

Workplace Stress, Coping Mechanism and Teachers' Performance

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Abstract:

This study determined the levels of teachers' workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and work performance in a district under a large-sized schools division during School Year 2024 to 2025. It also examined differences and relationships among these variables when grouped according to age, sex, highest educational attainment, length of service, and average family monthly income. Using a descriptive-comparative-correlational design, data were collected through a validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire administered to public elementary teachers. Findings revealed that most teachers were older, had lower educational attainment, shorter lengths of service, and belonged to lower-income households. Results showed high levels of workplace stress across the areas of role ambiguity, task design, job security, work-life balance, and working environment. Despite the elevated stress, teachers demonstrated high coping levels, utilizing problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-focused strategies. Work performance was also rated high, indicating consistent fulfillment of instructional and professional responsibilities. When grouped by profile, teachers with higher educational attainment, income, longer service, and older age reported higher stress levels, while those with lower income and shorter service showed higher coping and performance levels. Significant differences were found in stress levels by age and educational attainment, in avoidance-focused coping by income, and in performance by income. However, no significant relationships were found between stress and performance or between coping mechanisms and performance. These findings suggest that while teachers face considerable stress, their performance remains unaffected, highlighting the value of developing responsive school-based interventions that support teacher well-being without compromising effectiveness.

Keywords: Coping mechanism, teachers' performance, workplace stress

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

According to the World Health Organization (2023), stress is defined as a state of mental tension and worry due to a difficult situation. In fact, when a person faces challenges and tensions and responds to those things, stress comes up. Every individual may respond differently, at different levels, and in different ways, but a person's way of responding is very important because that is management. In the workplace, there are lots of situations that will cause stress to a certain worker, but it depends on their coping ability how they respond to those stressors.

A survey from Royandoyan (2022) states that stress in the workplace among Filipinos is highest in Southeast Asia. He further stated in his survey that stress happened not because of the hours spent at work, imbalance, or location of the workplace, but because of the actual happenings in the workplace that make them feel miserable. There are many instances that could be the source of stressors. It could be based on the working system, reports needed, and relationships to one another.

Hence, a study from Qiu et al. (2021) stated that there are many workers who experience stress in their workstations because of physical problems, psychological issues, and job dissatisfaction. Stress in their workloads is higher when they are experiencing physical abnormalities, and they are dissatisfied with their job if they experience psychological stress.

Furthermore, it was found that adverse working conditions and management practices cause the participants more stress in the workplace. Stress-inducing management practices included unrealistic demands, lack of support, unfair treatment, low decision latitude, lack of appreciation, effort-reward imbalance, conflicting roles, lack of transparency, and poor communication. Organizational interventions were perceived as effective if they improved management styles, and included physical exercise, taking breaks, and ensuring adequate time for planning work tasks. Personal interventions used outside of work were important to prevent and remedy stress.

In the district of San Francisco in the Division of Cebu Province, based on a survey as compared with various related literature, the paramount difficulties encountered by teachers lie in the work stressors, financial stressors, and emotional stressors. The researcher's personal experiences would testify that stress is very evident in the workplace. In reflection of what is mentioned above, it is the purpose of this research to assess the status of Stress Management in the Workplace of Public-School Teachers in the District of San Francisco, Cebu, during the School Year 2024-2025, based on the Stress Management Training Plan.

This research study is very important in the field of the educational system because it can provide a good insight to address the gap of having stress in the workplace and further address stress by managing it well through a stress management plan to be proposed.

Current State of Knowledge

Workplace stress has been extensively examined across professions, revealing consistent patterns of organizational and interpersonal factors that undermine employee well-being. Harvey et al. (2020), Bharathi (2023), Krasniqi et al. (2024), Kumar (2023), Markham and Zwane (2024), Buruk and Yinal (2024), dos Reis et al. (2023), Khugshal and Chaubey (2022), and COVID (2022) collectively emphasized that workplace stress among employees—including teachers—is primarily driven by role ambiguity, poor communication, lack of support, and unclear job expectations. These studies highlighted that when employees encounter inconsistent feedback, job insecurity, and an absence of empathy or structural clarity, productivity declines while emotional exhaustion increases. Organizational rigidity, especially when coupled with inadequate leadership support and uneven role expectations, was found to exacerbate psychological strain. The research further underscored the need for participatory leadership, transparent workload management, and institutional empathy to mitigate stress. Strategies such as clear communication, flexible scheduling, and structured feedback systems were identified as essential buffers against burnout. Collectively, these works concluded that stress is not merely an individual or psychological issue but a systemic organizational concern that demands structural reforms to promote clarity, role alignment, and emotional safety in the workplace.

