# The Influence of Self-resilience and Self-belief on Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies in the Workplace

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**Abstract**
Teacher stress in the workplace, if not handled properly, will have an impact on the quality of teachers' work. Therefore, selection of coping strategies that are suited to the teacher's personality in facing work challenges is crucial in order to reduce work stress and burden. This study employed a quantitative approach in the form of a survey to identify the extent to which the level of self-resilience and the level of self-belief influence primary schoolteachers' choice of coping strategies. A total of 279 respondents were selected using simple random sampling from a population of 960 teachers from 43 primary schools located in Setiu district, Terengganu. Research instruments used for data collection included the Resilience Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Coping Orientation to Problems Experience Inventory (Brief-COPE). Data were analysed descriptively and inferentially. Based on the study's findings, it was found that the teachers in Setiu district had a high level of self-resilience, and a moderately high level of self-belief. Results showed that level of self-belief ($\beta$=0.339, t= 5.781, p=0.000) positively predicted teachers' choice of coping strategies. Meanwhile, self-resilience ($\beta$=0.114, t= 1.947, p=0.053) predicted choice of coping strategies insignificantly. Based on the regression analysis equation, self-belief accounts for 0.315 as a predictor of teachers' choice of coping strategies. Hence, teachers' choice of coping strategies increases when teachers' self-belief increases. The implication of this study is that it could assist teachers in identifying or exploring ways of overcoming stress according to their level of self-resilience and self-belief. This study is expected to be able to provide a general exposure to teachers on the importance of coping strategies as one of the steps in overcoming challenges in the workplace in the future.
**Keywords:** Self-Resilience, Self-Belief, Coping Strategies, Teacher, Workplace

**Introduction**
Teachers are the most important agent in the development of the education system in our country. Hence, teachers need to always be aware and be prepared of current changes in the education system, especially after the recent pandemic outbreak. This is because the endemic phase demands various transformations in the education system, especially in terms of interactive teaching methods so as to attract the interest of students in going to school

after being in the comfort zone of learning from home. Teachers also have to deal with various circulars and new methods introduced by the ministry to ensure that the country's education system is always relevant to current needs. At times, the demands for awareness of these current needs of education can put pressure and pose challenges to teachers' personal wellbeing (Sadovnikova et al., 2018).

The teaching career is considered a complex and complicated job that is identified with the perception of pressure and demands on teachers because of various alarming and stressful situations at school such as student health and sudden injuries or fights between students that they have to face daily (Cheung & Hui, 2011; Desouky & Allan, 2017; Johnson et al., 2005; Liu & Wiu, 2021; Hagan et al., 2022). The demands that need to be met in order to produce first-class education such as skills in technology and always being aware of students' current trends are also among the biggest challenges or obstacles that teachers have to face, causing them to feel stressed, which have resulted in many teachers opting for early retirement lately. Thus, a teacher should have strong self-resilience and be confident of their own abilities as well as be efficient in choosing the appropriate coping strategies in dealing with unexpected situations.

Teacher stress in the workplace, if not managed properly, will have an impact on their quality of work. Therefore, the researcher believes that choosing the appropriate coping strategies that match the teacher's personality in facing work challenges is crucial in order to lessen teachers' work stress and workload. Coping strategies refer to a response process that a person uses when faced with cognitive or behavioural demands that are taxing on their resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to Parker and Endler (1996), coping is a defence mechanism in which an individual uses various technique to adapt to situations that exert pressure on them so that they would be able to manage the situation effectively. Thus, coping is viewed as an important factor in a person's life especially teachers so that they would be able to manage the problem that arise from the unpleasant situation effectively and be able to reduce the stress.

