

Burnout and Coping Mechanisms Among Teachers in Inclusive Classrooms

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Abstract

This study examined the extent of burnout and coping mechanisms among teachers in inclusive classrooms at Canduman National High School, Mandaue City. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 30 teachers through a structured survey. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze respondents' demographic profiles, burnout levels, and coping strategies, while Pearson's correlation coefficient determined the relationship between burnout and coping mechanisms. Results revealed that teachers generally experienced moderate to high levels of burnout, primarily due to overwhelming workloads, noisy classrooms, and student misbehavior. The effects of burnout were observed as exhaustion, frustration, and feeling overwhelmed, though most teachers remained resilient and committed to their roles. In terms of coping, respondents often employed adaptive strategies such as time management, social support, and relaxation activities, while maladaptive strategies (e.g., substance use, smoking) were rarely practiced. Findings further showed that general burnout levels did not significantly influence coping strategies; however, the effects of burnout were significantly related to coping behaviors, suggesting that teachers adopt coping strategies more actively when burnout manifests in physical or emotional symptoms. Based on the result, a teacher's wellness and stress management program was proposed to enhance teachers' professional satisfaction, sustain their motivation, and improve classroom effectiveness. The study underscores the importance of proactive stress management, institutional support, and wellness programs to sustain teacher well-being and effectiveness in inclusive classrooms.

Keywords: Special Education, burnout, coping mechanism, inclusive classroom, Wellness program, Descriptive-Correlational, Mandaue City, Cebu Philippines

Introduction

Inclusive education promotes equal learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. It ensures that children, whether with special needs or from minority groups, are given the chance to attend the same schools, learn together, and develop essential life skills. Beyond academic outcomes, inclusive systems value diversity and encourage mutual growth, where all learner's unique contributions are recognized. However, while inclusive education advocates equity and access, it also places significant demands on teachers, who must manage diverse classroom needs, adjust pedagogical approaches, and meet administrative expectations. These challenges increase the risk of stress and burnout.

International and national frameworks underscore the importance of inclusive education. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) affirms the right to "inclusive, quality and free" education for all, irrespective of disability, gender, race, or socio-economic status. In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order No. 21 in 2019, which provides policy guidelines on inclusive education as part of the K to 12 programs. Furthermore, Republic Act No. 11650 (2022), or the Inclusive Education Act, institutionalizes support and services for learners with disabilities, reaffirming the State's commitment to accessible education for all (Llego, 2025).

Despite these legal and policy provisions, the lived experiences of teachers reveal persistent challenges. Teachers in inclusive classrooms often struggle with high workloads, behavior management, and adapting lessons to varied learning needs. Such stressors may lead to physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion, eventually manifesting as burnout (Etzion, 2020). Burnout negatively affects teachers' job satisfaction, instructional quality, and retention, ultimately compromising the promise of inclusive education.

While several studies abroad have examined teacher burnout and coping strategies in inclusive education contexts, there is a scarcity of localized research exploring how Filipino teachers experience and manage these challenges. Most existing literature emphasizes the rights of learners and the structural policies of inclusion but pays insufficient attention to the teachers' well-being, which is equally critical to the sustainability of inclusive education. Addressing this gap will provide evidence-based insights to support both teacher welfare and learner outcomes.

Therefore, this study explored the extent of burnout among teachers in inclusive classrooms, identify common stressors, and assess the effectiveness of coping strategies within the Philippine context. The findings are beneficial to multiple stakeholders. Teachers gain insights into practical coping mechanisms to protect their well-being and sustain their performance. School administrators are guided in implementing institutional support systems, such as mentoring, workload management, and professional development programs. Policy makers, including DepEd and legislators, can use the results to strengthen inclusive education policies by integrating provisions that directly address teacher welfare. Parents and local communities also gain awareness of the challenges faced by educators, encouraging greater collaboration and shared responsibility. Ultimately, addressing teacher burnout through effective coping strategies not only enhances teacher well-being and retention but also ensures that inclusive education remains a sustainable and impactful approach for all learners.

Literature Review

This study was grounded in several key frameworks that examine the intricate relationship between stress, coping, and resilience in the educational context. By integrating Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, Conservation of Resources Theory, and Teacher Resilience Theory, all provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how teachers navigate stress and resilience in their professional lives, shaping the direction and significance of this study. Alongside legal mandates for inclusive education, these all provide a roadmap for addressing systemic barriers, enhancing teacher preparedness, and promoting practices that ensure every student can succeed—academically, socially, and personally.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1991) provides a foundational understanding of how individuals assess and respond to stress, emphasizing the dynamic relationship between external stressors and personal coping resources. Complementing this, the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory highlights the significance of resource management in coping with stress, proposing that individuals strive to acquire, retain, and protect valuable resources to maintain psychological well-being. Additionally, the Teacher Resilience Theory offers insights into the ways in which teachers develop the ability to withstand and recover from the stresses inherent in their profession, focusing on the protective factors and strategies that contribute to long-term well-being.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping theory of Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1991) posits that stress results from an individual's appraisal of a situation as threatening, harmful, or overwhelming, coupled with their perceived ability to cope with it. The model emphasizes the dynamic process of how individuals interpret stressors and choose coping strategies. In the case of teachers in inclusive classrooms, stressors such as high workload, lack of resources, and student behavior may lead to burnout if the coping strategies available are insufficient. Burnout is a psychological syndrome that arises from prolonged exposure to stressors, typically characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). In the context of teaching, burnout occurs when educators experience overwhelming stress, fatigue, and a sense of ineffectiveness, often due to the emotional and mental demands of their job.

Furthermore, the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) is applied to understand burnout among teachers. According to the COR theory, individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect resources (e.g., time,

energy, and social support). When these resources are depleted, burnout may occur. Teachers who lack the necessary resources, such as adequate training or classroom support, may experience burnout more.

Nevertheless, teachers in inclusive classrooms often develop a range of coping mechanisms. This strategy is used to manage stress, emotions, and the challenges encountered in daily life, especially being a teacher. Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model (1984) is one of the most widely recognized frameworks for understanding stress and coping. According to the model, coping strategies are classified into two types. The Problem-focused coping which focuses on addressing the cause of the stress. This involves actively addressing the stressor, such as adjusting teaching practices, seeking professional development, or using classroom management strategies to reduce stress. And, the emotion-focused coping which aims to manage emotional responses to stress. This involves managing emotional responses to stress, such as seeking social support, practicing relaxation techniques, or engaging in self-compassion. Additionally, Resilience Theory emphasizes on the ability of individuals to bounce back from adversity, stress, and burnout. Teacher Resilience Theory focuses on understanding how teachers adapt to and cope with the challenges of the teaching profession, particularly those that involve emotional, psychological, and practical stressors. Resilience in teachers refers to the ability to overcome adversities, maintain well-being, and continue to perform effectively in the classroom, even in the face of high demands, stress, and burnout. Resilience is not a fixed trait but can be developed through supportive environments and adaptive coping mechanisms. In the context of burnout, resilience allows teachers to maintain their well-being despite the challenges they face (Mastin, 2001).