In alignment with these findings, research focusing specifically on teachers underscores the importance of both personal and institutional strategies in addressing professional stress. Studies by Kyriacou (2019), Jennings (2017), Brunsting et al. (2018), Roffey (2019), Lomas (2019), Farber (2020), Oxley (2021), Eyal and Roth (2019), Diliberti and Schwartz (2022), and Montgomery and Rupp (2021) revealed that chronic stress in the teaching profession often stems from excessive workload, time pressures, student misbehavior, and insufficient institutional support. These scholars collectively argued that teacher well-being must be addressed through integrated approaches that include both self-regulatory practices and systemic reforms. Mindfulness, reflective practice, emotional regulation, and peer support were identified as effective coping mechanisms, while leadership style, school culture, and teacher autonomy were seen as determining factors in resilience. Importantly, these studies called for institutional frameworks that prioritize teacher well-being through supportive leadership, participatory decision-making, and continuous professional development. Together, they reinforce the notion that managing teacher stress is both a personal and collective responsibility—anchored in emotional intelligence, professional identity, and organizational empathy.

Beyond the educational context, broader organizational research reflects similar patterns, indicating that the causes of stress are deeply systemic rather than profession-specific. Studies by Parham (2023) and Talebzadeh and Karatepe (2020) demonstrated that unclear job roles, inconsistent feedback, and the absence of mentoring contribute to confusion, overcommitment, and eventual burnout. Likewise, Ciolfi and Lockley (2018) and Mofakhami (2022) found that incoherent or overly demanding tasks without adequate autonomy and managerial support intensify fatigue and psychological strain. Job insecurity related to automation, as discussed by Matt et al. (2020) and Hii (2023), further amplifies anxiety and disengagement, particularly among employees lacking digital literacy or access to upskilling opportunities. Moreover, inflexible workplace policies (Parham, 2023; Curington, 2023) and suboptimal environmental design (Guo, 2024; Smith & Bone, 2021) exacerbate the inability to maintain work-life balance. Collectively, these studies affirm that workplace stress is not a result of individual inadequacy but a structural outcome of flawed organizational design, ambiguous expectations, and weak support systems. Accordingly, they call for organizational interventions emphasizing role clarity, participatory leadership, and wellness-oriented workplace cultures.

Consistent with this systemic perspective, research on coping mechanisms across professions highlights the need for adaptive, proactive, and institutionally supported strategies to sustain employee well-being. Studies by Jiang et al. (2017), Marais-Opperman and van Eeden (2021), and Emeljanovas et al. (2023) indicate that problem-focused coping—such as strategic planning, seeking social support, and emotional regulation—enhances resilience and reduces burnout. In contrast, avoidance and self-blame were found to intensify psychological distress. Evidence from Agyapong et al. (2023), Schonfeld et al. (2017), and Wu (2020) supports the integration of mindfulness, therapy-based interventions, and workload restructuring as effective means of addressing chronic stress and preventing long-term psychological decline. Furthermore, Cancio et al. (2018) and Mérida-López et al. (2017) underscore the critical role of emotional intelligence, mentoring, and peer collaboration in sustaining professional motivation and mental

health. Taken together, these studies emphasize that coping frameworks should move beyond individual self-care to encompass systemic, emotionally intelligent, and collaboratively driven institutional practices.

In the Philippine context, workplace stress reflects many of the same global challenges but is further complicated by cultural, administrative, and organizational factors. Filipino teachers, in particular, experience heightened stress due to role ambiguity, poor communication, and rigid bureaucratic structures that restrict professional autonomy and psychological safety. Studies by Zulueta and De Lara (2020), Gai et al. (2024), and Maylett and Warner (2022) consistently highlight that unclear job expectations, inconsistent feedback, and top-down management styles contribute significantly to emotional exhaustion and disengagement. Filipino employees—particularly within the education and outsourcing sectors—report that stress is rooted not merely in workload but also in the lack of feedback, limited decision-making power, and minimal recognition of effort. Complementing these findings, Parks (2025) and Hoque (2022) emphasize that leadership empathy, open communication, and task flexibility are essential for sustaining resilience and mental well-being during times of crisis or technological transformation. Similarly, Usmani and Khan (2022) and Dordoni and Carreri (2022) note that breaches of trust, inequitable workload distribution, and gender-based disparities further aggravate workplace stress. Supporting this, Liloia and Costa (2025) demonstrated that role ambiguity and multitasking impair cognitive functioning, reinforcing the necessity of clarity and brain-based management strategies. Collectively, these findings confirm that in the Philippine setting, workplace stress remains a structural concern deeply rooted in organizational design, leadership behavior, and communication systems rather than an individual's inability to adapt.