In this regard, the choice of appropriate coping strategies will be able to help teachers defend themselves and protect their psychological wellbeing from external and internal pressures (Sitton, 2021; Tahara et al., 2021). This is possibly because the choice of coping strategies depends on the individual's psychosocial components, such as sense of coherence that encompasses meaningfulness, comprehensibility, and manageability (Kurowska et al., 2021). As a conclusion, when teachers are able to manage their emotions and work challenges effectively, they would not feel burdened and can therefore improve the quality of their work. Thus, the researcher expects that through this study, insights can be gained into how coping strategies can help build teachers' self-resilience and self-belief as well as help increase the teachers' desire to make teaching as a life-long profession.

**Literature Review**
Often, teachers who face difficulties while overcoming or dealing with their problems will feel stressed and this will simultaneously have an impact on their job satisfaction and can lead to problems of depression. Today, many teachers choose to retire early because of increasing workload and extreme fatigue. Teacher stress, if not managed properly, can result in various negative effects including loss of job satisfaction, reduction in effectiveness of teaching, and even cause the teacher to choose to retire earlier than expected (Kumawat, 2020; Minihan et al., 2022). Hence, it is vital for teachers to identify the appropriate coping methods or strategies suited to their level of self-resilience and self-belief.

### Self-resilience

Self-resilience is an important ability in facing and dealing with life's challenges, especially problems at work. According to Wagnild and Young (1993), resilience is an individual's ability to adapt in facing current challenges. Meanwhile, Armawi (2020) defined self-resilience as an individual's ability to adapt to unexpected situations and produce good self-development. Simply put, self-resilience is an individual's ability through behaviour, thoughts or actions that promote personal and mental wellbeing (Kunicki & Harlow, 2020). An individual can develop the ability to adapt, withstand and recover from these difficulties and adversities by using effective coping strategies (Fullerton et al., 2021). Therefore, when a teacher is faced with a challenging crisis, it is essential that the teacher maintains the stability of their mental resilience so that they can resolve the crisis effectively.

Wolin and Wolin (1983) suggested a resilience theory that focuses on the individual's self as the core, and it is an ability or capability that develops over time. According to this theory, these resulting abilities will be part of the enduring strength of the individual and that there are seven behaviours that influence the development of the individual's self-resilience (Ortegaa & Saavedrab, 2014). Figure 2 displays the seven qualities that influence resilience development as introduced by Wolin and Wolin (1993), namely insight, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity, humour, and morality.



*Figure 1*: Wolin and Wolin's (1993) seven behaviours of resilience development

Subsequently, Biscoe and Harris (1994) improved the theory by creating a scale to measure the seven abilities and skills and named the scale as Resilience Attitude Scale (RAS). RAS contains seven dimensions or subscales of resilience, namely intelligence, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity and humour, morality, and general resiliency. Biscoe and Harris (1994) combined the subscale of creativity and humour into one and added the subscale of general resiliency as the third subscale in the RAS. The subscale of general resiliency refers to the skills and determination to overcome adversities as well as the belief that a person is capable of living in a better condition (Biscoe & Harris, 1994).

Maddi and Khoshaba (2005) asserted that resilience is the basis of a person's endurance and strength. The findings of their study showed that individuals who have high levels of resilience exhibit steadfastness in the 3C, namely commitment, control and challenge. When a person is able to master the 3C, the individual will thus be able to face any change and

challenging situation, and subsequently develop into a resilient individual. Figure 2 shows the relationship between the 3C based on the Maddi and Khoshaba's (2005) Resilience Model.

*Figure 2*: Maddi and Khoshaba's (2005) Resilience Model
Source: Osman et al (2015)

**Self-belief**
According to Anthony (2007), self-belief is a personality trait that an individual possesses about their ability to accept truth, develop self-awareness, always think positively and attain freedom. According to Hambly (1992), self-belief is often associated with confidence in one's own abilities to capably deal with all problems or situations effectively. Hambly (1992) also discussed self-belief from the context of relationships with the surrounding people. Hambly, based on the findings of her study, noted that self-belief is when an individual does not feel inferior when talking or facing the public. In this sense, it is crucial for teachers to possess this skill as the scope of a teacher's duties requires the courage to present ideas and bring change in the workplace.