The legal foundation for examining burnout and coping mechanisms among teachers in inclusive classrooms in the Philippines is grounded in various laws and policies that highlight the rights of both educators and students, especially within the framework of inclusive education. The Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), Republic Act No. 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) are laws that emphasize the significance of inclusive education. These highlights the importance of providing equitable and quality education to all learners including those with special needs, and teachers in inclusive classrooms must be equipped with the necessary skills and resources to cater to students with disabilities. Furthermore, these legal provisions establish a framework that supports the inclusion of all learners in the education system, ensuring that children with disabilities and other marginalized groups receive the necessary resources, support, and opportunities to succeed in school.

The implementation of inclusive education in the Philippines faces several challenges, ranging from insufficient teacher training and limited resources to negative societal attitudes and lack of infrastructure. These obstacles make it difficult for inclusive education to reach its full potential, limiting opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their peers in a supportive environment. Singal (2019) finds out that teachers feel unsure of their capacity and readiness to effectively implement inclusive practices. Several factors contribute to this sense of doubt and the difficulties teachers face in adopting inclusive education are lack of adequate training and preparation, insufficient resources and support. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including increased investment in teacher training, improved accessibility, better resource allocation, and societal awareness to promote inclusion and equity in education (UNESCO).

This theoretical background aligning with the legal mandates underscores the need to investigate the factors contributing to teacher burnout and the coping mechanisms utilized by teachers in inclusive classrooms in the Philippines. Given the complex and demanding nature of inclusive education, understanding how teachers perceive and manage stress is critical to improving their well-being and ensuring the success of inclusive education policies.

Methodology

This section of the research methodology outlines the procedures and techniques used to conduct the study. It details the research process, which includes various data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, and observations. Furthermore, it explains how participants were selected and describes the data analysis techniques, such as statistical and thematic analysis. It also addresses ethical considerations, potential limitations, and the rationale behind the chosen methodology

Design

This study utilized a descriptive correlational approach to examine burnout and coping strategies among teachers in inclusive classrooms in the Canduman National High School for the school year 2024-2025. Descriptive-correlational is deemed suitable for this study as it allows the researchers to describe the characteristics of the population and determine the association between two variables (Salendab, 2023).

In addition, the 30 respondents were selected through purposive sampling. This allowed the researchers to obtain data and be able to generate a more comprehensive analysis of the relationships between measured variables.

Consequently, data was collected using an adapted and validated structured survey while adhering to the three-stage gathering process: (1) preliminary stage- involves securing relevant approvals from authorities through official transmittals; (2) data gathering stage- involve survey questionnaire distribution and retrieval of responses from the respondents; and (3) post data gathering- involves organization, tabulation, and analysis of gathered data and interpretation using appropriate statistical methods and tools.

Prior to the distribution, the adapted survey questionnaire was reviewed by the Cebu Technological University- Main Campus Thesis Advisory and Approval Committee experts for content and face validity. An online survey questionnaire with similar content was also provided for respondents who cannot be physically present during the data gathering.

Moreover, the gathered data were encoded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency counts and percentages comprised the descriptive analysis of teacher demographics. Pearson r correlation coefficient was used to determine the relation between burn-out and coping mechanisms. Results were analyzed and interpreted to address each research question and test the hypothesis.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were the teachers of Canduman National High School who are directly involved in handling inclusive classrooms. These teachers were selected as participants because they are primarily responsible for addressing the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). Their daily experiences in managing academic and behavioral challenges, coupled with workload demands, make them highly relevant subjects for examining burnout and coping mechanisms.

The study focused on both junior high school and senior high school teachers, regardless of age, gender, or years of teaching experience. This inclusive selection allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon across different teaching levels and backgrounds. Teachers were considered eligible respondents if they had at least one year of teaching experience in Canduman National High School, ensuring that they were adequately familiar with the demands of inclusive education within the school environment.

Table 1
Distribution of the Respondents

School	N	n	Percentage
Canduman National High School	140	30	21.43
Total	140	30	100.00

Note. N = total population; n = sample size.

Table 1 showed the distribution of the respondents in the study. Out of the total 140 teachers of Canduman National High School, a sample of 30 teachers was selected to serve as respondents. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a margin of error of 5% or purposive sampling, ensuring that the participants adequately represent the teaching population. These respondents were chosen because they are directly handling inclusive classrooms and are thus relevant to the study on burnout and coping mechanisms.

The final sample included teachers from a variety of demographic backgrounds, including age, gender, teaching experience, and educational qualification based on their biographical profiles. Since Canduman National High School

is an inclusive school, teachers are eligible to participate in the study. Gathering their insights on the extent of burnouts and the extent of utilizing coping mechanisms provide perspectives to understand the contextual realities of inclusive education.

Instrument

This study utilized a validated survey questionnaire containing scales that were adapted specifically for measuring key variables (teacher demographics, extent of burnouts, effects of stress, and utilization of coping strategies) among inclusive teachers at Canduman National High School.

To begin, the biographical data section gathered profile information such as age, gender, marital status, education background, years of teaching experience, training in inclusive education, and awareness of inclusion policies. Next, the Stress survey which utilizes a 5-point scale where teachers indicate the perceived extent of burnout associated with 30 work-related stressors from "Extremely Stressful" to "Not at all Stressful." Higher average ratings on this scale indicates greater perceived stress from specific sources. Further, the Effects of Burnout survey contains a 6-point scale where teachers self-report the frequency of experiencing 18 stress-related physical, cognitive and behavioral effects from "Almost Always" to "Hardly Ever." Higher average ratings suggest more severe perceived impacts of stress. Furthermore, the Coping Strategies survey incorporates a 4-point scale to measure the perceived extent teachers utilize 15 coping methods frequently reported in literature from "Always" to "Never." Higher average ratings signified more frequent utilization of coping approaches to manage work stress.

Moreover, the structured survey instrument to be used in this study is adapted from The Pullis Inventory of Teacher Stress (Pullis, 1992) which was previously modified by Kebbi (2015), and was adapted in this study. It contains four parts: 1) Biographical data of inclusive teachers, 2) the Burnout survey that is composed of 30 items rated on a 5-point scale regarding perceived amount of stress per item, 3) the Effects of Burnout survey that is composed of 18 items rated on a 6-point scale regarding perceived effects of stress per item, and 4) the Coping

Strategies survey that is composed of 15 items rated on a 4-point scale regarding perceived extent of utilization of coping strategies to combat burnout.

Data Gathering Procedures

The data-gathering procedures involved three stages: the preliminary stage, the data-gathering stage, and the post-data-gathering stage.

Preliminary Stage. First, permission was obtained from the Dean of Graduate Studies and the research adviser through a signed letter of authorization before data collection. This authorization was then be forwarded to DepEd's Mandaue City Division Office to obtain their consent to allow the researchers to gather data from their constituents. After acquiring the written approval from the division's office, the School Principals/Heads was officially notified through another transmittal letter. Once official approval from authorities were secured, reaching out to the respondents was the next step. A written consent was acquired from participants ensuring them confidentiality, and their right to withdraw anytime. A protocol maintaining the confidentiality of information was also established. Before data collection, the respondents were briefed pertaining to the study's goals and processes.

