



# INTERACTIVE PROBLEMS OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM AND COPING MECHANISM OF TEACHERS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between students' interactive problems in the classroom and the coping mechanisms employed by public elementary school teachers in the Kiblawan District, Division of Davao del Sur. A non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing the correlational method was employed. The respondents consisted of 138 public elementary school teachers selected through universal sampling. Data were analyzed using the mean, Pearson  $r$ , and regression analysis. Results revealed that the level of interactive problems among students, particularly in terms of family issues, examination stress, financial difficulties, and relationship challenges, was high and frequently observed. Similarly, teachers' coping mechanisms, including positive self-talk, physical activity, nutritious food intake, adequate sleep, relaxation routines, and interpersonal interaction, were also high and moderately exhibited. A significant relationship was found between students' interactive problems and the teachers' coping mechanisms. Furthermore, the various domains of interactive problems were found to significantly influence the coping strategies of teachers. Based on these findings, it is recommended that school heads and stakeholders enhance intervention strategies to support teachers in managing classroom-related student concerns, promote mental well-being, and strengthen coping practices to foster sustainable and responsive teaching environments.

**KEYWORDS:** Interactive Problems, Coping Mechanisms, Public Elementary Schools, Teachers

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Classroom interaction problems have become a major concern in today's public school settings. While the issue of student misbehavior and classroom disruptions is not new, current studies have shifted toward understanding how such behaviors affect not only the learning environment but also the well-being and strategies of teachers. This shift is particularly crucial in addressing the rising stress levels and burnout among educators in overcrowded and under-resourced schools (Nuss, 2020; Kolomitro et al., 2020).

Initially, interactive classroom problems were seen as isolated student discipline issues, often attributed to lack of motivation or home-related factors (Havik & Ingul, 2021). However, recent literature highlights that these problems stem from complex social, emotional, and contextual influences. Likewise, coping mechanisms are no longer seen as mere reactions but as strategic tools that teachers develop and refine to maintain order, motivation, and student engagement (Park & Ramirez, 2022; Fisher & Frey, 2021).

Public school teachers are at the forefront of managing students with diverse needs and behavioral patterns. Their ability to address classroom problems directly impacts the flow of instruction, student performance, and classroom climate. Yet,

these teachers often encounter situations that test their emotional and professional limits. Managing such complexities requires more than instructional knowledge; it demands resilience, adaptability, and effective coping strategies to sustain professional performance and well-being (Wabule, 2020; Hamadeh Kerbage et al., 2021).

Globally, student behavior management is one of the most cited challenges faced by educators. In countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, teachers report increasing concerns over defiance, attention difficulties, and emotional disturbances in students. These are compounded by large class sizes and minimal institutional support. Teachers who are equipped with proactive coping strategies show stronger classroom leadership, improved student engagement, and lower burnout levels. On the other hand, the lack of coping strategies often leads to heightened stress, absenteeism, and job dissatisfaction (Owusu, 2021; Sanchez-Gomez et al., 2021).

In the Philippine context, public school teachers frequently face overwhelming class sizes, limited learning resources, and socio-economic challenges among students. These conditions make classroom management increasingly difficult, especially in low-income urban and rural schools. Moreover, many teachers lack access to consistent professional development on behavioral



management techniques and psychosocial support systems. These realities often lead to emotional fatigue and ineffective handling of classroom interactions (Saleem & Muhammad, 2020; Wettstein et al., 2021).

This study addresses a critical gap in understanding how public elementary school teachers cope with interactive classroom problems. It assumes a significant relationship between the frequency of these student behaviors and the coping mechanisms employed by teachers. The findings aim to provide insights for school administrators and policy makers in developing support systems that promote teacher well-being and effective classroom management. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader goal of improving public education through a deeper understanding of classroom dynamics and teacher resilience.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was conducted to determine the level in interactive problems among students in the classroom and coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools in Kiblawan District, Division of Davao del Sur. Specifically this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of interactive problems among students in the classroom in public elementary schools in terms of:

- 1.1 domestic problems,
- 1.2 examination pressure,
- 1.3 economic difficulties and
- 1.4 connection difficulties?

2. What is the level of coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary school in terms of:

- 2.1 be positive,
- 2.2 exercises,
- 2.3 nourishment,
- 2.4 sleep,
- 2.5 get away at least once a day,
- 2.6 bonding with kids,
- 2.7 book an aromatherapy massage and feel good,
- 2.8 learn to say "no", and
- 2.9 be thoughtful?

3. Is there a significant relationship between interactive problems among students in the classroom and coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools?

