

Socio-Psychological Health and Stress Management of Teachers amidst Pandemic: Basis for Coping Development Program

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Abstract

The psychological condition and stress level of teachers are two important factors that help them to develop holistic classroom managers and education front liners teachers are the shock absorbers of the Department of Education (DepEd). This study aimed to determine the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers the light of COVID-19 pandemic at East Isulan District. The researcher utilized the descriptive- correlational method. The researcher utilized the one hundred (100) teacher respondents to answer the data gathering tool on the level of socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers.

The socio-psychological condition of teachers in terms of social, emotional and behavioral was rated high. Teachers manifested extraordinary socio-psychological condition by socially engaged in different activities that boasted their positivity amidst the pandemic. They have high level of stress management activities that utilized like social support, leisure activities, professional training and healthy living. Teachers engaged in different social activities and strategies like spending wisely, and attending various social gatherings as part of their stress management mechanisms. It is recommended that the school management may provide effective support mechanism to overcome anxiety, burnt out and excessive workloads.

Keywords: Socio-psychological health, stress management, teachers

1. Main text

1.1 Introduction

Republic Act 11036, the country's first mental health law, was created with the intention of ensuring that people with mental health issues and their family members have access to comprehensive and integrated psychological health care while also defending their legal rights (Clavellas & Perez, 2021). Teachers' psychological well-being and level of stress are two crucial aspects that aid in their development as holistic classroom managers and front-line educators. When it comes to bringing the curriculum, services, and skill mastery of the Department of Education (DepEd) to the students, instructors act as the department's shock

absorbers. Teachers still need to implement distance learning due to poor mental health and stress (Asio & Bayucca, 2021).

Stressors at work have an impact on teachers' socio-psychological health. Teachers experience stress due to a variety of factors, including a heavy workload, working from home, and information and communication technologies (ICT). These factors can lead to feelings of tension, weariness, and lower job satisfaction (Aperribai, 2020).

The physical, mental, and emotional health of teachers who are under too much stress may suffer, which could have an impact on their performance, their interactions with students, and ultimately, the performance of their students. Therefore, it is important to measure stress levels and pinpoint any potential problem areas so that any necessary environmental or behavioral modifications can be made to lessen stressful circumstances. People should learn stress management skills to lessen or eliminate the negative consequences of extended exposure to stress when it is not possible to modify the stressful environment. The majority of teachers use a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with their stress, including watching television (64%), window shopping at malls (57%), watching sports (43%), going to the movies (38%), and (5) practicing deep breathing and relaxation techniques (34%) (Rabago-Mingoa, 2017).

Teachers at public schools deal with a lot of paperwork and workload. The DepEd Secretary highlighted that everyone working for the government is overworked and under extreme pressure, not just the teachers. This was introduced to emphasize that, in addition to their daily six-hour teaching schedule, public school instructors are overloaded with work-related responsibilities such reports, instructional materials, school designations, and other related tasks. This working environment causes teachers' performance to fall short of the aim, which is above Proficiency Level. Due to their heavy workload, instructors' other obligations and functions are taking priority over their real teaching duties (Jimenez, 2021).

At present times, teachers are left with uncertainty on how to proceed with the teaching and learning process due to shifting of classes amid the pandemic. It caused worries, fears, and uncertainties to all teachers, which steered them out of people, work, and gatherings. Teachers have no clear mind-set and psychological understanding to be prepared and ready for the new normal and their mental health was affected (Jimenez, 2021).

In local setting, based on the observations and experienced, teachers have low psychological health and suffering from all out stress due to volume of workloads. At present, teachers were getting exhausted preparing for the expansion of limited face-to-face classes. Hence, the researcher prompted to conduct this study to determine the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers.

1.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Stress among teachers is detrimental and may be unhealthy. The three factors on which the employment circumstances were established were that the teacher faces demands, that these demands are difficult for the teacher to meet, and that failing to meet these demands could endanger the teacher's mental and physical health. Excessive workload, class size increases, monitoring and evaluation pressures, curriculum and course changes, assessment and testing requirements, poor management, bullying at work, failing schools, student misbehavior, risk of violence from students, parents, and intruders, lack of support with bureaucracy, form filling, and routine tasks, lack of job security due to redundancy, and fixed-term contracts are all factors that contribute to teacher stress (Beers, 2012).