Data Gathering Stage. Upon completing the required permissions, questionnaires were distributed to respondents (personally and/or through online Google Form) on scheduled dates. Accommodations were made for the needed guidance during administration. Completed questionnaires were promptly retrieved.

Post - Data Gathering Stage. Finally, gathered data were organized, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical methods and tools.

Statistical Treatment

The data collected from the respondents were carefully tallied, organized, and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods to address the research problems of this study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to

provide a systematic and objective interpretation of the findings. Specifically, the following statistical treatments were applied:

- **Frequency and Percentage Distribution:** This was used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents such as age, sex, years of teaching experience, and teaching level (junior or senior high school).
- **Weighted Mean:** This was applied to determine the extent of burnout experienced by teachers and the coping mechanisms they employed. The following scale and descriptive interpretation were used.
- **Standard Deviation (SD):** Used alongside the weighted mean to measure the variability of responses, showing how consistently or inconsistently teachers experienced burnout and applied coping strategies.
- **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r):** This was used to determine the relationship between the levels of burnout and the coping mechanisms of the respondents. The decision rule was set at a 0.05 level of significance, where a p-value less than 0.05 indicates a significant relationship.
- **Interpretation of r-values:** To interpret the strength of correlation, the following scale was used.
- **p-value/Level of Significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)** to determine whether the correlation between burnout and coping mechanisms was statistically significant.

Through these statistical treatments, the study was able to describe the profile of the respondents, evaluate the levels of burnout and coping mechanisms, and examine the relationship between the two variables within the context of inclusive classrooms at Canduman National High School.

Scoring Procedures

Responses for the Burnout survey, the Effects of Burnout survey, and the Coping Strategies survey were evaluated using Likert Scales.

Burnout Survey: Ratings between 4.21 and 5.00 indicates "Extremely Stressful", denoting "Extremely High" levels of burnout. Furthermore, scores from 3.41 to 4.20 signifies "Quite Stressful", representing "High" perceived burnout levels. In contrast, scores from 2.61 to 3.40 signifies "Moderately Stressful", representing "Moderate" perceived burnout levels. Similarly, scores from 1.81 to 2.60 signifies "Mildly Stressful", representing "Low-Moderate" perceived burnout levels. Lastly, scores from 1.00 to 1.80 signifies "Not at all Stressful", representing "Low" perceived burnout levels.

Coping Strategies survey: Ratings between 3.25-4.00 indicated strategies are used "Always", representing an "Extremely High" use of that coping technique. Furthermore, scores from 2.50-3.24 signified strategies are used "Often", representing a "High" use of that coping technique. Similarly, scores from 1.75-2.49 signified strategies are used "Sometimes", representing a "Moderate" use of that coping technique. In contrast, scores from 1.00-1.74 signified strategies are used "Rarely/Never", representing a "Low" use of that coping technique.

Having well-defined scoring procedures were essential for reliably measuring constructs of interest, interpreting individual responses, and drawing valid conclusions from the quantitative survey data regarding teacher burnout and coping strategies.

Results

This section presents the results of the data gathered from the teachers at Canduman National High School, Mandaue City. The study aimed to investigate the level of teacher's burnout and coping mechanism in inclusive classroom. The respondents consisted of 30 teachers from junior high and senior high school with diverse students. The data were collected, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted based on the objectives of the study.

Age and Gender of the Respondents

The age and gender profile of the respondents offered valuable insights into the composition of the study population. The age distribution of the respondents revealed a notable concentration in younger age groups.

Table 2 presented the distribution of respondents according to their age and gender. The majority of respondents fell within the 24-33 age group, 11 are female, and 3 are male, which had 46.67% of the total respondents. This indicated that the significant portion of the teachers in inclusive classrooms are relatively young. The 44-53 age group represented 30% of the total respondents, with 6 females and 3 males. It suggested that experienced and older teacher were also evident in inclusive education. The 34-43 age group comprised 23.33% of the sample, 4 are females and 3 are males. This illustrated a moderate representation of mid-career professionals.

The table highlighted the demographic composition of respondents by age and gender which revealed a significant gender imbalance. Females dominated the respondent pool with 70% (21 out of 30) while males are only 30% (9 out of 30). Overall, the males were underrepresented across age group. This aligned with the general trends in the teaching profession especially in basic education. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS, 2022), women make up a larger share of the teaching workforce worldwide, particularly in primary and lower secondary education.

The predominance of younger and female teachers in inclusive classrooms may influence the way burnout is experienced and the types of coping mechanisms employed. Younger teachers may have less experience in managing the complex needs of diverse learners, potentially increasing stress levels. Gender may also affect coping preferences, as research suggests women are more likely to seek emotional and social support as coping strategies (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989).

Table 2
Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
44-53	6	20.00	3	10.00	9	30.00
34-43	4	13.33	3	10.00	7	23.33
24-33	11	36.67	3	10.00	14	46.67
Total	21	70.00	9	30.00	30	100.00

Marital Status of the Respondents

This demographic characteristic was important, as marital status may influence teachers' experiences of stress and the coping strategies they employ. Thus, analyzing the respondents' marital status provided a useful context for understanding its potential role in relation to teacher burnout and coping mechanisms.

Table 3
Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	f	%
Single	14	46.67
Married	15	50.00
Widow	1	3.33
Total	30	100.00

Table 3 showed the marital status of the respondents. The data revealed that the majority of the respondents are married, comprising 50.00% (15 out of 30). This suggested that half of the study participants are likely balancing both professional responsibilities and family obligations. Close to half of the respondents, or 46.67% (14 out of 30), were single. This indicated that a considerable proportion of the respondents were not yet married, which may influence their perspectives, workload flexibility, and coping styles. Meanwhile, only one respondent (3.33%) was a widow, representing the smallest group in the sample.

The distribution of marital status among the respondents was important to consider, as studies had shown that marital and family circumstances can affect teachers' stress levels, burnout, and coping mechanisms. Married teachers may benefit from the emotional and social support of their spouses and families, which can serve as a protective factor

against emotional exhaustion and work-related stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013). On the other hand, single teachers may rely more heavily on peer networks, colleagues, or institutional support systems when managing stress (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Although the widowed group was small, it is worth noting that such individuals may face unique stressors related to both personal and professional adjustment. Therefore, the composition of respondents' marital status not only described their demographic profile but also provided a meaningful lens for analyzing variations in burnout levels and coping strategies within the teaching profession.

Educational Attainment

This section presented the respondents' highest educational attainment, an important demographic reflecting their academic preparation and professional growth. Higher qualifications can enhance competence and coping resources but may also pose challenges when pursued alongside teaching. Thus, examining educational attainment offered valuable context for understanding teachers' exposure to burnout and their coping strategies.

Table 4
Highest Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctorate Degree	1	3.33
With Doctorate Units	0	0.00
Master's Graduate	5	16.67
With Master's Units	19	63.33
Bachelor's Degree	5	16.67
TOTAL	30	100.00

Table 4 presented the highest educational attainment of the respondents. The majority, 63.33% (19 out of 30), had earned units in a master's degree program, while 16.67% (5) were master's degree holders. An equal proportion of 16.67% (5) only had a bachelor's degree, and 3.33% (1 respondent) had completed a doctorate degree. None of the respondents reported having completed doctorate units without finishing the program.