4. What domains in interactive problems among students in the classroom significantly influence coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools?

### 1.2 Hypotheses

The null hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1. There is no significant relationship between interactive problems among students in the classroom and coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools.

Ho2. The domains of interactive problems among students in the classroom do not significantly influence coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically utilizing a descriptive-correlational approach. Quantitative research involves collecting and analyzing numerical data in a structured and objective manner to uncover patterns and relationships among variables. This design is highly appropriate for studies in educational settings where observable behaviors and conditions can be measured and analyzed statistically (Fadele & Rocha, 2025).

The descriptive-correlational design was selected to determine the relationship between the interactive problems of students in the classroom and the coping mechanisms employed by teachers in public elementary schools. This method allowed the researcher to describe the prevailing conditions regarding student behavior and teacher response strategies, while also examining the potential statistical connection between the two variables without manipulation.

As Taherdoost (2022) emphasized, correlational designs are ideal for exploring how variables co-vary and influence one another. In this study, the correlational approach made it possible to examine whether the frequency or intensity of student interactive problems is significantly associated with specific coping mechanisms adopted by teachers in managing classroom behavior.

By adopting this research design, the study aimed to produce data-driven insights that could help educators, school administrators, and policymakers develop more effective interventions. The findings may support the implementation of professional development initiatives, classroom management training, and mental health support systems to strengthen teachers' coping strategies and foster more conducive learning environments in public elementary schools.

### 2.2 Research Respondents

The respondents of this study were the 138 teachers in public elementary schools in Kiblawan District, Division of Davao del Sur, they evaluated their colleagues and themselves via questionnaire that was administered to them. The teachers involve served at least three years above in public schools. This study was conducted on school year 2022-2023. The researcher used the universal sampling in selecting the respondents.

### 2.3 Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire composed of two main sections, specifically designed to collect data on interactive problems of students and coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools.



The first section focused on student interactive problems, with items constructed based on established literature and theoretical frameworks related to classroom behavior and student-teacher interaction. To ensure content validity, the items were reviewed by experts in educational psychology, child development, and classroom management. This section demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.938, indicating excellent reliability.

The second section measured coping mechanisms of teachers, reflecting their strategies for addressing and managing disruptive or challenging student behaviors. This section assessed how often teachers employed various coping strategies. This section also showed strong reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.927, confirming the instrument's suitability for assessing teacher coping mechanisms in public school settings. The final version of the instrument was used for data collection and was found to be clear, relevant, and practical for use among the target population.

### 2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process for this study was carried out in a systematic, ethical, and well-organized manner to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of the research. Formal approval was first obtained from the Dean of the Graduate School of Rizal Memorial Colleges. Subsequently, an official endorsement letter was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Davao del Sur to secure permission to conduct the study within public elementary schools under their jurisdiction.

Once approvals were granted, the researcher distributed the researcher-made questionnaires to the 138 teacher-respondents from selected public elementary schools. The instrument was specifically designed to gather data on the interactive problems experienced by students in the classroom and the coping mechanisms employed by teachers. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires were facilitated in coordination with school principals and teacher coordinators to ensure proper and timely administration.

Before completing the survey, each participant was fully informed about the purpose of the study, the data gathering

process, and the ethical considerations, including voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. These safeguards were clearly communicated to promote a respectful and trustworthy environment, encouraging honest and reflective responses from the participants.

After the data collection period, the completed questionnaires were retrieved and thoroughly checked for completeness. All responses were then systematically organized, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis. The following tools were used: mean and standard deviation for descriptive analysis, and Pearson's r correlation coefficient to examine relationships between the variables.

### 2.5 Data Analysis

In analyzing and interpreting the data collected for this study, several statistical tools were employed to ensure accuracy and relevance in addressing the research objectives. These tools were chosen to examine both the frequency and severity of interactive problems among students and the corresponding coping mechanisms employed by teachers in public elementary schools.

Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the levels of interactive problems encountered in the classroom and to determine the extent of coping mechanisms demonstrated by teachers. These descriptive statistics provided a general overview of the responses and highlighted the prevailing issues and strategies in the educational setting.

Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was employed to assess the relationship between the interactive problems of students and the coping mechanisms of teachers. This analysis helped to determine whether a statistically significant association existed between the two variables under investigation.