Socio-psychological health is crucial during this COVID 19 epidemic since it has a significant

impact on teachers' daily lives. The high level of psychological well-being was capable of reaching its full potential. There are six dimensions of psychological wellness. When the sixth dimension is met, a person's psychological well-being is at a high degree. The six dimensions psychological health, which encompasses self-acceptance, fulfilling relationships with others, independence, environmental mastery, and a sense of purpose in life (Kamaruzaman & Surat, 2021).

The above cited concepts anchored the present undertakings of the study on the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers. Figure 1 depicts the independent and dependent variables of the study. The independent variable is the socio-psychological health of teachers that describe based on social, emotional, and behavioural. The dependent variable is the stress management of teachers relative to the social support, healthy living, leisure activities, work and study, and spiritual activities. The following diagram depicts how the two variables were treated and the relationship of the independent and dependent variables.

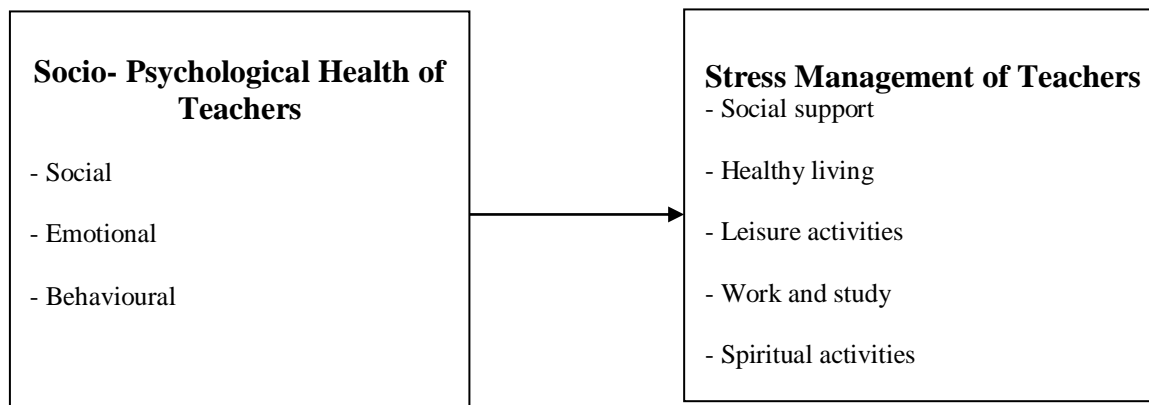


Figure 1. Schematic Design of the Conceptual Framework

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers the light of COVID-19 pandemic at East Isulan District. Findings serve as basis for proposed stress coping development program. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of socio-psychological health of teachers relative to:
 - 1.1 social,
 - 1.2 emotional, and
 - 1.3 behavioral?
2. What is the level of the stress coping management of teachers amidst pandemic in terms of:
 - 2.1 Social Support,
 - 2.2 Healthy living,
 - 2.3 Leisure activities,
 - 2.4 Work and Study, and
 - 2.5 Spiritual activities?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers?
4. What stress coping development program could be proposed based on the findings of the study?

1.4 Research Design

The researcher utilized the descriptive- correlational method. In descriptive survey, this study involves the description and analysis of the characteristics of the populations. It described the level of socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers.

Calmorin and Calmorin (2012) cited that descriptive research focuses at the present condition, the purpose of which is to find new truth. Descriptive research is also valuable in providing facts on which scientific judgments may be based.

The research design consisted of about three premises in gathering necessary data. First, information for the relevant variables were collected, tallied and synthesized. Second, descriptive statistics for each variable was determined (Abdullah, 2015). Third, inferential statistics was utilized to examine the significant relationship of the stated variables.

The study conducted at East Isulan District, Division of Sultan Kudarat. The District is composed of five (5) complete elementary schools. The district is located at Kalawag Central School, which has the greatest number of populations. The District is located at the heart of Poblacion of the Municipality.

The respondents of this research study were regular permanent teachers of East Isulan District. The teacher respondents are holding different ranks and position coming from different schools. In this study, the researcher utilized the one hundred (100) teacher respondents to answer the data gathering tool on the level of socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers.

This research study employed the total sampling technique to determine the sample respondents to participate in data gathering. Using the total sampling, the researcher included all the teachers. Total population sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique that involves examining the entire population that have a particular set of characteristics.

The research instrument to assess the psychological health of teachers was adapted from Supplemental Mental Health Questionnaire of Gulf study (2013). It composed of three (3) sub variables like social, emotional and behavioural.