Lauster (2002) presented five main aspects that influence an individual's self-belief, namely confidence in one's own abilities, being optimistic in all things, being objective regarding perception, being responsible for the impact of the choice made, and being rational and realistic about one's own abilities as well as making sensible decisions. In addition, Cooley (1902) likens self-belief to a looking-glass self in describing the idea that an individual's sense of self is formed during the process of self-confidence development which is built from the individual's perception of how others see or perceive them. The evaluation of the people around the individual plays the role of a mirror reflection that provides the individual information in determining their confidence and self-worth. The influence of social interaction is used as a mirror to measure and evaluate an individual's value, beliefs and behaviour (Cooley, 1922). Hence, Pajares and Prank (2002) believe that the development of an individual's self-belief is influenced by the perceptions that others hold of them.

Lawson et al (2018) noted that there is a direct relationship between teachers' self-belief and the effectiveness of their teaching. The self-belief of teachers in facing challenges and stimuli at school has the greatest influence on their teaching practices, and if a teacher lacks confidence, the teacher will then not be able to provide effective impact during the teaching process (Pajares, 1992; Ertmer, 2005; Staub & Stern, 2002; Patrick & Pintrich, 2001; Richardson & Placier, 2001; Lawson & Stella, 2018). This is also supported by Mueller and Dunslosky (2017) based on their research findings where they described that self-belief influences a teacher's judgement of learning which will affect the teacher's professional learning.

**Coping Strategies**
Teachers who are faced with pressure at work will indirectly generate a thinking or action to provide an appropriate response to the situation. This response is called coping mechanism by (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). According to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory, individuals constantly evaluate the stimuli in their environment. This stimulation process generates their emotions and when the stimulation is assessed as a danger, threat or challenge, it will produce a coping strategy to manage the negative emotion or to directly deal with the resulting stress. The resulting coping process will bring about changes to the relationship between the individual and their environment, where successful resolution will

promote positive emotions, while failure to resolve the demand will lead to further consideration to overcome the problem in more profound ways (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

This coping mechanism is produced when a person tries to defend themselves from such pressures. This action is considered one of the adaptation processes by humans in facing daily life challenges and it is not merely a stimulus (Yiu-Chung Ko et al., 2000). Accordingly, coping mechanisms are often used as a variable in various studies, particularly in relation to stress and psychological strategies for mental wellbeing. In general, coping mechanisms refer to a method of adjustment that is consciously or unconsciously generated, which is used by the individual to reduce or increase control over unpleasant emotions, thus providing psychological wellbeing (Graves et al., 2021; Barcenas & Bibon, 2021). Simply put, coping mechanisms can be described as a strategy that humans use to defend themselves and to protect their psychological wellbeing from external or internal pressures or stressors (Sitton, 2021; Tahara et al., 2021).

Frydenberg (2008), in general, explained that coping mechanism is a multidimensional process and a cyclical system of events that will continue throughout life with various factors contributing to the occurrence of this cyclical process. Frydenberg (2008) also asserted that this process is a dynamic interaction between humans and their environment which will help develop their maturity when dealing with challenges, stressors and pressures. This assertion is supported by Stefenal et al (2022) who found in their study that when coping strategies are focused directly on the problem, it is capable of changing the situation or addressing the environment caused by the stressors.

According to Biggs (2017), when an individual is exposed to various stimuli and when the stimuli are judged as a threat, a challenge or a danger, the stimuli will then produce coping mechanisms to manage emotions and to indirectly deal with the stressor itself. However, this coping process should be re-evaluated to determine if it is appropriate or not functioning to solve the problem. This is probably because the selection of coping strategies depend on the individual's psychosocial components, such as sense of coherence that  meaningfulness, comprehensibility, and manageability (Kurowska et. al., 2021).