Educational attainment was an important demographic factor, as it has always been associated with teachers' levels of stress, burnout, and coping strategies. Studies suggested that higher educational attainment often equips teachers with advanced skills, greater professional confidence, and broader coping resources, which can help mitigate the effects of burnout (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). However, pursuing graduate and post-graduate studies while working full-time may also contribute to additional workload and stress, potentially increasing the risk of emotional exhaustion if not balanced effectively (Kyriacou, 2001). The fact that most respondents were either currently pursuing or had already completed graduate studies indicated a strong commitment to professional development, but it also suggested that this group may be exposed to unique stressors related to managing both academic and professional responsibilities. Therefore, the educational attainment of respondents provided valuable context in analyzing how burnout manifests and how coping mechanisms are employed among teachers.

Length of Service of the Respondents

The distribution of respondents according to their length of service in the teaching profession provided an overview of the respondents' teaching experience. The length of service of teachers was closely linked to their experiences of stress, burnout, and coping mechanisms. Teachers at different career stages often faced distinct challenges and resources for resilience.

Table 5
Length of Service of the Respondents

Length of Service (in years)	f	%
16 and above	5	16.67
11-15	3	10.00
6-10	13	43.33
1-5	8	26.67
less than one year	1	3.33
Total	30	100.00

Table 5 showed the distribution of respondents according to their years of service in the profession. The largest proportion, 43.33% (13 out of 30), were in the teaching profession for 6–10 years. This group represented mid-career teachers who were relatively experienced yet still in a stage of professional growth and development. The second largest group, 26.67% (8 respondents), had served for 1–5 years, representing early-career teachers who were in the adjustment stage of their profession. A smaller proportion, 16.67% (5 respondents), had more than 16 years of teaching experience, while 10.00% (3 respondents) were in the profession for 11–15 years. The smallest group, with only one respondent (3.33%), consisted of teachers with less than one year of service.

The distribution suggested that the majority of respondents fell within the early to mid-career stages (1–10 years of service). This reflected a teaching force composed largely of individuals who were navigating professional challenges, adjusting to workloads, and establishing long-term teaching practices. According to Kyriacou (2001), early-career teachers are often vulnerable to stress due to difficulties in classroom management, workload demands, and the transition from academic preparation to real classroom contexts. Similarly, Antoniou, Ploumpi, and Ntalla (2013) highlighted that mid-career teachers, such as those in the 6–10-year range, may face compounded stress from increased responsibilities and expectations, potentially heightening their risk for burnout.

On the other hand, teachers with longer service (11 years and above, comprising 30.00% of the sample) may possess stronger coping mechanisms developed through years of experience. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) emphasized that experienced teachers often rely on well-established classroom strategies, professional confidence, and broader support networks to manage stress effectively. However, while longevity in the profession can foster resilience, it does not eliminate the risk of burnout, as prolonged exposure to heavy workloads, administrative tasks, and policy changes may also lead to emotional exhaustion over time (Kyriacou, 2001).

Overall, the data indicated that most respondents concentrated in the first decade of their teaching career, where risks of stress and burnout were relatively high but opportunities for developing effective coping strategies were also most crucial. Meanwhile, the presence of veteran teachers in the group added diversity in perspectives, offering valuable insights into how teaching experience influences both vulnerability to burnout and the evolution of coping mechanisms.

Respondents' training attendance for inclusive education

The respondents' attendance to training in inclusive education were essential for teachers as they strengthen their skills in handling learners with diverse needs. In the context of inclusive classrooms, training equips teachers with the necessary strategies, attitudes, and knowledge to effectively accommodate students with varying abilities, backgrounds, and challenges. Attendance to training also served as an indicator of the respondents' preparedness and openness to adopt inclusive practices, which were vital in ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all students. By examining the respondents' participation in training programs, this study understood how exposure to professional

development may influence their confidence, teaching performance, and ability to cope with the demands of inclusive education.

Table 6
Respondents' attendance to training in inclusive education

Attendance to Training	f	%
Has Attended	25	83.33
Not Attended	5	16.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 6 showed the respondents' attendance to training in inclusive education. The data revealed that a large majority, 83.33% (25 out of 30), had attended training programs related to inclusive practices, while only 16.67% (5 respondents) reported that they had not participated in such training. This indicated that most of the respondents had opportunities for professional development in inclusive education, which was a critical area of competence for teachers working with diverse learners in today's classrooms.

The high percentage of respondents who had attended training suggested a strong commitment to continuous learning and alignment with educational policies that emphasize inclusivity. Training in inclusive education equips teachers with strategies for differentiated instruction, classroom management, and the ability to address the needs of learners with disabilities, as well as those from varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such preparation is vital because teachers who feel more competent in handling diverse learners are less likely to experience high levels of stress or burnout (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013). In contrast, the smaller group of respondents (16.67%) who had not attended any training may face greater challenges in implementing inclusive practices, potentially increasing their risk of frustration, role conflict, and reliance on less effective coping mechanisms (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

The distribution of responses also highlighted the role of professional training as a protective factor against teacher burnout. Kyriacou (2001) emphasized that uncertainty and lack of preparation are major contributors to stress in teaching, particularly when dealing with complex classroom settings. Inclusive education training, therefore, not only enhances teacher competence but also serves as a coping resource by increasing confidence, self-efficacy, and problem-solving capacity. Thus, the respondents' high level of attendance in inclusive education training provided valuable insight into their preparedness to manage the challenges of inclusivity while maintaining resilience in their professional roles.

Respondents' awareness on the current inclusive practices

Awareness of inclusive practices is a crucial factor in fostering equitable and responsive education, particularly in diverse classrooms where learners have varying needs, abilities, and backgrounds. In the Philippine context, inclusive education has been emphasized by the Department of Education (DepEd) and supported by global frameworks such as UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and the Sustainable Development Goals, which advocate for the right of every child to access quality education without discrimination (UNESCO & DepEd, 2015; UNESCO, 2020). For teachers, being aware of inclusive practices gone beyond theoretical knowledge. It represents their readiness to create learning environments that value diversity, provide differentiated instruction, and ensure that no learner is left behind.

Table 7
Respondents' awareness on the current inclusive practices

Awareness to Inclusive Practices	f	%
Aware	26	86.67
Not Aware	4	13.33
Total	30	100.00

The findings in Table 7 revealed that a large majority of the respondents, 86.67% (26 out of 30), indicated that they were aware of the current inclusive practices implemented in schools, while only 13.33% (4 respondents) reported that they were not aware. This distribution highlighted the strong awareness among teachers regarding inclusivity, which may be attributed to recent professional development initiatives, institutional policies, and the increasing emphasis on inclusive education in the Philippines (UNESCO & DepEd, 2015; SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2019). The high level of awareness among respondents can be considered a positive indicator of readiness to implement inclusive strategies in the classroom. Awareness is a fundamental step toward application, as teachers who recognize and understand inclusive practices are more likely to integrate differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and learner-centered approaches in their teaching. Likewise, being aware of inclusive practices can help reduce stress and burnout, as teachers feel more equipped to handle diverse learners (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013). Moreover, awareness of inclusive practices plays a vital role in shaping how teachers manage stress and prevent burnout. Studies had shown that teachers who are knowledgeable about inclusive approaches often feel more competent and confident in handling classroom challenges, which can reduce feelings of inadequacy and emotional exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). On the other hand, the 13.33% of respondents who reported not being aware of inclusive practices suggested a gap that schools and policymakers need to address. Lack of awareness may leave teachers unprepared to respond to the needs of diverse learners, potentially leading to frustration, stress, and ineffective coping mechanisms (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013). In addition, lack of awareness may hinder teachers' ability to implement equitable and responsive teaching strategies, which could affect learner outcomes and contribute to higher stress levels due to perceived inadequacy (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). This underscored the importance of continuous professional development and sustained support from educational institutions to ensure that all teachers are both knowledgeable and confident in applying inclusive approaches.

