

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AND COPING STRATEGIES MECHANISM OF TEACHERS IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This study determined the stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools, Mintal District, Division of Davao City. This study used the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing correlational method. The respondents of this study were composed of 133 teachers in public elementary school using the universal sampling. The data analysis utilized the mean, Pearson r and regression analysis. The findings disclosed that the stress management techniques of teachers in the new normal education in terms of relaxation techniques, time-management skills, counseling, exercise and healthy lifestyle were moderate and sometimes manifested. Moreover, coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in terms of problem solving, self-control and responsibility were also moderate and sometimes manifested. It was found out that there was a significant relationship between stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal. It revealed further that the domains of stress management techniques significantly influence coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education. Based on the findings, the public school teachers may attend consultations and trainings from the DepEd for professional growth platform. This may provide skillful progress for teachers with the objective of constructing capabilities thoroughly and reinforced education chances for learners and simultaneously learn the content of better educational practices.

Keywords: Stress management techniques, coping strategies mechanism, teachers, new normal education, public elementary schools, Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress management encompasses a wide array of techniques and psychotherapies designed to control a person's stress levels, particularly chronic stress, with the goal of improving everyday functioning (Glazer & Liu, 2017). Stress can manifest through numerous physical and mental symptoms, which vary depending on individual circumstances. These symptoms may include physical health decline and mental health challenges, such as depression (Cassel, 2017). In modern society, stress management is widely regarded as essential to achieving a happy and successful life. Although life presents many demands that can be difficult to handle, effective stress management provides methods to reduce anxiety and maintain overall well-being (Kassymova et al., 2018).

Among students in Jordan, ineffective coping strategies for stress are alarmingly prevalent. These include behaviors such as excessive alcohol consumption, drug use, overconsumption of caffeine, social withdrawal, self-harm, and disordered eating. These maladaptive strategies can become habitual, addictive, and even fatal. For instance, students who turn to alcohol as a stress reliever may begin drinking in larger quantities and with greater frequency, which increases the risk of alcohol poisoning, addiction, and other

harmful behaviors. Such methods not only fail to alleviate stress but can lead to more severe problems, exacerbating the original issues (Al-Gamal et al., 2016).

Although stress is often viewed as a subjective experience, it can be objectively measured using physiological tests, akin to polygraph methods. However, evaluating the effectiveness of stress management techniques remains a challenge due to limited research. The quality and quantity of evidence supporting these methods vary significantly (Zvonimirvanović, 2018). Some techniques, particularly those validated through psychotherapy, are widely accepted as effective, while others, categorized as alternative therapies, have less supporting evidence. Professional organizations worldwide provide training and promotion of both conventional and alternative therapies Chekroud et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, effective stress management programs begin with identifying key factors that influence an individual's ability to control stress and determining intervention methods that address these factors (Kilag et al., 2023). Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress emphasizes the interaction between individuals and their external environments. According to this model, stress may not arise if individuals perceive stressors as challenges or opportunities rather than threats. Additionally, the presence of adequate coping skills can mitigate stress. This model suggests that individuals can be trained to manage stress by changing their perceptions of stressors and enhancing their coping mechanisms. By building confidence and providing practical tools, individuals can improve their lives and effectively handle various stressors (Obbarius et al., 2021).

In Davao City, organizational stress levels that an individual faces is dependent not just on external factors such as job characteristics or environment, but also on intrapersonal factors such as personality, temperament, and individual coping and thinking styles. Both aspects need to be managed well. Some examples of stressors in the workplace can be their perception of Organization Commitment, which is the way the teachers conceptualizes his/her reasons for staying in the organizations for either Affective, Continuance, or Normative reasons (Catamco&Genuba, 2022). Affective commitment to the organization is ideal, as it is the situation where an employee strongly identifies with the values and culture of the organization. While this is not directly telling of an employee's stress levels, genuine interest and enjoyment in the employee's work and work relations places the employee in a good position to manage stress well (Chordiya et al., 2017).