In response to these organizational stressors, Filipino teachers employ a combination of personal resilience and institutional collaboration to manage stress effectively. Zulueta and De Lara (2020) observed that educators rely on peer mentoring, collaboration, and participatory decision-making to counter administrative ambiguity and hierarchical rigidity. Parks (2025) reconceptualized resilience as an organizational competency, emphasizing the role of empathetic leadership and psychological safety in fostering sustainable coping. In support of this, Gai et al. (2024) and Kinik (2020) established that participatory human resource practices, transparent communication, and responsive leadership significantly reduce teacher burnout. In the digital era, Adelabu et al. (2024), Liloia and Costa (2025), and Denicolai and Ugenti (2022) further found that technology-induced stress can be mitigated through flexible scheduling, digital literacy training, and mindfulness interventions. Southgate (2020) and Pušić et al. (2024) similarly advocated for emotional intelligence, reflective practice, and informal learning communities as empowering tools for teacher well-being. Finally, Ehrenreich (2018) underscored the therapeutic value of collective healing and psychosocial support during periods of crisis. Altogether, these studies converge on a central conclusion: teachers cope most effectively in environments that value empathy, autonomy, collaboration, and open communication—transforming stress management from an individual burden into a systemic, culture-driven responsibility.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is grounded on three key theories that explain the relationships between workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and teacher performance: The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987; Biggs et al., 2017), the Self-Regulatory Coping Behavior Theory (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2016), and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). The Transactional Theory posits that stress arises when perceived demands exceed available coping resources, triggering either problem-focused or emotion-focused coping responses. The Self-Regulatory Coping Behavior Theory emphasizes that coping is a dynamic and adaptive process shaped by personal goals, emotional regulation, and situational factors, especially relevant for teachers managing continuous stressors. Meanwhile, the JD-R Model explains how high job demands, such as heavy workloads or role ambiguity, can lead to burnout, while sufficient resources like support systems, coping strategies, and professional development enhance motivation and job performance.

Collectively, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how stress and coping interact to influence teachers' well-being and effectiveness. The Transactional Theory captures the subjective nature of stress experiences among teachers, while the Self-Regulatory Coping Theory highlights their adaptive strategies in navigating institutional and emotional challenges. The JD-R Model connects these experiences to tangible performance outcomes, demonstrating how coping mediates the impact of job demands and available resources. Together, these frameworks form a strong theoretical foundation for analyzing the interplay of workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and performance, guiding the interpretation of findings and the development of practical interventions to support teacher resilience and educational quality.

Objectives

This study aimed to determine the levels of teachers' workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and teachers' performance in a District of a large school division during the School Year 2024-2025. To answer the main problem, the following specific questions were asked: 1) the level of teachers' workplace stress according to the area of role ambiguity, task design, job security, work-life balance, working environment; 2) the level of teachers' coping mechanisms according to the area of problem focused, emotion focused, avoidance focused; 3) the level of teachers'

work performance during the School Year 2023-20224; 4) the significant relationship between the level of teachers' workplace stress and the level of teachers' performance; and 5) the significant relationship between the level of teachers' coping mechanisms and the level of teachers' performance.

Methodology:

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology used, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, and the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis.

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the levels of teachers' workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and performance in a district within a large-sized schools' division during the School Year 2024-2025. As noted by Manjunatha (2019), descriptive research focuses on understanding current phenomena, including conditions, practices, and relationships, by collecting information to describe and interpret prevailing situations. This approach is commonly used in educational research to assess existing conditions, establish baselines, and identify patterns or connections between variables. The descriptive-correlational method was deemed most appropriate for this study as it systematically describes teachers' stress levels and coping abilities while examining their relationship to work performance. Through this dual focus, the study seeks to uncover meaningful associations that can inform the creation of evidence-based intervention plans aimed at enhancing teachers' well-being and productivity.

Study Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of 137 elementary school teachers selected from a total population of 212 across 22 schools within the identified district for the School Year 2024-2025. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation, dividing the population into subgroups based on school affiliation and randomly selecting samples from each stratum according to its size. This method enhanced the precision and representativeness of the findings, addressing the unequal number of teachers per school, as supported by Makwana et al. (2023), who noted that stratified sampling reduces bias by reflecting key population characteristics. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, which considers confidence level, population proportion, and margin of error, with an adjustment for finite populations below 10,000 to maintain statistical validity. The resulting sample of 137 teachers satisfied the required conditions for reliability and analytical power, consistent with Adhikari's (2021) assertion that Cochran's formula is a reliable standard for determining representative sample sizes in educational research.