Additionally, coping mechanisms are also defined as cognitive and behavioural efforts that are focused towards managing conflicts or internal demands or the environment that is putting a negative impact on the individual's wellbeing (Coyne et al., 1981; Melendez et al., 2018). For this reason, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have distinguished two basic coping categories, namely problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. Carver et al (1989), on the other hand, are of the view that categorising coping mechanisms into two key categories is insufficient because of their assumption that it needs to be viewed based on a deeper dimension. Therefore, Carver and colleagues produced the COPE inventory to further analyse the coping techniques used by individuals (Stanislawaski, 2018).

The factor of self-resilience is one of the positive coping mechanisms in work and life routines, which is an effective tool to enhance an individual's work ability (Tahara et al., 2021). Armawi (2020) defined self-resilience as an individual's ability to adapt to unexpected situations and produce good self-development. Therefore, teachers who have a high level of resilience will be able to overcome the challenges at work effectively (Fathi et al., 2020). Moreover, as highlighted by Kunicki and Harlow (2020), cognitive resilience and cognitive flexibility are the active components of an individual's coping mechanism which help an individual adapts to stress and challenges as well as adjust to changing situations and think creatively to find solutions to problems.

Lindqvist et al (2019) in their study discussed four types of coping mechanisms that are often used by teachers in overcoming the negative effects caused by emotional disturbances at work. The four mechanisms are diverting thoughts, acting according to appropriateness, expressing one's emotions, and seeking support from others around them. The researchers found that the coping mechanisms are related to the concept of teacher's self-belief. Self-belief is a personality trait possessed by individuals related to the ability to accept reality, develop self-awareness, always think positively, and attain freedom (Anthony, 2007). However, not much of the research conducted discussed the importance of self-belief on the mental wellbeing of teachers. Furthermore, existing studies such as the ones by Karaterzi (2022); Pressley (2022); Kollen, Herman and Huang (2022) only emphasised the methods and interventions to overcome teacher stress involving the administrators alone without including the role of the teachers themselves in overcoming the problems that they face. Thus, this study was conducted to examine if teachers are able to recognise appropriate coping strategies in overcoming their problems. Being able to do so would mean that they will be able to deal with the unexpected stimuli such as changes in education policies, minor incidents at school, and performance pressure from the administrators with tact.

In conclusion, there is a need to examine the relationship between the level of self-resilience and level of self-belief with the type of coping strategies selected by primary schoolteachers in dealing with challenges at school.

**Objectives of the Study**
The objectives of this study include
1. Identifying the level of self-resilience of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district.
2. Identifying the level of self-belief of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district.
3. Identifying the types of coping strategies of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district.
4. Identifying the relationship between teachers' self-resilience and self-belief with the choice of coping strategies of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district.
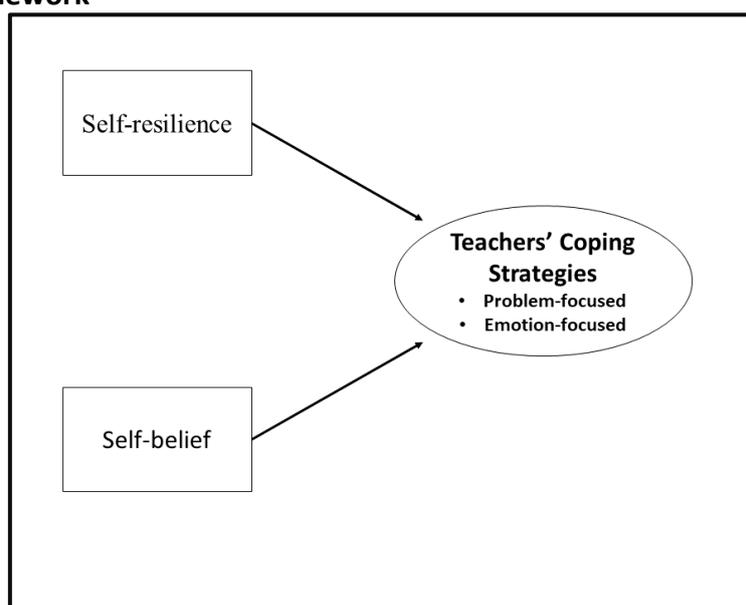
**Conceptual Framework**