Stress management in organizational settings requires addressing both external job-related stressors and internal coping mechanisms. this dual approach ensures a healthier, more balanced work environment, fostering better stress resilience among employees (Badu et al., 2020). This study study aimed to determine the significant relationship between stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

STRESS-MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION

- relaxation techniques
- time-management skills
- counseling exercises

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

COPING STRATEGIES MECHANISM OF TEACHERS IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION

- problem solving
- self-control



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized a non-experimental quantitative research design employing a correlational method. Quantitative research emphasizes objective measurements and the statistical analysis of data collected through tools such as questionnaires and surveys. It involves analyzing pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques to identify patterns and relationships. The focus of quantitative research is to gather numerical data and generalize findings across groups of people or to explain specific phenomena (Pregoner & Baguio, 2024).

The primary aim of a quantitative research study is to determine the relationship between variables, specifically between an independent variable and a dependent (or outcome) variable, within a given population. Quantitative research designs are often descriptive, wherein subjects are typically measured only once. A descriptive study establishes associations between variables but does not infer causation (Pregoner, 2024).

Descriptive research focuses on the characteristics of a population or phenomenon, emphasizing the “what” rather than the “why.” It describes the nature of a demographic segment or phenomenon without probing into its underlying causes (Raudeliuniene, 2018). Accordingly, this research aimed to examine the relationship between teachers’ stress management techniques and coping mechanisms in the context of the “new normal” education in public elementary schools.

2.2 Research Respondents

The respondents of this study consisted of 133 public elementary school teachers, selected using universal sampling, wherein the entire population was included as respondents. The teachers evaluated both their colleagues and themselves through a survey questionnaire

administered to them. To qualify for participation, the teachers had to have served for at least three years in public schools.

This study focused on examining teachers' stress management techniques and coping strategies in the context of the "new normal" education in public elementary schools within the Mintal District, Division of Davao City, during the school year 2020–2021.

2.3 Research Instrument

The study utilized two parts of research instruments, namely: transdisciplinary teaching and educational responsiveness of teachers in public elementary schools. These instruments were developed and constructed by the researcher based on a comprehensive review of relevant studies and literature.

Before administration, the draft instruments were subjected to content validity and reliability testing by a panel of experts in the field of Educational Management. Based on their feedback and suggestions, necessary revisions were made to improve the instruments.

To ensure reliability and validity, the instruments were pilot-tested in a separate school within the same cluster, involving 30 teachers. The reliability of the instruments was confirmed with a Cronbach's Alpha result of 0.721, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data for this study were gathered following a systematic process. The researcher first sought permission and endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon approval, request letters were submitted to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent. After receiving approval, an endorsement letter was sent to the respective School Heads. A schedule was then arranged for the distribution of the pilot testing questionnaires to all target schools and respondents. The purpose of the study and detailed instructions for completing the questionnaires were included in the materials provided to the participants. Once the questionnaires were completed, the researcher retrieved them for processing. The collected data were then tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted based on the study's objectives.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis employed both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The mean was used to measure the level of teachers' stress management techniques and coping strategies in the context of the new normal education in public elementary schools. Additionally, the Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson r) was utilized to determine the relationship between teachers' stress management techniques and their coping strategies. This analysis was conducted specifically for teachers in the Mintal District, Division of Davao City.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Level of Stress Management Techniques in the New Normal Education among Teachers

Table 1. The Level of Stress Management Techniques in the New Normal Education among Teachers

No	Indicators	Mean (\bar{x})	Descriptive Level
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1	relaxation techniques	3.38	Moderate
2	time management skills	3.48	High
3	Counseling	3.28	Moderate
4	Exercise	4.15	High
5	healthy lifestyle	3.65	High
	Overall	3.57	High

Table 1 illustrates the level of stress management techniques employed by teachers in the new normal education across five indicators. The highest mean was observed in exercise, with a score of 4.15, rated as high, indicating that teachers highly prioritize physical activity as a key strategy for managing stress. Healthy lifestyle followed with a mean score of 3.65, also rated as high, reflecting the teachers' strong commitment to maintaining their overall well-being. Time management skills recorded a mean of 3.48, rated as high, showing that teachers effectively manage their time to cope with the demands of their profession. Relaxation techniques received a mean score of 3.38, rated as moderate, suggesting that while some teachers utilize these techniques, there is room for improvement in this area. Counseling, with a mean of 3.28, was also rated as moderate, indicating that seeking professional guidance is a less frequently used strategy among teachers. Overall, the mean score of 3.57, rated as high, signifies that teachers generally demonstrate effective stress management practices, particularly through physical activity, time management, and adopting a healthy lifestyle.