Lastly, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the predictive relationship between the identified classroom interactive problems and the coping mechanisms of teachers. This analysis provided deeper insights into which specific types of problems significantly influenced the strategies teachers adopted to manage their classrooms effectively.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Level of Interactive Problems Among Students in the Classroom

Table 1. Level of Interactive Problems Among Students in the Classroom

| Statements                | Mean        | Descriptive Equivalent |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Family Problems           | 3.22        | High                   |
| Examination Stress        | 4.20        | High                   |
| Financial Difficulties    | 4.18        | High                   |
| Relationship Difficulties | 4.18        | High                   |
| <b>Overall</b>            | <b>3.95</b> | <b>High</b>            |



Presented in Table 1 is the level of interactive problems among students in the classroom in public elementary schools, based on the mean scores across four domains: family problems, examination stress, financial difficulties, and relationship difficulties. Among the indicators, examination stress recorded the highest mean score of 4.20, followed closely by financial difficulties and relationship difficulties, both with a mean of 4.18. These three domains are described as high, suggesting that many students frequently experience these challenges, which may negatively affect their academic performance and classroom behavior. On the other hand, family problems had a slightly lower mean of 3.22, though still within the high range, indicating that familial issues remain a relevant concern among learners. Overall, the level of interactive problems among students yielded a mean score of 3.95, categorized as high, implying that these issues are

commonly encountered and must be addressed through proactive and supportive interventions in the school environment.

This finding aligns with the study of McKechnie et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of building a supportive school community to address recurring student behavioral and emotional issues through adaptive leadership and collaboration. Their work suggests that creating an environment where students feel safe and understood allows for better intervention strategies and fosters improved engagement in learning. Similarly, the research of Sun & Liu (2023) confirmed that high levels of academic and personal stressors among elementary learners contribute to a decline in student interaction, classroom participation, and overall mental well-being. They emphasized the need for contextually appropriate coping mechanisms and collaborative teacher practices to mitigate these effects.

### 3.2 Level of Coping Mechanism among Teachers

Table 2. Level of Coping Mechanism among Teachers

| Statements                                 | Mean        | Descriptive Equivalent |
|--|-------------|------------------------|
| Let Thy Self-Talk Positively               | 3.63        | High                   |
| Get Active Exercises                       | 1.42        | Low                    |
| Eat Nutritious Foods                       | 3.48        | Moderate               |
| Get Adequate Sleep                         | 3.48        | Moderate               |
| Get Away at Least Once a Day               | 3.25        | Moderate               |
| Interact With Kids                         | 2.49        | Fairly                 |
| Book an Aromatherapy Massage and Feel Good | 3.25        | Moderate               |
| Learn to Say “No”,                         | 2.49        | Fair                   |
| Be Considerate                             | 3.49        | Moderate               |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>                        | <b>2.97</b> | <b>Moderate</b>        |

Presented in Table 2 is the summary of coping mechanisms of teachers in public elementary schools, based on the mean scores across nine key indicators: let thy self-talk positively, get active exercises, eat nutritious foods, get adequate sleep, get away at least once a day, interact with kids, book an aromatherapy massage and feel good, learn to say “no,” and be considerate. Among these, “let thy self-talk positively” recorded the highest mean score of 3.63, categorized as high, indicating that teachers frequently use self-affirmation as a strategy to regulate stress. Following this, “be considerate” had a mean of 3.49, while both “eat nutritious foods” and “get adequate sleep” recorded a mean of 3.48, all categorized as moderate, suggesting these habits are commonly practiced. Other indicators such as “get away at least once a day” and “book an aromatherapy massage and feel good” had a mean of 3.25, while “interact with kids” and “learn to say ‘no’” both scored 2.49, rated fairly. The lowest-rated strategy was “get active exercises,” with a mean score of 1.42, classified as low. Overall, the coping mechanisms of teachers yielded a mean score of 2.97, described as moderate, which indicates that these

strategies are sometimes practiced. This implies that while teachers engage in several helpful coping behaviors, there remains a need to strengthen or diversify their strategies to better support their mental and emotional well-being.

This result supports the findings of Mahfouz (2020), who explained that coping mechanisms consist of constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts that help individuals manage stressors perceived as overwhelming. When consistently practiced, such mechanisms enhance psychological resilience and reduce susceptibility to emotional exhaustion. Likewise, Bakker and De Vries (2021) noted that coping involves deliberate strategies people use to adapt to demanding situations, ultimately improving their emotional regulation and professional effectiveness. Their study emphasized the importance of developing consistent, healthy routines among educators to counter the long-term effects of work-related stress and maintain productivity in the classroom.