*Figure 3*: Conceptual Framework of Self-resilience and Self-belief Against Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies in the Workplace

Figure 3 is the conceptual framework of this study which shows the relationship between teachers' self-resilience and self-belief and teachers' choice of coping strategies, whether it is problem-focused strategies or emotion-focused strategies. This model was adapted from the Transactional Model of Coping introduced by (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed a theory that emphasised coping as a response towards cognitive or behavioural demands that continuously burden the individual. These burdensome demands, if not dealt with, will cause excessive pressure on the person to the point that it can cause a loss of life's satisfaction (Barcenas & Bibon, 2021). This observation reflects the demands and challenges of the work of teachers today which have caused many teachers to choose to retire early as they are unable to cope with these challenges well. Therefore, choosing the appropriate coping strategies is necessary among teachers in order for them to be able to act rationally in resolving the problems faced.

There are two types of coping strategies proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), namely problem-focused strategies and emotion-focused strategies. Dewe (2017) stated that these two strategies are inter-related, but the selection of the type of coping strategies also usually needs to be based on the environment or the individual's level of self-resilience. This is supported by Stefenal et al (2022) who noted that when the coping strategies are directly focused on the problem, it is able to change the situation or deal with the environment that is caused by the stressors. Despite being under the same profession, teachers are faced with different environments and different problems from one another, in accord with the current situation of teachers. This is due to the factors of differences in the number of students, local culture, and colleagues at work. Therefore, the selection of coping strategies that are appropriate to the current situation is crucial so that the stress faced by teachers can be dealt with tactfully.

The diagram in Figure 3 shows two circles that lead to the selection of teachers' coping strategies, namely teachers' self-resilience and teachers' self-belief. Both these circles are the main factors that influence teachers' choice of coping strategies. If a teacher has high self-belief, it is highly likely that the teacher is more mature in terms of their emotions; thus, the selection of emotion-focused coping strategies is better compared to problem-focused strategies. In this regard, the research goal that this study sought to achieve is to identify the extent to which self-resilience and self-belief influence the selection of coping strategies of primary schoolteachers, especially in the district of Setiu, Terengganu.

**Methodology**
**Research Design and Sampling**
This study used the quantitative approach in the form of a survey. The data obtained would be converted and analysed in the form of figures using statistical analysis. Survey based approach was chosen because of the constraints of time and the endemic phase of Covid-19 which could increase the rate of infection. In this respect, the use of simple random sampling technique was considered highly appropriate because data collection could be conducted within a short period of time (Mokhlis, 2021; Chua, 2014). In addition, a survey-based approach was chosen because this study was conducted to examine the coping strategies that are the choice of teachers when faced with challenges at work.

This study involved 279 respondents who were selected from a population of 960 teachers from 43 primary schools located in the district of Setiu, Terengganu. The determination of the study's sample size was based on the size of the population (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), the need for statistical testing, and appropriateness of the duration. The process of respondent selection was performed using simple random sampling. All the respondents selected were teachers from different backgrounds in terms of work experience and gender. The selection of the respondents was conducted through Google Form because of constraints of time and the endemic phase of Covid-19 which could increase the infection rate. The use of the Google Form which was distributed online meant that the respondents could provide their feedback without the need to meet face-to-face.