Instruments

The researcher utilized a structured survey questionnaire to determine teachers' levels of workplace stress, coping mechanisms, and work performance. The instrument comprised four parts: Part I gathered demographic data (age, educational attainment, length of service, and family income); Part II assessed stress experiences in personal, work-related, and interpersonal areas; Part III measured coping abilities in cognitive, emotional, and avoidance domains; and Part IV evaluated work performance based on IPCRF ratings. Each area included 15 items designed to address the study's objectives and support data analysis on variable relationships. To ensure validity, the instrument was evaluated by five experts in education, research, and management following Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates' criteria, yielding a validity index of 4.64, interpreted as excellent. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha confirmed strong internal consistency, with a reliability coefficient of 0.923, also rated excellent. These results affirm that the questionnaire was both valid and reliable for accurately measuring teachers' workplace stress, coping abilities, and performance.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the research instrument was considered valid and reliable, permission from the Schools Division Superintendent was obtained for the conduct of the study, and then it was channeled to the Public Schools District Supervisor and to the School Heads of the identified elementary schools in an island district of a large-sized division in Central Visayas. After the approval, the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, who are the teachers of the identified secondary schools in the district. Questionnaires were distributed personally, adhering to research protocols. The data collected were tallied, carefully analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The researcher ensured voluntary participation of the respondents to this study, names were included in the data, and each identity was not disclosed; they were assured of full confidentiality of the data, with the researcher being the sole person who had data access. After tabulating and analyzing the data, the electronic data were discarded, and print-outs were also shredded to prevent unauthorized access to the information.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No. 1 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean to assess the level of teachers' workplace stress in the areas of role ambiguity, task design, job security, work-life balance, and working environment.

Objective No. 2 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean to evaluate the level of teachers' coping mechanisms in the areas of problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-focused strategies.

Objective No. 3 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean to measure the level of teachers' work performance for the school year 2024 to 2025 based on their IPCRF ratings.

Objective No. 4 used the relational analytical scheme and Spearman's rho to determine the significant relationship between the level of teachers' workplace stress and their work performance based on IPCRF ratings.

Objective No. 5 used the relational analytical scheme and Spearman's rho to determine the significant relationship between the level of teachers' coping mechanisms and their work performance based on IPCRF ratings.

Ethical Consideration

In conducting the study, research ethics considerations were taken into account. Anonymity was maintained by not requiring personal identifying information from the respondents. Confidentiality was also ensured by keeping the data securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. To minimize the risk of harm, the researcher observed health protocols such as wearing a mask and a face shield when interacting with the respondents. Informed consent was also obtained from the participants, emphasizing their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. The potential risks and benefits of the study were explained to the participants, and they were allowed to ask questions before consenting to participate. These research ethics considerations were put in place to protect the participants' welfare and rights and maintain the study's integrity.

Results and Discussion:

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Table 1

Teachers' Workplace Stress in the Area of Role Ambiguity

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Experiencing unclear job expectations and responsibilities that lead to confusion and stress.	4.16	High Level
2. Receiving inconsistent instructions from multiple supervisors causes uncertainty in task execution.	4.12	High Level
3. Lacking proper communication regarding performance evaluation criteria and expectations.	4.08	High Level
4. Encountering frequent changes in job roles without adequate training or guidance.	4.13	High Level
5. Struggling to balance multiple roles within the organization without clear prioritization.	4.18	High Level
6. Facing difficulties in decision-making due to unclear authority and accountability.	4.11	High Level
7. Dealing with insufficient job descriptions that fail to outline specific duties and responsibilities.	4.13	High Level
Overall Mean	4.13	High Level

Table 1 reveals that teachers experienced a high level of workplace stress related to role ambiguity, with an overall mean of 4.13. The lowest-rated item, "Lacking proper communication regarding performance evaluation criteria and expectations" (M = 4.08), and the highest-rated item, "Struggling to balance multiple roles within the organization without clear prioritization" (M = 4.18), both indicate significant stressors. These findings suggest that unclear responsibilities, inconsistent communication, and insufficient administrative guidance contribute to confusion in task prioritization, reduced productivity, and emotional exhaustion. Persistent ambiguity in job roles may further result in burnout, low morale, and diminished instructional effectiveness. Consistent with Harvey et al. (2020), the study confirms that role ambiguity is a major cause of teacher stress and burnout, underscoring the need for clearer role definitions and improved communication systems to foster teacher well-being and organizational efficiency.

Table 2

Teachers' Workplace Stress in the Area of Task Design

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Managing excessive workload that exceeds reasonable expectations and personal capacity.	4.11	High Level
2. Handling repetitive and monotonous tasks reduces engagement and job satisfaction.	4.16	High Level
3. Struggling with unrealistic deadlines that create pressure and reduce work quality.	4.17	High Level
4. Adapting to frequent changes in curriculum and instructional strategies without proper preparation.	4.12	High Level
5. Balancing administrative duties alongside instructional responsibilities can lead to burnout.	4.13	High Level
6. Working without sufficient resources and support to effectively perform job responsibilities.	4.12	High Level
7. Dealing with ambiguous task assignments that require constant clarification from supervisors.	4.13	High Level
Overall Mean	4.13	High Level