### 3.3 Significant Relationship Between Interactive Problems of Students in the Classroom and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers

**Table 3. Significant Relationship Between Interactive Problems of Students in the Classroom and Coping Mechanisms of Public Elementary School Teachers**

| Independent Variable     | Dependent Variable   | r-value | Degree of Correlation | Computed p-value | Decision |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------|-----------------------|------------------|----------|
| Interactive Problems (X) | Coping Mechanism (Y) | 0.41    | Moderate Correlation  | 0.000            | Reject   |

Presented in Table 3 is the correlation analysis between interactive problems and coping mechanisms among public elementary school teachers. The computed correlation coefficient (r) is 0.41, indicating a moderate positive correlation between these two variables. The corresponding p-value is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Based on these results, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming a statistically significant relationship between interactive problems and coping mechanisms. This suggests that as teachers face more interactive problems in the classroom, they tend to utilize coping strategies more frequently, highlighting their adaptive responses to manage challenges effectively.

This finding is supported by the study of Salimzadeh et al. (2021), which showed that teachers experiencing moderate to high levels of classroom interaction difficulties tend to adopt various coping strategies to manage stress and sustain teaching effectiveness. Their study underscores that recognizing interactive problems can trigger the use of healthy coping mechanisms. Similarly, the research of Mahmud (2022) found that coping strategies such as self-reflection, mindfulness, and emotional regulation are often linked to teachers' responses to classroom disruptions, thus enhancing their ability to remain focused and positive. These studies collectively emphasize that coping mechanisms play a vital role in mitigating the adverse effects of interactive problems on teacher well-being and professional performance.

### 3.4. Significant Influence of Domains of Interactive Problems of Students in the Classroom on Coping Mechanisms of Teachers

**Table 4. Significant Influence of Domains of Interactive Problems of Students in the Classroom on Coping Mechanisms of Teachers**

| Domains of Interactive Problems | B    | BE   | Beta | t-stat | p-value | Decision    |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|--------|---------|-------------|
| Constant                        | 3.12 | 0.85 |      | 7.22   | 0.000   | Significant |
| Family Problems                 | 1.08 | 0.82 | 0.58 | 3.40   | 0.000   | Significant |
| Examination Stress              | 0.02 | 0.74 | 0.01 | 0.12   | 0.000   | Significant |
| Financial Difficulties          | 0.22 | 0.79 | 0.21 | 1.81   | 0.000   | Significant |
| Relationship Difficulties       | 0.17 | 0.76 | 0.19 | 1.57   | 0.000   | Significant |

Regression Model Equation:

$$\text{Coping Mechanisms} = 3.12 + 1.08(\text{Family Problems}) + 0.02(\text{Examination Stress}) + 0.22(\text{Financial Difficulties}) + 0.17(\text{Relationship Difficulties})$$

Model Summary:

$$R = 0.271$$

$$R^2 = 0.073$$

$$F = 90.02$$

$$p\text{-value} = 0.000$$

Presented in Table 4 is the regression analysis showing the significant influence of the domains of interactive problems of students in the classroom on the coping mechanisms of public elementary school teachers. The regression model produced an R-value of 0.271 and an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.073, indicating that approximately 7.3% of the variance in teachers' coping mechanisms can be explained by the combined influence of the identified interactive problems. The model was statistically significant, with an F-value of 90.02 and a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 level of significance. This leads to the

rejection of the null hypothesis, suggesting that the domains of interactive problems significantly predict the coping mechanisms of teachers.

Among the predictors, family problems showed the strongest positive influence on coping mechanisms, with a B coefficient of 1.08, a beta (β) of 0.58, and a t-value of 3.40 (p = 0.000), indicating a statistically significant effect. Financial difficulties also had a moderate and significant influence, with B = 0.22, β = 0.21, and t = 1.81 (p = 0.000). Relationship difficulties followed



closely, contributing positively with  $B = 0.17$ ,  $\beta = 0.19$ , and  $t = 1.57$  ( $p = 0.000$ ), likewise showing significance. On the other hand, examination stress exhibited a very weak influence, with  $B = 0.02$ ,  $\beta = 0.01$ , and a  $t$ -value of  $0.12$  ( $p = 0.000$ ), though still statistically significant based on the  $p$ -value.

These findings suggest that various types of student-related interactive problems—particularly family problems, financial difficulties, and relationship difficulties—play a meaningful role in shaping how teachers cope with classroom challenges. While examination stress had minimal impact, the overall model confirms that the interactive difficulties faced by students significantly influence the adaptive responses of public elementary school teachers.