Overall, the results affirmed that while the majority of teachers were aware of inclusive practices, efforts must be made to bridge the awareness gap among the few who were not, ensuring that inclusivity becomes a shared and consistent practice across educational settings.

Extent to which the respondents experience burnout in handling inclusive classrooms

Burnout has long been recognized as one of the major occupational hazards in the teaching profession, particularly among educators working in inclusive classrooms. Inclusive education requires teachers to address the unique needs of students with diverse learning profiles, including those with disabilities, behavioral challenges, and socio-emotional concerns. While this role promotes equity and social justice in education, it also places significant emotional, cognitive, and physical demands on teachers. The presence of stressors such as excessive workload, disruptive behavior, lack of institutional support, and limited resources can intensify the risk of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Understanding the extent to which teachers experience burnout was therefore crucial in identifying priority areas for intervention, promoting teacher well-being, and sustaining the success of inclusive education.

Table 8

Extent to which the respondents experience burnout in handling inclusive classrooms

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	In general, how stressful do you find being a teacher dealing with students with special needs?	3.97	0.96	High
2	Loud, noisy students	4.27	0.83	Very High
3	Poor career opportunities	3.67	1.06	High
4	Not enough time allotted to do the work	3.97	1.00	High
5	Inadequate disciplinary policy of the school	4.00	1.05	High
6	Students' rude behavior	4.47	0.73	Very High
7	Inadequate salary	3.73	1.05	High
8	Too much work to do	4.23	0.94	Very High
9	Attitudes and behavior of the school principal or coordinator	3.13	1.31	Moderate
10	Responsibility for the students' progress/learning	3.43	1.04	High

11	Low status of the teaching profession	3.13	1.11	Moderate
12	Poorly motivated students	4.17	0.83	High
13	Lack of recognition for good teaching	3.33	0.88	Moderate
14	Dealing with the parents of students	3.50	1.01	High
15	Constant monitoring of the student's behavior	3.67	0.96	High
16	Inadequate equipment and instructional materials	3.83	0.91	High
17	Demands on after-school time	3.60	1.10	High
18	Lack of effective consultation and assistance	3.47	1.14	High
19	Students' defiance of teacher authority	4.10	0.99	High
20	Attitudes and behavior of other teachers/professionals	3.00	1.11	Moderate
21	Having to punish students or use aversive techniques	3.30	1.12	Moderate
22	Lack of participation in decision-making	3.43	1.07	High
23	A large number of students who lack of time to spend with individual kids	3.73	1.08	High
24	Evaluation by principals or supervisors	2.97	1.13	Moderate
25	Threat of aggression/physical harm	3.23	1.43	Moderate
26	Lack of appreciation from your students	2.83	1.02	Moderate
27	Inability to meet your personal or professional goals	3.33	1.12	Moderate
28	Lack of fun or enjoyment involved in teaching	3.17	0.87	Moderate
Aggregate Mean		3.60		
Aggregate Standard Deviation			1.03	High

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low; 1.00-1.80-Very Low

The data in Table 8 revealed the different dimensions of burnout experienced by teachers in inclusive classrooms. The computed aggregate mean of 3.60, interpreted as High, indicated that respondents generally experience a considerable level of burnout in performing their professional responsibilities. This finding supported Maslach and Leiter's (2016) concept of burnout as a pervasive condition in teaching, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

A closer look at the individual indicators showed that students' rude behavior (WM = 4.47, SD = 0.73) emerged as the most significant stressor, rated at a Very High level. This reflected previous research suggesting that classroom misbehavior is a key predictor of teacher stress and burnout, as it disrupts the learning environment and undermines teacher authority (Aloe et al., 2014). Similarly, loud and noisy classrooms (WM = 4.27, SD = 0.83) and too much work to do (WM = 4.23, SD = 0.94) were also identified as Very High contributors. This aligned with the findings of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who reported that heavy workloads and demanding classroom management responsibilities intensify teacher stress and feelings of exhaustion.

Several other items were rated High, such as inadequate disciplinary policy (WM = 4.00), lack of time to accomplish work (WM = 3.97), and poorly motivated students (WM = 4.17). These suggested that both institutional shortcomings and student disengagement add to teachers' burdens. In particular, inadequate institutional support has been linked to feelings of helplessness and decreased teacher efficacy (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Moreover, issues such as inadequate salary (WM = 3.73) and lack of instructional resources (WM = 3.83) reflected systemic constraints. According to Antoniou, Ploumpi, and Ntalla (2013), financial dissatisfaction and insufficient resources exacerbate stress levels, particularly in resource-challenged educational settings.

Meanwhile, a number of indicators were rated only Moderate, including evaluation by principals or supervisors (WM = 2.97), lack of appreciation from students (WM = 2.83), and attitudes of other teachers or professionals (WM = 3.00). While these factors contributed to stress, they appeared to be less pressing compared to classroom management and workload. This was consistent with the findings by Kyriacou (2001), who argued that interpersonal relations matter but are often secondary to workload and student behavior as primary stressors in teaching.

The overall results implied that teacher burnout in inclusive classrooms was multifaceted, but primarily stemmed from three major areas: classroom behavior management, excessive workload, and insufficient institutional support. Unless

these challenges are addressed—through stronger discipline policies, reduced workloads, adequate resources, and ongoing training—teachers may continue to experience burnout that could negatively affect their performance and the learning outcomes of their students

Extent of effects of burnout experienced by the respondents

Table 9 showed the extent of burnout effects among teachers in inclusive classrooms. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) posited that burnout involves emotional exhaustion, and reduced professional efficacy. This section provided insights into how teachers' daily responsibilities and stressors translate into physical, emotional, and psychological effects. Understanding these effects is vital, as they affect teachers' well-being, performance, relationships, and commitment to the profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