Table 2 shows that teachers' workplace stress in the area of task design is high, with an overall mean of 4.13. The most stressful item, "Struggling with unrealistic deadlines that create pressure and reduce work quality," scored 4.17, while "Managing excessive workload that exceeds reasonable expectations and personal capacity" scored slightly lower at 4.11, both indicating high stress levels. Teachers often face multiple, overlapping deadlines for lesson planning, grading, meetings, and administrative tasks, sometimes without proper notice, which forces them to work beyond official hours and carry tasks home, leading to physical and emotional exhaustion. This workload-pressure mismatch reduces focus, motivation, and performance, highlighting the need for better task scheduling and coordination. These findings align with Natividad and Barsaga (2020), who reported that unrealistic deadlines and poor planning increase teacher stress, lower job satisfaction, and exacerbate fatigue, emphasizing the importance of practical scheduling and support systems to improve teacher well-being.

Table 3
Teachers' Workplace Stress in the Area of Job Security

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Worrying about delayed salary releases and benefits due to bureaucratic processing.	4.16	High Level
2. Experiencing uncertainty regarding salary increases and step increments.	4.14	High Level
3. Dealing with stress from performance-based ranking and promotion policies.	4.12	High Level
4. Managing concerns about reassignment or transfer to distant locations without prior consultation.	4.07	High Level
5. Facing pressure to meet high performance expectations for career advancement.	4.09	High Level
6. Navigating complex promotion processes with limited slots for career progression.	4.10	High Level
7. Adjusting to frequent changes in DepEd policies that may affect workload and responsibilities.	4.12	High Level
Overall Mean	4.11	High Level

Table 3 indicates that teachers' workplace stress related to job security is high, with an overall mean of 4.11. The highest stressor, "Worrying about delayed salary releases and benefits due to bureaucratic processing," scored 4.16, while concerns about "reassignment or transfer to distant locations without prior consultation" scored 4.07, both reflecting high stress. Delays in salary and benefits create financial strain, particularly for teachers in remote areas or those supporting households and loans, undermining motivation, classroom performance, and willingness to take on additional responsibilities. The lack of transparency and slow bureaucratic processes fosters feelings of helplessness and demoralization, eroding trust in the system. These findings align with Naig and Borbon (2021), who reported that delayed compensation causes psychological distress, forces teachers to seek short-term loans, and reduces morale, emphasizing the need for streamlined payroll systems, prompt fund releases, and better administrative accountability to sustain teacher well-being and professional commitment.

Table 4
Teachers' Workplace Stress in the Area of Work-Life Balance

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Struggling to manage professional responsibilities while meeting personal and family obligations.	4.20	High Level

2. Spending excessive hours on work-related tasks beyond regular school hours.	4.15	High Level
3. Bringing work home leads to reduced personal and family time.	4.23	High Level
4. Experiencing difficulty in maintaining physical and mental well-being due to work demands.	4.20	High Level
5. Facing pressure from school-related events that require participation outside official work hours.	4.05	High Level
6. Struggling to take leave or vacation days due to workload and responsibilities.	4.15	High Level
7. Balancing multiple job roles while maintaining personal hobbies and interests.	4.15	High Level
Overall Mean	4.16	High Level

Table 4 shows that teachers experience high workplace stress related to work-life balance, with an overall mean of 4.16. The most stressful factor is "Bringing work home, leading to reduced personal and family time" (mean 4.23), while pressure from school-related events outside work hours is slightly lower at 4.05, both indicating high stress. Teachers often extend lesson planning, administrative tasks, and paperwork beyond official hours, limiting rest and personal time, which contributes to fatigue, emotional strain, and reduced job satisfaction. These results align with Baluyos et al. (2019), who found that carrying work home disrupts personal routines and lowers teacher motivation and well-being, highlighting the significant impact of poor work-life balance on educators.

Table 5
Teachers' Workplace Stress in the Area of Working Environment

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Dealing with overcrowded classrooms that hinder effective teaching and student engagement.	4.09	High Level
2. Working in physically uncomfortable conditions, such as inadequate ventilation or poor lighting.	4.17	High Level
3. Experiencing workplace conflicts with colleagues or school administrators.	4.04	High Level
4. Lacking access to necessary teaching materials and technological resources.	4.14	High Level
5. Handling stress due to excessive noise levels that disrupt concentration and instruction.	4.11	High Level
6. Feeling unsafe due to a lack of security measures within the school premises.	4.18	High Level
7. Struggling with ineffective school policies that negatively impact workflow and productivity.	4.06	High Level
Overall Mean	4.11	High Level

Table 5 indicates that teachers experience high workplace stress related to the working environment, with an overall mean of 4.11. The greatest stressor is "Feeling unsafe due to lack of security measures within the school premises" (mean 4.18), while conflicts with colleagues or administrators are slightly lower at 4.04, both reflecting high stress. Teachers' perception of physical insecurity—due to absent guards, inadequate fencing, or lack of surveillance—creates anxiety, reduces focus, and undermines classroom management, particularly in high-risk or isolated areas. These conditions contribute to emotional strain, lower professional confidence, and may discourage teachers from remaining in certain schools. Ellovido and Quirap (2024) similarly found that poor school security increases psychological stress and absenteeism, highlighting the need for improved safety infrastructure and policy interventions to protect teacher welfare and sustain educational quality.