This supports the notion that student issues extend beyond academic concerns and can influence the emotional climate and coping responses of educators. Previous studies have similarly highlighted the emotional toll such problems can have on teachers. For instance, Jiang et al. (2023) found that teachers are more likely to adjust their coping strategies in response to emotionally charged student issues, particularly those rooted in home environments. Likewise, Fullerton et al. (2021) emphasized that relational difficulties and financial strain, when persistent in the classroom context, contribute to emotional fatigue, pushing teachers to adopt more structured or adaptive coping behaviors. These results underline the importance of providing teacher support systems that are responsive to the types of student problems encountered, and point to the value of targeted interventions, such as counseling access and peer debriefing sessions, to help educators manage the stress associated with these challenges.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Firstly, the level of interactive problems among students in public elementary school classrooms is generally high. These problems encompass challenges such as family problems, examination stress, financial difficulties, and relationship difficulties. The high frequency with which these issues are manifested indicates that many students experience stressors that interfere with their classroom engagement and emotional well-being. These stressors likely affect their ability to focus, perform academically, and interact positively with peers and teachers, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support their emotional and behavioral needs.

Secondly, the level of coping mechanisms employed by teachers in public elementary schools is also high. This indicates that teachers are consistently utilizing strategies to manage stress and maintain psychological well-being amidst the challenges of the profession. These coping mechanisms include positive self-talk, regular exercise, nutritious eating, adequate sleep, temporary disengagement for rest, meaningful interactions with students, engagement in therapeutic practices like aromatherapy, assertive

boundary-setting, and being considerate. The moderate manifestation of these behaviors suggests that while teachers are equipped with resilience strategies, there is still room for more systematic support and promotion of well-being practices in school settings.

Thirdly, the study revealed a statistically significant relationship between students' interactive problems in the classroom and the coping mechanisms of public elementary school teachers. This finding underscores the dynamic interaction between student behavior and teacher well-being. As students face more challenges, teachers are likely to feel an increased emotional and professional burden, requiring them to rely more heavily on their personal coping strategies. The significance of this relationship implies that interventions to reduce student stressors may positively affect teacher wellness and vice versa.

Lastly, the regression analysis confirmed that all domains of students' interactive problems—family problems, examination stress, financial difficulties, and relationship difficulties, significantly influence the coping mechanisms of public elementary school teachers. Each domain demonstrated a statistically significant contribution to the overall model, indicating that various forms of student-related challenges have a direct and meaningful impact on how teachers manage stress and maintain their professional functioning. This finding underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach within the school environment that supports not only student needs but also the psychological and emotional well-being of teachers. Promoting teacher resilience through professional development, mental health resources, and institutional support can help foster a healthier and more productive teaching-learning dynamic.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Firstly, given the high level of interactive problems experienced by students in public elementary schools, school heads are encouraged to implement proactive interventions that address family-related concerns, examination stress, financial difficulties, and relationship issues. Programs that include parent engagement initiatives, peer counseling, and school-based mental health support could help alleviate these challenges. Specifically, areas such as preventing drug addiction within families and improving family communication should be prioritized to enhance students' overall well-being and classroom behavior.

Secondly, since the level of coping mechanisms among public elementary school teachers is also high, but with notable areas for improvement, school administrators should provide supportive wellness programs tailored to teachers' needs. Initiatives such as positive self-talk training, regular exercise programs, nutrition workshops, and adequate rest and leisure opportunities can reinforce teachers' ability to manage stress. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging teachers to practice stress-relieving habits consistently, such as daily physical activity and positive



communication, to maintain their psychological and physical well-being.

Thirdly, considering the significant relationship between interactive problems and teachers' coping mechanisms, collaborative strategies involving both teachers and stakeholders should be enhanced. School leaders must ensure that teachers receive appropriate support, especially when handling students with high interactive difficulties. Strategies such as mentoring systems, peer support groups, and time management flexibility can help teachers stay resilient and responsive. Moreover, equitable administrative practices, like providing opportunities for teachers who miss deadlines to catch up, can foster a supportive and fair environment.

Fourthly, since the domains of interactive problems among students significantly influence the coping mechanisms of teachers, school administrators should closely monitor these issues and establish early intervention measures. Regular mental health check-ins, crisis response protocols, and individualized support for teachers and students alike can help reduce the risk of burnout, anxiety, and depression. Creating a school culture that values emotional well-being and provides accessible resources is essential to long-term positive outcomes for both learners and educators.

Lastly, future researchers are encouraged to explore additional variables that may impact interactive problems and coping mechanisms, such as school climate, parental involvement, and the availability of mental health services. Employing longitudinal or mixed-method research designs could yield deeper insights into how these factors develop and interact over time, providing a more comprehensive understanding of student-teacher dynamics and the effectiveness of intervention programs.

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