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A Study on Occupational Stress and Resilience of MAPEH Teachers as Mediated by Their Coping Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Teacher resilience is a critical concern as public-school teachers face increasing occupational demands, administrative tasks, classroom management concerns, and extracurricular responsibilities. This study determined the mediating effect of coping behavior on the relationship between occupational stress and resilience among Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur, Philippines. A non-experimental quantitative design using descriptive-correlational and mediation analysis was employed. Through total enumeration, 304 public secondary school MAPEH teachers participated, representing 93.83% of the target population. Data were collected using adapted standardized questionnaires on occupational stress, resilience, and coping behavior. Mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, regression-based path analysis, and the Sobel test were used to analyze the data. Results showed that occupational stress was high ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.72$), while resilience ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.34$) and coping behavior ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.45$) were very high. Occupational stress was positively correlated with resilience ($r = .357$, $p < .001$) and coping behavior ($r = .580$, $p < .001$), while coping behavior was positively correlated with resilience ($r = .416$, $p < .001$). Coping behavior partially mediated the relationship between occupational stress and resilience (Sobel $z = 4.603634$, $p < .05$). These findings indicate that adaptive coping strategies strengthen teachers' resilience and should be integrated into teacher wellness and workload-support programs.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher well-being remains a major concern in educational systems because teachers are expected to sustain instructional quality while managing administrative, emotional, and organizational demands (Medez, 2024). In Philippine public secondary schools, these pressures are intensified by documentation work, large and heterogeneous classes, extracurricular obligations, and limited institutional resources. For Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) teachers, the workload is especially complex because their discipline combines classroom instruction, skills-based performance, coaching, health education, student supervision, school programs, and competition preparation (Javiña, 2025; Venturanza *et al.*, 2025).

Occupational stress refers to the strain experienced when work demands exceed available resources, time, or capacity. Among teachers, stress is commonly linked to workload, classroom management, administrative duties, time pressure, and inadequate support (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022; Kyriacou, 2023; Nwoko *et al.*, 2023). If unmanaged, these stressors may lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced instructional effectiveness, lower job satisfaction, and possible attrition (Diliberti *et al.*, 2021; Simonton *et al.*, 2022). Resilience, in contrast, enables teachers to adapt, recover, and remain professionally effective despite workplace adversity. It is viewed as a dynamic capacity shaped by personal competence, social support, spirituality, family relationships, professional experience,

and supportive work conditions (Bagdziuniene *et al.*, 2023; Hascher *et al.*, 2021; Mu, 2024).

Coping behavior is a key mechanism in this process. Guided by Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, coping refers to the cognitive and behavioral efforts used to manage stressful demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Adaptive coping strategies, such as planning, problem-solving, emotional regulation, and seeking support, may reduce the harmful effects of stress and strengthen resilience (Herman *et al.*, 2020; Wang, 2021). Although these variables have been widely studied, limited local evidence has tested coping behavior as a mediator between occupational stress and resilience among MAPEH teachers. This study therefore determined the mediating effect of coping behavior on the relationship between occupational stress and resilience among public secondary school MAPEH teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur, Philippines

LITERATURE REVIEW

Occupational stress in teaching commonly arises from heavy workload, classroom discipline concerns, non-teaching responsibilities, time pressure, limited resources, and competing stakeholder expectations. Persistent stress has been associated with burnout, anxiety, reduced professional satisfaction, and lower instructional performance (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022; Anton & Van Ryzin, 2024; Kyriacou, 2023). In the Philippine context, documentation and administrative work further

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intensify teacher strain (Medez, 2024). Among MAPEH teachers, stress may be heightened by the need to handle music, arts, physical education, and health instruction alongside performances, sports activities, competitions, and school programs (Albay & Javina, 2025; Cabag, 2025; Venturanza, 2025).

Teacher resilience refers to the capacity to withstand pressure, adapt to difficult conditions, and sustain professional commitment. It involves personal competence, persistence, emotional regulation, social support, family cohesion, spirituality, and positive workplace relationships. Resilient teachers are more likely to maintain motivation and recover from work-related challenges; however, resilience should not replace institutional support because even highly resilient teachers may struggle when demands are excessive or school systems are unsupportive (Bagdziuniene *et al.*, 2023; Baatz & Wirzberger, 2025; Chen & Lee, 2022; Zhang & Luo, 2023).