Table 9
Extent of effects of burnout experienced by the respondents

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	How often do you feel exhausted?	4.20	0.96	High
2	How often do you feel frustrated?	4.00	1.17	High
3	How often do you feel angry with the students having special educational needs?	2.97	1.07	Moderate
4	How often do you feel depressed/sad?	2.67	1.18	Moderate
5	How often do you feel nervous/anxious?	2.70	1.12	Moderate
6	How often do you have headaches?	3.30	1.26	Moderate
7	How often do you feel your heart beating fast?	2.80	1.24	Moderate
8	How often do you feel unable to cope?	2.53	1.11	Low
9	How often do you get an upset stomach?	2.23	1.10	Low
10	How often do you feel irritable?	3.10	1.21	Moderate
11	How often do you feel guilty about not doing enough?	3.20	1.47	Moderate
12	How often do you feel tearful?	2.27	1.05	Low
13	How often do you feel like quitting teaching students having special educational needs?	2.60	1.35	Low
14	How often do you feel distant from students having special needs?	2.40	1.04	Low
15	How often do you feel unsuccessful in teaching students having special needs?	2.93	1.31	Moderate
16	How often do you feel bored by work?	2.97	1.35	Moderate
17	How often do you feel overwhelmed by your work?	4.27	1.05	Very High
18	How often does school stress carry over to other aspects of your life?	3.83	1.39	High
Aggregate Mean		3.05		
Aggregate Standard Deviation			1.19	Moderate

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low; 1.00-1.80-Very Low

Table 9 illustrated the extent to which teachers handling inclusive classrooms experience the effects of burnout in their personal and professional lives. The aggregate mean of 3.05, interpreted as Moderate, suggested that while burnout was present among respondents, its effects vary in intensity across physical, emotional, and psychological dimensions. This aligned with Maslach and Leiter's (2016) model of burnout, which highlights exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy as the primary manifestations.

A closer examination revealed that feeling overwhelmed by work (WM = 4.27, SD = 1.05) is rated Very High, indicating that workload remained the most pressing and consistent factor affecting teachers' well-being. This supported the findings by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who emphasized that excessive demands and role overload are central to teacher stress and burnout. Similarly, feeling exhausted (WM = 4.20, SD = 0.96) was rated High, pointing

to the physical toll of teaching in inclusive settings where diverse needs require significant energy and preparation (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013).

Several emotional indicators also scored High, including feeling frustrated (WM = 4.00, SD = 1.17) and the carry-over of school stress into personal life (WM = 3.83, SD = 1.39). This highlighted how burnout extends beyond professional boundaries and impacts teachers' overall quality of life. Previous studies have shown that teachers often struggle with work-life balance, leading to increased frustration and stress spillover into family and social relationships (Kyriacou, 2001).

Other symptoms, such as headaches (WM = 3.30, SD = 1.26), irritability (WM = 3.10, SD = 1.21), feelings of guilt (WM = 3.20, SD = 1.47), and feeling unsuccessful in teaching students with special needs (WM = 2.93, SD = 1.31), were rated Moderate. These reflect psychosomatic and emotional manifestations of burnout, consistent with findings by Aloe et al. (2014), who noted that unresolved classroom stressors often lead to physical health problems and reduced self-perceived effectiveness.

Interestingly, negative affective responses such as anger toward students with special needs (WM = 2.97, SD = 1.07), feelings of depression/sadness (WM = 2.67, SD = 1.18), and nervousness or anxiety (WM = 2.70, SD = 1.12) were only rated Moderate. This indicated that while stress is common, teachers generally maintain patience and resilience toward learners. This finding resonated with Brouwers and Tomic (2000), who found that teacher self-efficacy in classroom management helps buffer negative emotions despite high stress levels.

Meanwhile, several indicators were rated Low, including feeling unable to cope (WM = 2.53, SD = 1.11), upset stomach (WM = 2.23, SD = 1.10), tearfulness (WM = 2.27, SD = 1.05), feeling distant from students (WM = 2.40, SD = 1.04), and wanting to quit teaching (WM = 2.60, SD = 1.35). These results implied that although teachers are under pressure, most remain committed to their professional roles and do not allow burnout to severely compromise their connection with students. This resilience aligned with findings by Richards, Levesque-Bristol, and Templin (2014), who noted that teachers' intrinsic motivation and sense of purpose often mitigate the most severe effects of burnout.

Overall, the results demonstrated that burnout manifests most strongly in the form of workload-related stress and physical exhaustion, while its effects on emotional detachment and professional commitment remained comparatively lower. This suggested that teachers in inclusive classrooms experience stress not because of rejection of their roles, but due to the sheer intensity of their responsibilities. Interventions such as workload reduction, wellness programs, and institutional support systems are therefore essential to minimize the physical and psychological impact of burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

Extent to which the coping strategies utilized by the respondents

The extent to which the respondents utilize various coping strategies in addressing burnout and stress while handling inclusive classrooms is presented in this section. Coping strategies are vital mechanisms that enable teachers to maintain their well-being, reduce stress levels, and sustain professional effectiveness despite the challenges of teaching diverse learners (Kyriacou, 2015; Travers, 2017).

Table 10
Extent to which the coping strategies utilized by the respondents

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Discussing problems with professional colleagues	3.03	0.76	Often
2	Discussing problems with personal friends and family	2.97	0.81	Often
3	Leaving the school problems at school	2.93	0.98	Often
4	Taking courses and workshops to improve skills	2.93	0.87	Often
5	Organizing your time and setting priorities	3.40	0.72	Always
6	Doing relaxing activities (hobby)	3.20	0.81	Often
7	Taking a nap	2.97	0.89	Often

8	Taking a day off	2.90	0.92	Often
9	Forgetting, walking away for a while	2.60	0.86	Often
10	Restructuring to improve personal/professional expectations or goals	2.73	0.91	Often
11	Walking/jogging/maintaining diet and exercise	2.47	0.78	Sometimes
12	Drinking coffee and energy drinks	2.70	1.06	Often
13	Using substances or prescribed medication (alcohol, drugs, anti-depressants, anti-anxiety, stimulants, etc.)	1.27	0.64	Never
14	Gain or loss of appetite (eating more or eating less)	1.97	0.89	Sometimes
15	Smoking cigarettes	1.07	0.37	Never
16	Getting professional counseling or therapy	1.40	0.72	Never
Aggregate Mean		2.53		
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.81	Often

Legend: 3.25-4.00- Always ; 2.50-3.24-Often; 1.75-2.49-Sometimes; 1.00-1.74-Never

Table 10 showed the coping strategies employed by teachers in managing stress and burnout. The aggregate mean of 2.53 indicated that respondents often use coping mechanisms to deal with the demands of inclusive teaching. However, the extent and type of strategies vary, with some leaning toward proactive and adaptive strategies while others reflect less effective or avoidant responses. This finding is consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress and coping, which suggests that individuals use a mix of problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies depending on the stressor and available resources.

Among the listed indicators, the highest-rated strategy was "organizing time and setting priorities" (WM = 3.40, SD = 0.72, Always). This suggested that teachers prioritize time management and task organization as key strategies for mitigating stress. Research supports that effective time management enhances teachers' efficiency, reduces workload pressure, and improves work-life balance (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2020).

Another commonly utilized coping strategy is "doing relaxing activities or hobbies" (WM = 3.20, SD = 0.81, Often), reflecting teachers' reliance on recreational or leisure pursuits to manage stress. This aligned with findings by Antoniou, Polychroni, and Walters (2013), who emphasized that relaxation and personal hobbies promote resilience among educators. Similarly, strategies like "discussing problems with colleagues" (WM = 3.03) and "discussing problems with family and friends" (WM = 2.97) highlighted the importance of social support networks. Social support has consistently been recognized as one of the strongest buffers against teacher burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). On the other hand, some coping mechanisms were found to be less frequently utilized. For instance, "walking, jogging, maintaining diet and exercise" (WM = 2.47, Sometimes) suggested that while physical activity is known to alleviate stress, teachers in this study only occasionally engage in it. This finding resonated with previous research noting that heavy workload and time constraints often limit teachers' engagement in health-promoting behaviors (Bauer et al., 2006).