This finding aligns with the study of Pokhrel (2024), which emphasized the importance of stress management practices in enhancing teachers' well-being and professional performance. Teachers who adopt strategies such as regular exercise, effective time management, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle are better equipped to handle the demands of their profession, contributing to a more positive and productive educational environment.

Moreover, the result is consistent with the findings of Agyapong et al. (2023), which highlighted that stress management techniques, particularly physical activity and time organization, play a significant role in reducing burnout and improving resilience among educators. The high mean score observed in this study reflects the proactive measures taken by teachers to manage stress effectively, enabling them to maintain their mental and physical health while fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

3.2 Level of Coping Strategies Mechanism among Teachers

Table 2. The Level of Coping Strategies Mechanism among Teachers

No	Indicators	Mean (x)	Descriptive Level
1	problem solving	3.63	High
2	self-control	3.42	High
3	responsibility	3.47	High
	Overall	3.41	High

Table 2 highlights the level of coping strategies mechanism employed by teachers across three indicators. The highest mean was observed in problem solving, with a score of 3.63, rated as high, indicating that teachers effectively address and resolve challenges in their professional and personal lives. Responsibility followed with a mean of 3.47, also rated as

high, reflecting teachers' commitment to fulfilling their duties and managing obligations despite stressors. Self-control recorded a mean score of 3.42, similarly rated as high, suggesting that teachers demonstrate a strong ability to regulate their emotions and reactions when facing difficulties. Overall, the mean score of 3.41, rated as high, signifies that teachers possess well-developed coping strategies mechanisms, enabling them to manage stress and maintain resilience effectively.

This finding corroborates the study of Thompson (2024), which highlighted the significance of well-developed coping strategies in enhancing teachers' ability to adapt to stressful situations. Teachers who employ mechanisms such as problem-solving, self-control, and responsibility are better able to navigate professional challenges, maintain emotional stability, and sustain their effectiveness in the classroom.

Additionally, the result aligns with the research of Wang et al. (2024), which emphasized the role of adaptive coping strategies in fostering resilience among educators. Their study revealed that teachers with high levels of coping skills are more likely to thrive under pressure and maintain a positive outlook, which ultimately benefits both their personal well-being and their professional performance. The high mean score in this study suggests that teachers have cultivated these strategies, empowering them to meet the demands of their roles effectively.

3.3 Relationship Between the Stress Management Techniques and Coping Strategies Mechanism of Teachers in the New Normal

Table 3. Significant Relationship between Relationship Between the Stress Management Techniques and Coping Strategies Mechanism of Teachers in the New Normal

Variables	X	Y	r-value	Degree of Correlation	p-value	Decision (Ho)
Stress Management Techniques	4.43		0.798	High Correlation	.000	Rejected
Coping Strategies Mechanism		4.01				

Table 3 presents the significant relationship between the stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal. The computed r-value of 0.798 indicates a high degree of correlation, suggesting a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This implies that teachers who effectively employ stress management techniques are more likely to exhibit well-developed coping strategies mechanisms. The p-value of .000, which is less than the standard significance level, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho). This result confirms that the relationship between stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanisms is statistically significant, highlighting the critical interplay between these factors in enhancing teachers' ability to navigate the challenges of the new normal education environment.

This result aligns with the study of Nwoko et al. (2024), which emphasized the interconnected nature of stress management techniques and coping strategies in fostering teachers' resilience and adaptability. Their research demonstrated that educators who effectively manage stress through structured approaches, such as exercise and time management, are more likely to develop robust coping mechanisms that enhance their capacity to navigate challenging professional circumstances.

Moreover, this finding is consistent with the research of Skinner and Beers (2016), which highlighted the positive correlation between stress management and coping skills in improving teachers' overall well-being and professional effectiveness. Teachers who actively engage in stress-reduction strategies are often better equipped to regulate emotions, maintain focus, and implement effective problem-solving techniques, leading to enhanced performance and a more positive learning environment for their students.