The questionnaire for stress management was taken from the study of Hidalgo-Andrade (2021). It composed of five (5) sub variables like social support, healthy living, leisure activities, work and study, and spiritual activities. A 5-Likert scale will be used: 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Moderately Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree.

The responses of the respondents were carefully encoded, tabulated, analysed and interpreted.

For the level of socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers weighted mean was used. Pearson r Moment correlation used to determine the relationship between the two variables. The following parameters was used.

Scale	Range-value	Description	Verbal Interpretation
5	4.50-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
4	3.50-4.49	Agree	High
3	2.50-3.49	Moderately Agree	Moderately High
2	1.50-2.49	Disagree	Low
1	1.00-1.49	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

1.5 Discussion of Results and Reflection

This section dealt with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data taking consideration on the research questions which sought to answer the main problem of the research. The data were sequentially presented below in the form of tables for the systematic and comprehensive analysis.

1.5.1. Level of Socio-Psychological Health of Teachers

The first research problem determines the level of socio-psychological health of teachers. Tables 1-3 show the findings of the study. As shown, in the social aspect of socio-psychological health, collaborating with other teachers to ease burden in workloads obtained the mean of 4.62 described as Very High. It was also rated very high in pursuing a goal or task in the face of challenges and difficulty which obtained the mean of 4.58.

Taken as a whole, the mean of socio-psychological health of teachers in terms of social was rated High (4.45). This means that teachers manifested extraordinary socio-psychological condition by socially engaged in different activities that boasted their positivity amidst the pandemic. The result implies that good social aspect of mental health help them overcome the stress and other related pressures.

Table 2 presents the level of socio-psychological health of teachers relative to emotional. As shown, influencing the quality of relationships with students, parents and others was rated high with mean of 4.48. This followed by acquiring and applying the knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities which obtained the mean of 4.45 and described as high. Taken as a whole, the mean of socio-psychological health of teachers relative to emotional was 4.33 and rated as high. This means that teachers have high emotional level that contributed in high efficacy of socio-psychological condition and greatly manage emotional state by doing activities that promote positive mental health.

Table 3 presents the level of socio-psychological health of teachers relative to behavioural aspect. As shown, seeking and giving facts and shares ideas to the pupils in the remote learning was rated high with mean of 4.49. In possessing the warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring to the pupils considering the situation was also rated high with mean of 4.48. Taken as a whole, the mean of behavioural aspect was 4.45 described as High. This means that teachers manifested positive behaviour as indicated in the overall mean which highlighted the different activities. During the pandemic, they were faced the hardships and obstacles and act in accordance with the will and acceptance. This implies that, teachers' behavior contributed to the extraordinary perspective of their mental health.

1.5.2 Level of the Stress Management of Teachers amidst Pandemic

The second research problem deals on the stress management of teachers amidst pandemic. The extent of coping management of teachers was determined by computing the mean scores of the five items for indicator using a five-point scale.

Table 4 presents the level of stress management employed by teachers amidst pandemic relative to social support. As shown, needing some extra help financially was rated very high with mean of 4.60. Moreover, attending church or religious services was also rated high and obtained a mean of 4.52.

Taken as a whole, the mean of social support was 4.46 and rated as high. This means that the coping management of teachers on social support was high which manifested by the result. To overcome the challenges and other obstacles during the pandemic and improve the socio-psychological condition, teachers engaged in different social activities and strategies like spending wisely, and attending various social gatherings.

Table 5 presents the level of stress management employed by teachers amidst pandemic in terms of healthy living. As shown, working on daily activities was rated very high with mean of 4.65. It was also rated very high on satisfying relationships with friends and families were obtained the mean of 4.57. Taken as a whole, the mean of healthy living was 4.40 described as high. This means that teachers manifested a great

healthy living during the pandemic. Healthy living involves doing physical activities, working on daily routines and good relationship with other people.

Table 6 presents the level of stress management employed by teachers amidst pandemic in terms of leisure activities. As shown, watching movies and social media platforms obtained the mean of 4.19 and described as high. Moreover, hiking and walking was also rated high with mean of 4.10. Taken as a whole, the mean of leisure activities was 3.79 described as high. The findings indicate that teachers manifested high coping mechanisms in doing the leisure activities that promotes effective and positive socio-psychological health during the pandemic.