Maladaptive coping strategies such as "using substances or prescribed medication" (WM = 1.27, Never), "smoking cigarettes" (WM = 1.07, Never), and "getting professional counseling or therapy" (WM = 1.40, Never) were rarely or never practiced. While it is encouraging that harmful coping behaviors were avoided, the low utilization of professional counseling highlights a gap. Teachers may lack access to or awareness of psychological support services, or there may be cultural stigmas attached to seeking mental health assistance (Richards et al., 2016).

Interestingly, some respondents indicated "gain or loss of appetite" (WM = 1.97, Sometimes) as a coping response, reflecting a physiological manifestation of stress rather than an intentional strategy. This indicated that while teachers often rely on problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies, stress still impacts their physical well-being. In summary, the results indicated that teachers primarily rely on time management, hobbies, social support, and relaxation techniques to cope with burnout. However, they rarely seek professional counseling or engage in structured physical activities, which could be areas for improvement. Encouraging teachers to adopt healthier coping mechanisms such as regular exercise and professional counseling may further reduce burnout and enhance their resilience in inclusive education settings (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Test of relationship between the burnout and coping strategies of the respondents

Table 11 presented the test of relationship between the burnout and coping strategies of the respondents. The correlation analysis was conducted to determine whether teachers' level of burnout significantly relates to the coping mechanisms they employ in handling work-related stressors.

Table 11
Test of relationship between the burnout and coping strategies of the respondents

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Burnout and Coping Strategies	0.308	Weak Positive	0.097	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

The result revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.308, which indicated a weak positive relationship between burnout and coping strategies. This suggested that as burnout levels slightly increase, the frequency of coping strategies also increases. However, the computed p-value of 0.097 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. This implied that the relationship between burnout and coping strategies of the respondents is not statistically significant.

This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize how the effectiveness of coping strategies varies depending on the type of coping employed. For instance, Maslach and Leiter (2016) note that while some teachers may attempt to use coping strategies to mitigate stress, the intensity of burnout is not always reduced, particularly if coping is emotion-focused rather than problem-focused. Similarly, Chang (2009) explains that the perception and appraisal of stress play a crucial role in whether coping strategies significantly reduce burnout.

The weak and non-significant relationship suggests that although teachers attempt to use coping mechanisms such as time management, seeking social support, and relaxation activities, these strategies may not be sufficient to fully counter the effects of burnout. This aligns with Brunsting, Sreckovic, and Lane (2014), who argue that coping efforts often provide temporary relief but may not address the systemic and workload-related sources of stress that fuel burnout.

Thus, the findings highlighted the need for institutional interventions rather than relying solely on individual coping strategies. Organizational support, reduced workloads, and continuous professional development may be more effective in managing teacher burnout (Kyriacou, 2015; Travers, 2017).

Test of relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies of the respondents

Table 12 illustrated the test of relationship between the effects of burnout and the coping strategies employed by the respondents. The analysis sought to determine whether the impact of burnout symptoms among teachers has a significant relationship with the coping mechanisms they utilize.

Table 12
Test of relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies of the respondents

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Effects of Burnout and Coping Strategies	0.457*	Weak Positive	0.011	Reject Ho	Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

The findings revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.457, which signified a weak positive relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies. This means that as the effects of burnout (e.g., exhaustion, stress, irritability, and anxiety) become more evident, teachers tend to increasingly apply coping strategies. More importantly, the

computed p-value of 0.011 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, which leads to the decision to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, the relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies is statistically significant.

This result suggested that the more teachers experience the effects of burnout, the more likely they are to employ coping strategies such as time management, social support, relaxation activities, and self-care techniques. This finding is consistent with the perspective of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which posits that individuals adapt coping mechanisms in direct response to stressors and their perceived consequences. Similarly, Maslach and Leiter (2016) emphasized that coping becomes more prominent once burnout begins to significantly interfere with personal and professional functioning.

The significant correlation highlighted the reality that coping strategies are reactive—teachers intensify their coping efforts when burnout symptoms start to negatively affect their health, emotions, or professional performance. This resonated with the work of Chang (2009), who noted that coping behaviors are more likely to be activated once teachers perceive burnout as directly impairing their well-being and teaching effectiveness.

However, while coping mechanisms can mitigate the effects of burnout, they may not eliminate the root causes such as workload pressures, lack of institutional support, or challenges of inclusive classrooms (Brunsting, Sreckovic, & Lane, 2014; Kyriacou, 2015). Thus, while the use of coping strategies is significant, the findings emphasize the importance of systemic and organizational interventions to complement individual coping practices.

Comparative Interpretation of Table 11 and Table 12

In Table 11, the test of relationship between burnout and coping strategies showed a correlation coefficient of 0.308, which indicates a weak positive correlation. However, the result was found to be not significant ($p = 0.097 > 0.05$), leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. This suggested that the respondents' general level of burnout does not have a statistically significant relationship with their coping strategies. In other words, experiencing burnout in general does not automatically predict whether teachers frequently employ coping mechanisms.

By contrast, Table 12 presented the relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies. The computed correlation coefficient of 0.457 still denotes a weak positive correlation, but in this case, the result was found to be statistically significant ($p = 0.011 < 0.05$). This implied that when teachers actually experience the *effects* of burnout (e.g., exhaustion, anxiety, irritability, or headaches), they were more likely to engage in coping strategies such as social support, relaxation activities, or time management.

This comparative analysis highlighted a crucial distinction:

- General burnout levels (Table 11) did not show a significant influence on coping strategies.
- The perceived effects of burnout (Table 12), however, significantly influenced the use of coping strategies.

This means that teachers may not always respond proactively to burnout in its early stages. Instead, they tend to adopt coping strategies more actively once the burnout starts manifesting through physical, emotional, or behavioral symptoms. This finding resonated with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which emphasized that coping behaviors are typically triggered when stressors are perceived to directly threaten an individual's well-being. Likewise, Chang (2009) explained that teachers often downplay or ignore early signs of burnout but become more motivated to cope when the negative effects interfere with their personal lives and professional responsibilities.

The contrast between the two tables suggested that while teachers were aware of coping strategies, they may not consistently apply them until burnout escalates into noticeable effects. This reactive pattern indicated a need for proactive interventions such as professional development on stress management, regular wellness programs, and institutional support systems to prevent burnout from reaching severe levels. As Maslach and Leiter (2016) argued, addressing burnout effectively requires both individual coping strategies and organizational changes to reduce stressors in the teaching environment.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the burnout levels experienced by teachers handling students with special educational needs, the coping strategies they employed, and the relationship between these two variables. The study also sought to examine the demographic profiles of the respondents in terms of marital status, educational attainment, length of service, training in inclusive education, and awareness of inclusive practices. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from thirty (30) teacher-respondents through a structured survey questionnaire. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze demographic data and the extent of burnout and coping strategies, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied to determine the relationships between burnout, its effects, and coping mechanisms.