Table 6
Teachers' Coping Mechanisms in the Area of Problem-Focused

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Focus on finding solutions to problems in the workplace.	4.29	High Level
2. Reflect on past experiences to guide current actions.	4.29	High Level
3. Analyze situations logically to reduce emotional reactions.	4.26	High Level
4. Set realistic goals to address stressors effectively.	4.26	High Level
5. Planned and prioritized tasks to manage workload efficiently.	4.25	High Level
6. Seek new knowledge and strategies to handle challenges.	4.32	High Level
7. Use positive self-talk to maintain a constructive mindset.	4.26	High Level
8. Break down large tasks into manageable steps.	4.26	High Level
9. Create a structured routine to increase productivity.	4.28	High Level
10. Focus on facts rather than assumptions in stressful situations.	4.26	High Level
Overall Mean	4.27	High Level

Table 6 shows that teachers employ high levels of problem-focused coping strategies, with an overall mean of 4.27. The most utilized strategy is "Seek new knowledge and strategies to handle challenges" (mean 4.32), while "Plan and prioritize tasks to manage workload efficiently" is slightly lower at 4.25, both indicating high usage. This suggests that teachers consistently apply problem-solving approaches to manage stress, with slight variation in emphasis. Supporting this, Donasco et al. (2025) found that teachers who actively pursued professional development and solution-focused strategies, such as goal setting and task analysis, felt more in control, reduced emotional exhaustion, and maintained higher job satisfaction and instructional performance, highlighting the importance of school support in enhancing coping mechanisms.

Table 7
Teachers' Coping Mechanisms in the Area of Emotion-Focused

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Express your emotions through healthy outlets like journaling.	4.17	High Level
2. Seek support from friends or colleagues when overwhelmed.	4.22	High Level
3. Practice self-compassion to manage feelings of inadequacy.	4.16	High Level
4. Use relaxation techniques like deep breathing to calm yourself.	4.26	High Level
5. Allow yourself time to process challenging emotions.	4.18	High Level
6. Engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation.	4.27	High Level
7. Acknowledge and validate your feelings during stressful times.	4.23	High Level
8. Use humor to diffuse tension in difficult situations.	4.22	High Level
9. Establish emotional boundaries to protect your well-being.	4.27	High Level
10. Share your concerns with a trusted confidant or counselor.	4.23	High Level
Overall Mean	4.22	High Level

Table 7 presents the level of teachers' coping mechanisms in the area of emotion-focused strategies. The overall mean is 4.22, which is interpreted as High Level. Among the items, the one with the highest mean score of 4.27 is shared by two indicators: "Engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation" and "Establish emotional boundaries to protect your well-being," both interpreted as High Level.

The item with the lowest mean score of 4.16 is "Practice self-compassion to manage feelings of inadequacy," also interpreted as High Level. This shows that while all emotion-focused strategies are practiced frequently, self-compassion receives slightly less emphasis than the others. However, the mean remains within the high range, reflecting that teachers still recognize its importance in maintaining emotional resilience. Teachers likely use this strategy alongside others, such as relaxation and seeking support, demonstrating a multi-faceted stress management approach. The consistent mean scores across all items suggest a balanced use of emotional regulation techniques among teachers, indicating their awareness of the need to process and manage stress internally while seeking supportive outlets when needed.

This finding is supported by the study of Dotimas (2023), who explored emotional coping mechanisms among public elementary teachers in NRC. The study found that teachers frequently relied on emotionally soothing activities such as leisure, music, and connecting with family members to relieve stress. The research highlighted that teachers who engaged in joy-inducing hobbies and maintained healthy emotional boundaries showed higher job satisfaction and lower levels of burnout. Teachers in their study also emphasized that setting boundaries was essential for preserving their mental health, especially when dealing with emotionally demanding situations. Dotimas further recommended integrating well-being sessions in teacher development programs to enhance emotional coping. Their findings reinforce the importance of emotion-focused strategies in promoting teacher resilience and sustaining motivation in the profession.