Coping behavior explains how individuals manage stressful experiences. Task-oriented coping involves planning, problem-solving, and direct action; emotion-oriented coping involves emotional processing or regulation; and avoidant or distracted coping involves temporarily shifting attention away from the stressor. Research generally associates task-oriented coping with stronger psychological adjustment because it directs teachers toward practical solutions (Herman *et al.*, 2020; Wang, 2021). Emotion-oriented and avoidant coping may provide short-term relief but may become less adaptive when they prevent teachers from addressing the source of stress (Emeljanovas *et al.*, 2023; Valls & Tardif, 2025). The conceptual model positions occupational stress as the independent variable, resilience as the dependent variable, and coping behavior as the mediating variable. From this perspective, occupational stress may influence resilience directly and indirectly through the coping strategies teachers use. Testing this model provides localized evidence for context-sensitive teacher support programs in public secondary schools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a non-experimental quantitative research design combining descriptive-correlational and mediation analysis. The respondents were 304 public secondary school MAPEH teachers from the Division of Davao del Sur, Philippines representing 93.83% of the target

population of 324 teachers. Total enumeration sampling was used because the population was localized and manageable. Included participants were public secondary school MAPEH teachers who were at least 25 years old and had at least three years of teaching experience. Teachers assigned outside the division, those teaching non-MAPEH subjects, those with less than three years of experience, and those unwilling or unavailable to participate were excluded.

Data were gathered using adapted standardized questionnaires. Occupational stress was measured using the Teachers' Occupational Stress Questionnaire with indicators on curricular and extracurricular activity stress, classroom management stress, and working condition stress (Hendres *et al.*, 2014). Resilience was measured through indicators on spiritual influences, personal competencies and persistence, social skills and peer support, and family cohesion (Daniilidou & Platsidou, 2018). Coping behavior was measured through task-oriented, emotion-oriented, and avoidant-distracted coping (Endler & Parker, 1990; Averro *et al.*, 2003). All items used a five-point Likert scale. Expert validation yielded a very high validity rating, while pilot testing produced Cronbach alpha values of .946 for occupational stress, .916 for resilience, and .845 for coping behavior, indicating acceptable to excellent reliability.

Mean was used to describe the levels of occupational stress, resilience, and coping behavior. Pearson product-moment correlation tested relationships among variables. Regression-based path analysis and the Sobel test determined the mediating effect of coping behavior on the occupational stress-resilience relationship. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured, and confidentiality, privacy, non-maleficence, and responsible data management were observed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Occupational Stress

Table 1 shows the level of occupational stress among MAPEH teachers. The overall mean was 3.78 (SD = 0.72), interpreted as high. This result indicates that occupational stress was often manifested among the respondents. Working condition stress obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.79$), followed by classroom management stress ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.93$) and curricular and extracurricular activity stress ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.79$).

Table 1: Level of occupational stress among MAPEH teachers

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive level
Curricular and extracurricular activity stress	3.68	0.79	High
Classroom management stress	3.69	0.93	High
Working condition stress	3.98	0.79	High
Overall	3.78	0.72	High

Note. Scale interpretation: 4.20-5.00 = very high; 3.40-4.19 = high; 2.60-3.39 = moderate; 1.80-2.59 = low; 1.00-1.79 = very low.

The results suggest that MAPEH teachers frequently experience stress from environmental and organizational

conditions, including paperwork, noise, workload demands, limited resources, and uncomfortable teaching

environments. The high ratings for curricular and extracurricular activity stress also show that teachers face difficulty balancing instruction, student activities, competitions, and school-related obligations. These findings are consistent with studies reporting that workload, student behavior, time pressure, and work-life imbalance contribute to teacher stress (Cabag, 2025; Kyriacou, 2023; Venturanza, 2025). Therefore, occupational stress among MAPEH teachers should be understood as multidimensional and requiring institutional workload support rather than individual adjustment alone.