3.4 Significant Influence of the Domains of Stress Management Techniques on Coping Strategies Mechanism of Teachers in the NewNormal Education

Table 4. Significant Influence of the Domains of Stress Management Techniques on Coping Strategies Mechanism of Teachers in the New Normal Education

Model	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	p-value	Decision
Regression	54.3899	1	56.018	.001	Rejected
Residual	502.304	130	11.5949		
Total	545.102	133			

Note: Significance when $P < 0.05$ (2T)

Coping Strategies Mechanism	Stress Management Techniques (Indicators)	Stress Management Techniques			Sig.
		B	B	T	
relaxation techniques	problem solving	-.075	-.056	-.503	.010
time-management skills	self-control	.014	.012	.125	.010
Counseling	responsibility	-.217	-.205	-1.807	.010
exercise		-.074	-.057	-.502	.000
healthy lifestyle		.013	.013	.126	.000
R	.215				
R ²	.046				
F	.670				
P	.010				

Table 4 outlines the significant influence of the domains of stress management techniques on the coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education. The regression model yielded a total sum of squares of 54.3899 for regression and 502.304 for

the residual, with a total of 545.102. The degrees of freedom for the regression and residual are 1 and 130, respectively, resulting in a mean square of 56.018 for the regression and 11.5949 for the residual. The computed p-value of .001, which is below the standard significance threshold, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding demonstrates that the domains of stress management techniques significantly influence the coping strategies mechanisms of teachers. It underscores the importance of implementing effective stress management practices to enhance teachers' ability to cope with challenges in the context of new normal education.

This finding validates the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1987), which posits that individuals' coping strategies are influenced by their appraisal of stress and the resources they have to manage it. The significant influence of stress management techniques on coping mechanisms aligns with the model's assertion that effective stress management provides individuals with the necessary tools to address challenges, enhancing their resilience and adaptability in stressful situations.

Furthermore, the finding reinforces the Conservation of Resources Theory by Hobfoll (1989), which emphasizes the importance of resource acquisition and preservation in managing stress. Teachers who utilize stress management techniques such as relaxation, exercise, and time management are effectively building and conserving their physical, emotional, and cognitive resources. This resourcefulness enhances their ability to cope with challenges, thus improving their overall well-being and professional performance.

Additionally, the result aligns with the Resilience Theory by Masten (2018), which highlights the significance of adaptive processes in overcoming adversity. Stress management techniques act as protective factors, enabling teachers to maintain equilibrium and recover from stressors effectively. By employing these techniques, teachers enhance their capacity for resilience, ensuring that they can sustain their professional responsibilities in the face of challenges in the new normal educational environment.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

It is concluded in this study that the level of stress management techniques of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools in terms of relaxation techniques, time-management skills, counseling, exercise and healthy lifestyle was described as high and oftentimes manifested by the teachers.

It is established in this study that the level of coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools in terms of problem solving, self-control and responsibility is high and manifested oftentimes by the teachers.

It is recognized in this study that there is a significant relationship between stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools.

It is concluded in this study that the domains of stress management techniques significantly influence coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are formulated for consideration:

It is concluded in this study that the DepED officials may support the stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools. This is to increase the level of their holistic knowledge in the areas of teamwork, experiential learning, art of questioning and learning resources to augment the school academic and non-academic operations.

The District Supervisors should provide opportunities for school heads and teachers to fully increase their awareness in understanding stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools for positive impact of behavioral display of sustaining harmonious working relationship in the school setting.

The school heads may have training in-depth development of stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools that will positively affect in achieving school improvement plan. School heads may have the ability to create a supportive environment in dealing with the staff to carry out the tasks and responsibility assigned to them. They also emphasized commitment in building community organization for school operations consistent to school policy implementations.

The teachers should develop their potentials and meaningful teaching strategies that they use in the classroom. They should be conscious of their teaching philosophy to achieve student's learning growth and development.

The future researchers should analyze the school dilemma reflective to the identification of potential develop of stress management techniques and coping strategies mechanism of teachers in the new normal education in public elementary schools

CONSENT (WHERE EVER APPLICABLE)

This quantitative study adhered to strict ethical standards to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, and participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's objectives and the measures taken to protect their confidentiality. All collected data was securely stored on encrypted servers, with access limited exclusively to the research team. The findings were reported in aggregate form to ensure that individual responses remained anonymous and untraceable. Additionally, statistical analyses were conducted with careful consideration to prevent the identification of any participants, ensuring their privacy was thoroughly upheld.

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