Table 8
Teachers' Coping Mechanisms in the Area of Avoidance-Focused

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Avoid conflicts that are not essential to address.	4.27	High Level
2. Distance yourself from toxic environments or individuals.	4.28	High Level
3. Redirect your focus to less stressful tasks temporarily.	4.19	High Level
4. Limit exposure to stress-inducing situations where possible.	4.24	High Level
5. Take time away from work to recharge and regain clarity.	4.17	High Level
6. Delay responding to stressful triggers until you are calmer.	4.27	High Level
7. Seek temporary distractions like hobbies to reduce immediate stress.	4.23	High Level
8. Withdraw from non-productive arguments or debates.	4.22	High Level
9. Refrain from overcommitting to tasks beyond your capacity.	4.26	High Level
10. Step back from situations that escalate stress unnecessarily.	4.27	High Level
Overall Mean	4.24	High Level

Table 8 presents the level of teachers' coping mechanisms in the area of avoidance-focused strategies. The overall mean is 4.24, which is interpreted as High Level. Among the items, the one with the lowest mean score of 4.17 is "Take time away from work to recharge and regain clarity," interpreted as High Level.

The items with the highest mean score of 4.28 and 4.27 are "Distance yourself from toxic environments or individuals" and three other indicators: "Avoid conflicts that are not essential to address," "Delay responding to stressful triggers until you are calmer," and "Step back from situations that escalate stress unnecessarily." These results show that teachers actively use avoidance-based coping as a strategy to preserve emotional balance and maintain workplace functionality. Teachers often choose to avoid conflicts or stressful engagements that do not contribute to productive outcomes. Distancing from negative environments is a conscious effort to reduce emotional overload and create mental space for better decision-making. Avoidance in this context is not denial but rather a selective withdrawal from stress-inducing encounters that drain energy and affect performance. Teachers may delay responses to conflict or stressors until they have regained composure, a strategy that prevents emotional outbursts or impulsive actions. Stepping back allows teachers to reflect and re-approach situations clearly, minimizing unnecessary tension. This also includes choosing to walk away from toxic conversations, limiting engagement with negative peers, or silently managing classroom stress without confrontation. The high mean scores indicate that avoidance-focused strategies are deliberately used to deflect unnecessary stress while preserving emotional well-being. These strategies may serve as preventive tools for maintaining inner peace in high-pressure school settings.

This finding is supported by Scott's study (2024), which examined avoidance coping strategies among high school teachers. Her study found that teachers frequently engaged in distancing themselves from hostile environments and avoided confrontational discussions as part of their emotional protection. Participants shared that walking away from potential conflicts and limiting interaction with toxic individuals helped them sustain focus and reduce emotional fatigue. The researcher also noted that avoidance was more prevalent in highly stressful work settings, especially during periods of increased administrative workload. Teachers reported that short-term avoidance provided temporary relief and prevented emotional escalation, which enabled them to continue teaching effectively. Scott emphasized that avoidance was not a sign of weakness but a mindful strategy used to regain mental clarity and composure. She recommended that school leaders recognize the value of such coping mechanisms and support teachers by reducing environmental stressors that trigger avoidance behavior. Her study confirms the importance of healthy avoidance as a viable strategy in managing the day-to-day stress of the teaching profession.

Table 9
Teachers' Work Performance During the School Year 2023-2024

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	27	19.70
Very Satisfactory	110	80.30
Satisfactory	-	-
Unsatisfactory	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	137	100.00

Table 9 presents teachers' work performance distribution during the School Year 2023–2024 based on their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings. Out of 137 teachers, a majority of 110, or 80.30 percent, received a Very Satisfactory performance rating. Meanwhile, 27 teachers (19.70 percent) obtained an Outstanding rating. No teachers received ratings under the Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Poor categories.

The data show that the overall work performance of teachers in the referenced school year was notably high, with all respondents falling within the top two performance brackets. The dominance of the Very Satisfactory rating suggests that most teachers consistently met or exceeded expectations in areas such as instructional delivery, learner engagement, classroom management, and professional development. Teachers likely demonstrated competence in fulfilling both teaching and non-teaching functions, including participation in school programs, maintaining learner outcomes, and submitting reports and requirements on time. The presence of teachers who were rated Outstanding further highlights exemplary performance within the group, likely driven by innovations in instruction, leadership roles in school initiatives, and active involvement in capacity-building activities. The absence of lower performance categories reflects a high standard of accountability and support within the school or district. This performance trend may be attributed to effective school leadership, regular performance monitoring, and teachers' intrinsic motivation to maintain quality service. It also suggests that the teachers were able to apply effective coping mechanisms and sustain productivity despite the workplace stressors identified in previous sections.