The study found that teachers generally experienced moderate levels of burnout, particularly related to work overload, feelings of exhaustion, and frustration. Teachers commonly employed healthy coping strategies, including time management, seeking social support, and engaging in relaxation activities, while rarely using harmful methods such as substance use or smoking. Importantly, the results indicated that general burnout levels did not significantly influence coping strategies, but the effects of burnout were significantly related to coping strategies, suggesting that teachers respond more actively when burnout manifested through emotional or physical symptoms.

Overall, the study highlighted the need for proactive coping measures and institutional support to help teachers manage stress effectively, enhance well-being, and sustain quality instruction in inclusive classrooms.

FINDINGS

The study examined the demographic profile of teachers handling students with special educational needs, their levels of burnout, coping strategies, and the relationship between burnout and coping mechanisms. Analysis of the respondents' profile revealed that a majority were married (50%), followed by single teachers (46.67%), and a small percentage were widowed (3.33%). This indicated that most teachers balanced both professional responsibilities and family obligations, which may influence stress levels and coping strategies. Regarding educational attainment, most respondents had Master's units (63.33%), while smaller percentages were Master's graduates (16.67%) or Bachelor's degree holders (16.67%), with only one teacher holding a Doctorate degree (3.33%). The respondents' length of service varied, with the largest group teaching for 6–10 years (43.33%), followed by 1–5 years (26.67%), 16 years and above (16.67%), and 11–15 years (10%). Additionally, a substantial majority had attended training in inclusive education (83.33%) and were aware of inclusive practices (86.67%), reflecting a well-prepared and professionally engaged teaching force.

The study also revealed that teachers experienced moderate to high levels of burnout, with an aggregate mean of 3.60. Major stressors included overwhelming workload, noisy classrooms, and student misbehavior, which were rated as very high, while factors such as inadequate salary, poor career opportunities, and responsibility for student progress were rated as high. Moderate stressors included the attitudes of principals or colleagues, low recognition for teaching, and evaluation by supervisors. These findings suggested that both direct classroom challenges and institutional factors contribute to teacher stress, consistent with the literature on emotional exhaustion as a central component of teacher burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Regarding the effects of burnout, the study found a moderate impact overall (aggregate mean = 3.05). Teachers frequently reported feeling exhausted (WM = 4.20), frustrated (WM = 4.00), and overwhelmed by their work (WM = 4.27). Emotional effects such as anger, depression, anxiety, irritability, and guilt were observed at moderate levels, while physical symptoms, including headaches and increased heart rate, were also present. Interestingly, indicators such as the desire to quit, feeling distant from students, or inability to cope were less common, suggesting resilience among respondents despite ongoing stressors.

In terms of coping strategies, teachers employed them often (aggregate mean = 2.53). The most frequently used strategy was organizing time and setting priorities (WM = 3.40, Always), followed by discussing problems with colleagues (WM = 3.03) and family/friends (WM = 2.97). Teachers also engaged in hobbies and relaxation activities (WM = 3.20), took naps, and occasionally took days off to relieve stress. Physical wellness activities, such as exercise and maintaining a healthy diet, were practiced sometimes, while maladaptive strategies like substance use, smoking,

or over-reliance on medication were rarely or never employed. This demonstrates that teachers prefer healthy, problem-focused, and socially supported coping strategies, consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) stress and coping theory.

Finally, correlation analyses revealed that general burnout levels did not significantly influence coping strategies ($r = 0.308$, $p = 0.097$), indicating that teachers may not automatically applied coping mechanisms simply due to burnout. However, the effects of burnout showed a significant weak positive relationship with coping strategies ($r = 0.457$, $p = 0.011$), suggesting that teachers are more likely to engage in coping behaviors when burnout manifests in emotional or physical consequences. This indicated a reactive pattern of coping, where strategies were applied in response to observable effects rather than proactively, highlighting the need for early intervention and support to prevent burnout escalation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, several conclusions were drawn regarding the burnout experiences and coping strategies of teachers handling students with special educational needs. First, it was concluded that teachers were generally professionally qualified and engaged in continuous development, as evidenced by their advanced educational attainment, training in inclusive education, and awareness of inclusive practices. This foundation equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to address the diverse needs of their students.

Second, teachers experienced moderate to high levels of burnout, particularly in areas related to work overload, classroom management, and responsibility for student learning outcomes. Emotional exhaustion, frustration, and feeling overwhelmed by tasks were among the most pronounced indicators, while physical symptoms such as headaches and anxiety were moderately present. These findings suggested that the demands of inclusive classrooms placed considerable strain on teachers, affecting both their emotional and physical well-being, consistent with Maslach and Leiter's (2016) research on teacher burnout. Third, teachers employed mostly healthy and adaptive coping strategies, such as time management, discussing challenges with colleagues or family, and engaging in relaxation activities. Harmful strategies like substance use or smoking were rarely reported, indicating a conscious effort to manage stress constructively. However, the coping strategies tended to be reactive rather than proactive, as general burnout levels alone did not significantly influence coping behavior. Instead, the effects of burnout, when manifested emotionally or physically, prompted teachers to apply coping mechanisms. This pattern highlighted the importance of early intervention and structured support to prevent burnout from escalating.

Finally, the study concluded that there was a significant weak positive relationship between the effects of burnout and coping strategies, indicating that teachers' engagement in stress management was triggered primarily by the observable consequences of burnout. This emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach involving personal, institutional, and policy-level interventions to support teacher well-being in inclusive education contexts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed to support teachers and enhance coping strategies:

For Teachers. It is recommended that they adopt proactive stress management practices to prevent burnout before its effects become pronounced. Teachers should consistently organize their time, prioritize tasks, and engage in hobbies or relaxation activities to maintain emotional and physical health. Developing stronger professional support networks through regular discussions with colleagues can also enhance problem-solving and provide emotional relief, promoting resilience in handling the challenges of inclusive classrooms.

For School Administrators. The study highlighted the need to create a supportive work environment that reduces stress and prevents burnout. Administrators are encouraged to implement structured wellness programs, including counseling, stress management workshops, and recreational activities. Ensuring equitable workloads, providing sufficient instructional resources, and recognizing teachers' efforts can enhance morale and foster a more positive

teaching environment. Facilitating collaboration and open communication among staff can further reduce stress and encourage shared problem-solving.

For Policymakers. it is recommended to develop policies that integrate teacher well-being frameworks into professional development standards. These may include mandated training in stress management, mental health awareness, and work-life balance alongside inclusive education practices. Providing funding for wellness initiatives, instructional support, and additional staff can alleviate workload-related stress and improve teacher retention and performance.

For Future Researchers, the study encouraged further investigation into the long-term patterns of burnout and coping strategies among teachers in inclusive education. Employing qualitative or mixed-methods approaches can uncover deeper insights into teachers lived experiences, while studies with larger and more diverse samples can enhance generalizability. Additionally, exploring contextual, organizational, and cultural factors influencing burnout and coping strategies can provide a more comprehensive understanding and guide effective intervention.

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