Level of Resilience

Table 2 presents the level of resilience among MAPEH teachers. The overall mean was 4.45 (SD = 0.34), interpreted as very high. Family cohesion had the highest mean ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.44$), followed by spiritual influences ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.37$), social skills and peer support ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.56$), and personal competencies and persistence ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.52$). The findings indicate that teachers' resilience is strongly supported by external and relational resources, particularly family cohesion, spirituality, and peer support. Family relationships may provide emotional

Table 2: Level of resilience among MAPEH teachers

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive level
Spiritual influences	4.64	0.37	Very high
Personal competencies and persistence	4.17	0.52	High
Social skills and peer support	4.32	0.56	Very high
Family cohesion	4.65	0.44	Very high
Overall	4.45	0.34	Very high

Note. Scale interpretation follows the five-point Likert descriptive range used in the study.

stability, encouragement, and a sense of belonging, while spirituality may serve as a source of meaning and psychological comfort during difficult work situations. This result supports literature emphasizing social support, spirituality, and environmental protective factors in strengthening resilience (Mu, 2024; Ozcan *et al.*, 2021; Payot & Nebria, 2025). The comparatively lower score for personal competencies and persistence suggests that some teachers may still need additional support in confidence-building, professional self-efficacy, and sustained problem management under prolonged stress.

Level of Coping Behavior

Table 3 presents the level of coping behavior among MAPEH teachers. The overall mean was 4.34 (SD = 0.45), interpreted as very high. Task-oriented coping had the highest mean ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.41$), followed by avoidant-distracted coping ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.51$), both interpreted as very high. Emotion-oriented coping had the lowest mean ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.91$), interpreted as high.

The results show that MAPEH teachers frequently use proactive coping strategies, particularly planning,

Table 3: Level of coping behavior among MAPEH teachers

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive level
Task-oriented coping	4.37	0.41	Very high
Emotion-oriented coping	3.42	0.91	High
Avoidant-distracted coping	4.34	0.51	Very high
Overall	4.34	0.45	Very high
Overall	4.45	0.34	Very high

Note. The overall mean is reported as 4.34 following the study text and appendix summary.

analyzing problems, and identifying courses of action. The high use of task-oriented coping supports previous findings that problem-focused strategies contribute to better adjustment and lower burnout (Herman *et al.*, 2020; Wang, 2021). The very high score for avoidant-distracted coping should be interpreted carefully. Temporary distraction may help teachers regulate emotions and recover from stress; however, excessive avoidance may become maladaptive when it prevents direct resolution of workplace demands (Valls & Tardif, 2025).

Relationship between Occupational Stress and Resilience

Table 4 shows the relationship between occupational stress and resilience. Occupational stress had a significant positive relationship with resilience ($r = .357$, $p < .001$). This indicates that as occupational stress increased, resilience was also more strongly manifested among the respondents. The strongest dimension-level relationship was between curricular and extracurricular activity stress and overall resilience ($r = .356$, $p < .001$).

Table 4: Correlation between occupational stress and resilience

Occupational stress	Spiritual influences	Personal competencies and persistence	Social skills and peer support	Family cohesion	Overall resilience
Curricular and extracurricular activity stress	.281** p < .001	.282** p < .001	.288** p < .001	.151** p = .009	.356** p < .001
Classroom management stress	.291** p < .001	.234** p < .001	.246** p < .001	.204** p < .001	.340** p < .001
Working condition stress	.229** p < .001	.194** p = .001	.181** p = .002	.009 p = .882	.218** p < .001
Overall occupational stress	.312** p < .001	.275** p < .001	.278** p < .001	.146* p = .011	.357** p < .001

The positive association suggests that stressful work experiences may activate teachers' adaptive resources when they are accompanied by coping capacity, social support, and meaning-making. This does not imply that stress is beneficial in itself. Instead, it suggests that teachers who experience occupational pressure may also mobilize resilience mechanisms such as spirituality, persistence, peer support, and family support. Institutions should therefore reduce unnecessary stressors while strengthening resources that help teachers manage unavoidable demands.