This finding aligns with the study of Torres (2020), who examined work performance among elementary teachers in Central Luzon. Her research revealed that a vast majority of teachers received Very Satisfactory to Outstanding ratings in their IPCRF, driven by high levels of professional commitment and continuous learning. The study highlighted that positive school culture, adequate support from school heads, and frequent recognition of teacher achievements contributed significantly to sustained performance. Teachers reported that collaborative practices, mentoring, and professional learning communities enhanced their instructional competence and motivation. Torres

emphasized the importance of strong leadership and teacher development programs in improving and maintaining work performance. Her findings confirm that high work performance can be achieved even under stressful conditions through structured support systems and a strong professional culture.

Table 10

Relational Analysis Between the Level of Teachers' Workplace Stress and the Level of Teachers' Performance

Correlates	N	Rho	Level of Sig	p-value	Interpretation
Level of Teachers' Workplace Stress	137	.110	0.05	.200	Not Significant
Level of Teachers' Performance					

Table 10 presents the relational analysis between the teachers' workplace stress level and their work performance level. The Spearman rank order correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables. The computed correlation coefficient or rho was 0.110 with a p -value of 0.200. At the 0.05 level of significance, the p -value was greater than the alpha level. Therefore, the relationship between teachers' workplace stress and their performance was not statistically significant. This indicates that there was no sufficient evidence to establish a meaningful relationship between the two variables during the school year 2023 to 2024.

Despite the high levels observed in workplace stress and teacher performance, the lack of a significant relationship implies that teachers could maintain their performance regardless of their stress levels. This could be attributed to adaptive coping mechanisms, professional accountability, or institutional support systems that helped mitigate the effects of stress. The result also suggests that stress alone may not directly influence how teachers perform, particularly when effective internal or external management strategies are in place.

Supporting this finding, the study conducted by Torres (2020) revealed that there was no significant relationship between stress levels and performance ratings among public school teachers in Central Luzon. The author emphasized the role of school-based wellness programs and peer mentoring in helping teachers handle stress without compromising their classroom duties. The study concluded that when addressed through appropriate support mechanisms, workplace stress does not necessarily hinder teaching effectiveness.

Table 11

Relational Analysis Between the Level of Teachers' Coping Mechanisms and the Level of Teachers' Performance

Correlates	N	Rho	Level of Sig	p-value	Interpretation
Level of Teachers' Coping Mechanisms	137	.108	0.05	.207	Not Significant
Level of Teachers' Performance					

Table 11 reveals the results of the relational analysis between the level of teachers' coping mechanisms and their level of performance. The analysis employed Spearman's rank-order correlation to measure the association between the two variables, with a total of 137 respondents considered. The computed correlation coefficient or rho value was 0.108 with a p -value of 0.207, which exceeds the significance level of 0.05. Based on this result, the relationship between coping mechanisms and performance is interpreted as not significant.

This indicates that there is insufficient statistical evidence to claim a meaningful correlation between how teachers cope with stress and how they perform in their professional duties. Although the coping mechanism of teachers remained at a high level and their performance was also rated high, the variations in coping styles did not translate into measurable differences in work performance within the sample. This suggests that other factors play a stronger role in influencing teacher performance apart from coping strategies alone.

A study conducted by Usop et al.(2016) supports this finding, as they concluded that while coping mechanisms contribute to emotional stability, they are not direct predictors of job performance among Filipino public school teachers. Their results emphasize that institutional support, clear job expectations, and access to teaching resources substantially impact performance outcomes more than individual coping efforts alone. Thus, schools must promote healthy coping behaviors and improve systemic and organizational supports to drive teacher effectiveness.

Conclusions:

The study found that most respondents were older teachers with lower educational attainment, shorter service, and modest family income. Teachers experienced high workplace stress across role ambiguity, task design, job security, work-life balance, and work environment, yet demonstrated strong coping abilities—problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-focused—and maintained high performance levels. Stress levels varied with age, education,

service length, and income, with older, more educated, and higher-income teachers reporting greater stress. Coping was also influenced by demographics, with older and more experienced teachers showing higher coping levels, while those with lower income used avoidance strategies more often. Teachers with lower income achieved higher performance ratings, suggesting strong motivation despite financial limitations. Statistical analysis revealed significant differences in stress by educational attainment and age, in coping by income, and in performance by income, but no significant relationships between stress and performance or coping and performance, indicating teachers' ability to sustain productivity despite pressure. The study concluded that while stress levels are high, teachers remain dedicated and resilient, supported by adaptive coping behaviors. It recommended implementing targeted interventions such as Project CLEAR PATH (role clarity), Project REALTIME (timeline management), Project PAYCHECK FIRST (salary timeliness), Project BALANCE MATTERS (work-life balance), Project SAFE ZONE (school safety), Project GABAY (peer mentoring), Project ALAGA (emotional resilience), and Project PAHINGA (wellness breaks). These programs are designed to institutionalize teacher support systems, reduce stressors, and promote sustainable well-being, aligned with DepEd's capacity-building, welfare, and mental health initiatives.

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