programs in both work and educational settings equips individuals, including teachers and pupils, with practical tools to address stress effectively.

When teachers experience challenges related to their living conditions—such as the struggles when there are lots of reports to be submitted, the pressure to attain personal achievement, financial stability, or commute distance from home to work—it impacts their approach to problem-solving in response to stress. They are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping strategies, aiming to directly address or find solutions to the stressors stemming from their living situations.

As observed in a school where teachers struggle with low salaries compared to the cost of living, especially those who are not financially stable due to loans, many teachers find it challenging to make ends meet. The financial strain affects their ability to afford daily expenses such as groceries, transportation, and healthcare. Recognizing the immediate need to address these financial constraints, the teachers employ problem-focused coping mechanisms. They initiate financial literacy workshops and seminars within the school community, inviting financial advisors or experts to provide guidance on budgeting, saving, and managing expenses.

Moreover, teachers form support groups where they share cost-saving tips, such as group buying, to help each other navigate their financial challenges. These problem-focused coping mechanisms aim to tackle the root cause of financial strain by actively seeking solutions and supporting networks to alleviate the impact of low salaries on teachers' daily living conditions. Cayao and Arenga (2021) highlighted a coping mechanism used by teachers wherein they actively seek to find positive aspects or the bright side within challenging situations to alleviate stress. By actively attempting to find positive elements within stressful situations, teachers utilize a coping mechanism that contributes to a more optimistic outlook and aids in managing the emotional impact of stressors within their professional roles. This approach aligns with resilience-building practices and promotes a healthier mindset to navigate challenging circumstances.

When teachers encounter challenges related to their specific subject conditions—such as such as difficulty in teaching certain topics, lack of resources, low internet connectivity for researching various ideas or complex curriculum—it affects their approach to problem-solving in response to stress. They are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping strategies, aiming to directly tackle or find solutions to the stressors specifically related to the subjects they teach.

As noticed in a school implementing a new math curriculum emphasizing problem-based learning, some of the teachers encounter difficulties in effectively integrating these new methodologies into their lessons. Recognizing the importance of adapting to the new curriculum, the teacher employs problem-focused coping mechanisms. They dedicate extra time for professional development, attending workshops and seminars specifically focused on innovative teaching strategies for math.

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Additionally, the teacher seeks mentorship from experienced educators proficient in the new teaching methodologies, actively collaborating with colleagues to share best practices and resources. Furthermore, they spend time researching and curating supplementary materials to support the new curriculum, aiming to align their teaching methods with the requirements of the updated subject standards. These problem-focused coping mechanisms aim to address the specific challenges related to adapting to the new teaching methodologies in mathematics by actively seeking solutions, acquiring new skills, and leveraging available resources to enhance their teaching approach. Diponegoro (2021) highlights the effectiveness of problem-focused techniques in mitigating the adverse impacts of stressors. This approach involves proactive steps aimed at directly addressing stressors and managing them effectively. By taking initiative, planning, carefully evaluating options, and making informed decisions, individuals can effectively mitigate the adverse impacts of stressors. This approach not only aids in resolving immediate issues but also fosters resilience and effective stress management over the long term.

In summary, when examining the coefficients, it is evident that teachers' occupational stress bears a substantial relationship to their coping mechanisms—both emotion-focused and problem-focused coping. The p -value, being less than 0.05, supports the significance of this relationship, coupled with a moderate positive correlation for both coping mechanisms. Consequently, the rejection of the null hypothesis in the correlation between these coping mechanisms signifies their noteworthy association with teachers' occupational stress. With the following findings for emotion-focused coping, a moderate positive for all indicators of occupational stress, such as working conditions, teachers' living conditions, and subject-related conditions, Also, with the following findings for problem-focused coping: a moderate positive for both indicators of occupational stress, such as working conditions and subject-related conditions, and a low positive for teachers' living conditions. A relationship exists between the variables.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study came up with following conclusions based on the findings of the study:

1. Teachers feel moderate stress due to subject-related conditions. Additionally, teachers' interest in growing professionally can sometimes add stress, affecting their overall occupational stress. This means that both the demands of their subjects and the desire for professional growth contribute to the pressures teachers face in their work.
2. Teachers often use problem-focused coping mechanisms, with waiting before acting emerging as a consistent and effective coping mechanism. This suggests that many teachers lean towards this method instead of jumping into immediate action. Having a good grasp of interpretation can really boost how teachers make decisions and deal with various situations.
3. A moderate positive correlation exists between challenging working conditions and teachers' utilization of emotion-focused coping mechanisms. When confronted with challenges such as heavy workloads, extracurricular responsibilities, or classroom management issues, teachers tend to lean towards employing emotion-focused coping mechanisms. This involves seeking emotional support from peers or engaging in activities to regulate their emotions, aiding them in handling workplace stressors.
4. There is a moderate positive relationship between challenging working conditions and teachers' use of problem-focused coping. When teachers encounter workload surges, extracurricular demands, or classroom management issues, they tend to prioritize problem-solving strategies. This involves directly tackling the underlying causes of stress or challenges within their work environment.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings, the study presented the following recommendations:

1. Implement strategies for teachers by coming up with better ways to submit reports. Give clear instructions, use templates, or set up standard formats to simplify report creation.
2. Create sessions for professional growth that are all about finding a good balance. Encourage sharing feedback, talking openly about any uncertainties, and giving support to deal with doubts. Stress the importance of making well-thought-out decisions during these sessions.
3. Set up programs to give specific help with the stress teachers face at work. Have workshops on managing time to handle those heavy reports, sessions for sorting out budget worries, and programs for overall well-being.
4. Give teachers training on how to deal with stress and solve problems. Equip them with skills to handle stress well, which can make them better at solving problems and more resilient when facing different stressors. It's about giving them tools to navigate challenges with confidence.

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