Relationship between Occupational Stress and Coping Behavior

Table 5 presents the correlation between occupational stress and coping behavior. Occupational stress was significantly and positively correlated with coping behavior ($r = .580, p < .001$), indicating that teachers used more coping strategies as stress increased. Classroom management stress had the strongest association with overall coping behavior ($r = .559, p < .001$).

The findings suggest that occupational stress shapes how teachers respond to workplace pressure. Classroom

Table 5: Correlation between occupational stress and coping behavior

Occupational stress	Task-oriented coping	Emotion-oriented coping	Avoidant-distracted coping	Overall coping behavior
Curricular and extracurricular activity stress	.300** p < .001	.440** p < .001	.252** p < .001	.518** p < .001
Classroom management stress	.348** p < .001	.474** p < .001	.306** p < .001	.559** p < .001
Working condition stress	.333** p < .001	.343** p < .001	.171** p = .003	.404** p < .001
Overall occupational stress	.406** p < .001	.491** p < .001	.287** p < .001	.580** p < .001

management concerns may require teachers to combine problem-solving, emotional regulation, and temporary distraction because student behavior and engagement issues require immediate and repeated responses. This supports research showing that teachers use multiple coping strategies depending on the stressor and context (Rivero, 2024; Wang, 2021).

Relationship between Coping Behavior and Resilience

Table 6 presents the relationship between coping behavior and resilience. Coping behavior was significantly and positively correlated with resilience ($r = .416, p < .001$). Task-oriented coping showed the strongest relationship with overall resilience ($r = .435, p < .001$), indicating that

Table 6: Correlation between coping behavior and resilience

Coping behavior	Spiritual influences	Personal competencies and persistence	Social skills and peer support	Family cohesion	Overall resilience
Task-oriented coping	.319** p < .001	.413** p < .001	.262** p < .001	.236** p = .009	.435** p < .001
Emotion-oriented coping	.164** p = .004	.094 p = .103	.170** p = .003	.169** p = .003	.208** p < .001
Avoidant-distracted coping	.234** p < .001	.038 p = .515	.292** p < .001	.378** p < .001	.327** p < .001
Overall coping behavior	.311** p < .001	.203** p < .001	.323** p < .001	.354* p = .011	.416** p < .001

problem-focused strategies are particularly important in sustaining teachers' adaptive functioning. The pattern of correlations supports the central role of coping behavior in resilience development. Task-oriented coping was most strongly associated with personal competencies and overall resilience, suggesting that teachers who analyze problems, identify solutions, and act deliberately are more likely to sustain persistence under stress. Emotion-oriented and avoidant-distracted coping showed weaker but still meaningful associations with selected dimensions, implying that emotional processing and temporary disengagement may provide supplementary support when balanced with problem-focused action (Barnová *et al.*, 2023; Valls & Tardif, 2025).

Mediating Effect of Coping Behavior

Table 7 presents the regression analysis for the mediation model. Occupational stress significantly predicted resilience in Step 1 ($B = .166$, $\beta = .357$, $p < .001$). Occupational stress also significantly predicted coping behavior in Step 2 ($B = .363$, $\beta = .580$, $p < .001$). In Step 3, coping behavior significantly predicted resilience ($B = .234$, $\beta = .316$, $p < .001$). When coping behavior was entered into the model, the direct effect of occupational stress on resilience decreased from $\beta = .357$ to $\beta = .174$ but remained significant, indicating partial mediation.

Table 8 shows the Sobel test results. The Sobel z -value of 4.603634 was significant at $p < .05$, confirming that

Table 7: Regression analysis of coping behavior as mediator between occupational stress and resilience

Step	Path	B	SE	beta
1	c: Occupational stress -> Resilience	.166	.025	.357***
2	a: Occupational stress -> Coping behavior	.363	.029	.580***
3	b: Coping behavior -> Resilience	.234	.047	.316***
4	c': Occupational stress -> Resilience controlling for coping behavior	.081	.030	.174**

Note. B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .000$.