Table 7 presents the level of stress management employed by teachers amidst pandemic in terms of work and study. As shown, trusting the team or co-workers to support the work activities was rated high with mean of 4.47. Likewise, it was also rated high on satisfying with working conditions with mean of 4.25. Taken as a whole, the mean of work and study was 4.19 rated as high. This means that teachers manifested great and effective coping management by doing their work daily and studying through professional development trainings. Through work and study they can promote better lifestyle and improve their well-being and mental health status.

Table 8 presents the level of stress management employed by teachers amidst pandemic in terms of spiritual activities. As shown, teachers has an ongoing personal relationship with God was rated Very High with mean of 4.37. Additionally, developing a good working relationship with the students, parents and co-workers was rated high with mean of 4.56. This means doing the spiritual activities is one strategy that improves the mental health of teachers.

1.5.3 Relationship between the Socio-Psychological Health and Stress Management of Teachers

The third research problem deals on the relationship between the socio-psychological health and stress management of teachers. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to measure the statistical relationship, or association, between two continuous variables. It is known as the best method of measuring the association between variables of interest because it is based on the method of covariance. It gives information about the magnitude of the association, or correlation, as well as the direction of the relationship of the variables in the present study.

As shown, on the analysis of socio-psychological condition and stress management of teachers shows a significant relationship with t -computed value = 23.09 > t -critical value at 5.67 (p -value=0.036<0.05), thus null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the stress management of teachers is dependent to the level of their socio-psychological health. The social, emotional and behavioural level of teachers during the pandemic determined the kind of stress management they planned and implemented to sustain the mental capacity of teachers. The result implies that stress management is effective predictors, as such the higher the socio-psychological needs of teachers the higher stress coping management employed to maximise their condition of becoming positive and strong mental health.

1.5.4 Stress Coping Development Program

The purpose of the Program

The goal of the stress management program is to get everyone on board with the proper information and abilities that teachers will need to use throughout the pandemic in order to start a process of rapid

improvement. This program seeks to provide instructors more control, extremely effective tools to lessen stress at work, and the ability to start performing well under pressure. The pandemic has worn down and stressed out the personnel in school today. Because they are only receiving their income and nothing more, teachers of all ages and levels feel anxious, insecure, and misunderstood. Many people believe that the responsibilities of both the office and the family have gotten to be too much to handle.

Development Objectives of the training

This stress management development program for teachers provides effective techniques for managing workplace stress, proven coping strategies for reducing anxiety and key skills for thriving under pressure.

1. Understand that stress is an unavoidable part of everybody's life
2. Reduce stress levels at work
3. Avoid mental exhaustion and tiredness
4. Gain proven stress management skills to cope with stress at work

Stress Management Program Overview

The program begins with the statement that stress is inherent in living. It is impossible to avoid all stress and it is wrong to try. Teachers have evolved to respond to stressors in an adaptive way. Stress is a trigger to adaptive responses. But an overdose of stress, or poorly managed stress is dangerous. The aim of the program is to gain the benefits of stress, whilst avoiding all its dangers. The teachers will start discussing their personal learning objectives. Based on this the following topics are covered in the Stress Management Program:

- Introduction – what is stress?
- How it affects Stress Management and us
- Foundations of Stress Management
- Mental Stress Management Strategies
- Stress Management at Work

1.6 Reflection

Teachers have high emotional level that contributed in high efficacy of socio-psychological condition and greatly manage emotional state by doing activities that promote positive mental health. During the pandemic, they were faced the hardships and obstacles and act in accordance with the will and acceptance. They manifested high coping mechanisms in doing the leisure activities that promotes effective and positive socio-psychological health during the pandemic. The social, emotional and behavioural level of teachers during the pandemic determined the kind of stress management they planned and implemented to sustain the mental capacity of teachers.

1.7 Conclusions

Teachers have high level of social, emotional and behavioural aspects of their socio-psychological condition. Their behaviour contributed to the extraordinary perspective of their mental health. The good social aspect of mental health helps them overcome the stress and other related pressures. They possessed great and effective coping management by doing their work daily and studying through professional development trainings.

They have high level of stress management activities that utilized like social support, leisure activities, professional training and healthy living. Teachers engaged in different social activities and strategies like spending wisely, and attending various social gatherings as part of their stress management mechanisms. Through work and study they can promote better lifestyle and improve their well-being and

mental health status.

1.8 Recommendation

1. Teachers may sustain the existing stress coping management to stay positive and improve mental health.
2. The school management may provide effective support mechanism to overcome anxiety, burnt out and excessive workloads.
3. Further studies may be conducted utilizing other indicators on mental health and stress coping management of teachers.

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