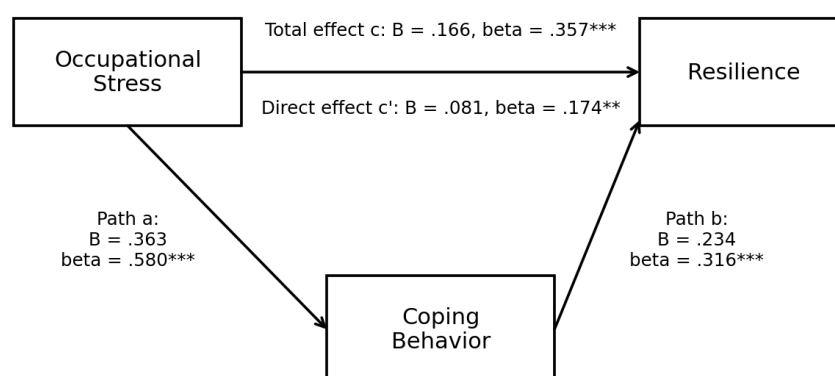
coping behavior significantly mediated the relationship between occupational stress and resilience. The indirect effect estimated from path a multiplied by path b was approximately .085. Relative to the total effect of .166,

the estimated percentage mediated was 51.28%. Because the direct effect remained significant after including the mediator, the mediation was partial rather than full.

The mediation result supports the Transactional

Table 8: Statistical analysis of the mediating effect

Variable combination	Sobel z	p-value	Estimated indirect effect	Percentage mediated	Mediation
Occupational stress -> Coping behavior -> Resilience	4.603634	$p < .05$	.085	51.28%	Partial mediation



Sobel $z = 4.603634$, $p < .05$; indirect effect = .085; percentage mediated = 51.28%; partial mediation

Figure 2: Regression-based mediation model for occupational stress, coping behavior, and resilience

Theory of Stress and Coping. Stressful conditions do not automatically determine teachers' resilience; instead, teachers' cognitive and behavioral responses help explain how stress is converted into adaptive

functioning. Coping behavior appears to serve as a psychological pathway through which teachers manage stress and sustain resilience. The partial mediation also indicates that other factors may contribute to resilience,

such as organizational support, emotional intelligence, professional experience, spirituality, and family support. Therefore, resilience-building programs should include coping-skills training while also improving workplace conditions and institutional support systems.

The findings have practical implications for education leaders. Since working condition stress was the strongest occupational stress indicator, interventions should not be limited to counseling or individual wellness activities. Workload audits, equitable distribution of school tasks, reduction of unnecessary paperwork, resource support, and clear boundaries for extracurricular duties are necessary. At the same time, the strong link between task-oriented coping and resilience suggests that professional development programs should include problem-solving, boundary management, cognitive reframing, collaborative planning, and peer-support structures.

CONCLUSION

This study determined the mediating effect of coping behavior on the relationship between occupational stress and resilience among public secondary school MAPEH teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur. The findings showed that occupational stress was high, while resilience and coping behavior were very high. Occupational stress, coping behavior, and resilience were significantly and positively related. Coping behavior partially mediated the relationship between occupational stress and resilience, indicating that teachers' coping strategies explain a substantial part of how stress is associated with resilience. The results suggest that teacher resilience is not merely an individual trait but a dynamic process shaped by stress exposure, coping responses, family cohesion, spirituality, peer support, and workplace conditions. Task-oriented coping emerged as a particularly important contributor to resilience, highlighting the value of practical problem-solving, planning, and direct action in managing occupational demands. However, because the mediation was partial, schools should also consider broader institutional factors that influence resilience. Based on the findings, the Department of Education and school administrators are encouraged to develop institutionalized teacher wellness and coping programs that include stress management, cognitive reframing, boundary management, problem-solving, and peer support. Schools may also implement workload audit mechanisms to ensure equitable distribution of auxiliary tasks and reduce excessive documentation. Future studies may expand the sample to other divisions and subject areas, use longitudinal designs to examine changes in stress and resilience over time, and include additional mediating or moderating variables such as organizational support, emotional intelligence, work engagement, and self-efficacy. Qualitative studies may also provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers in managing occupational stress.

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