**Data Collection Method**
A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contained four sections. Section A was on the demographic data of the respondents such as gender, age, teaching experience, level of education, and field of specialisation. Section B contained 22 items related to teachers' level of self-resilience when facing challenges in the workplace based on five indicators, namely self-reliance, meaningfulness (purpose), equanimity, perseverance, and existential aloneness which were adopted and translated into the Malay language from the Resilience Scale instrument (Wagnild & Young, 1990).

Meanwhile, Section C aimed to identify the level of teachers' self-belief in their mental strength when facing huge challenges. This section consisted of 10 items which were adapted from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), where the items were selected based on their suitability to the study's objectives. All the items that had been adapted were translated into the Malay language. The last section, which is Section D, comprised 20 items adapted from the Coping Orientation to Problems Experience Inventory (Brief-COPE) which was introduced by Carver et al. (1997). Similarly, all the adopted items were translated into the Malay language. Section D of the questionnaire aimed to examine teachers' choice of coping strategies in dealing with challenges at work based on 2 indicators, namely problem-focused strategies and emotion-focused strategies.

All the sections in the questionnaire except the demographic section used the five-point Likert scale, ranging from the score of 1 (strongly disagree) to the score of 5 (strongly agree). Before the questionnaire was administered, a pilot study was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 software.

**Method of Data Analysis**
The demographic data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 software. Since the level of measurement for the demographic data was at the nominal level, the results were analysed descriptively. The descriptive statistics included the calculation of mean, frequency, standard deviation, and percentage which were used to obtain information about the respondents' background such as gender, age, level of education, and other related information.

Inferential analysis performed comprised Pearson correlation, r. In this study, Pearson correlation, r was used to identify the relationship between the variables, namely the

relationship between self-resilience and self-belief in relation to teachers' choice of coping strategies when faced with challenges at work. The significance level for Pearson correlation measurement was set at $p < 0.05$. The value of r (in the range of -1 to +1) describes the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables, where r = - 1 signifies that there is a strong negative relationship between the two variables, and if r = + 1, it indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. If r = 0, it signifies that there is no relationship between the variables (Chua, 2011).

Pearson correlation analysis was also used as an inferential analysis to examine the relationship between the variables of self-resilience and self-belief and teachers' choice of coping strategies when faced with challenges in the workplace. The strength of the relationship between the variables was interpreted based on the value of the coefficient, r.

**Research Findings**
This study was conducted to identify the extent to which the level of self-resilience and self-belief influences primary schoolteachers' choice of coping strategies. The researcher intended for the findings of this study to be used as a reference for the relevant parties in refining the issue of teacher stress and improving the mental wellbeing of teachers. The discussion of the findings of this study was presented based on the arrangement of the research questions by using descriptive and inferential analysis. All the data obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 software.

**Respondents' Demographics**
In this study, the respondents' demographics were evaluated based on gender, age distribution, teaching experience, level of education, and field of specialisation to present the analysis of their profile. Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic distribution and profile based on the demographic information collected. The total number of respondents involved in this study was 279.

Table 1
*Respondents' Demographic Distribution*

| Demography | Sub-profile | Number | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 81 | 29.0 |
| | Female | 198 | 71.0 |
| | | | |
| Age | 21- 30 years old | 69 | 24.7 |
| | 31- 40 years old | 33 | 11.8 |
| | 41- 50 years old | 87 | 31.2 |
| | 51- 60 years old | 90 | 32.3 |
| | | | |
| Years of teaching experience | Less than 5 years | 18 | 6.5 |
| | 6-10 years | 69 | 24.7 |
| | 11- 15 years | 15 | 5.4 |
| | 16- 20 years | 33 | 11.8 |
| | More than 20 years | 144 | 51.6 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Level of education | Certificate/ STPM/ STAM/ Diploma | 30 | 10.8 |
| | Bachelor's degree | 228 | 81.7 |
| | Master/PhD | 21 | 7.5 |
| | | | |
| Field of specialisation | Arabic Language | 9 | 3.2 |
| | English Language | 60 | 21.5 |
| | Malay Language | 36 | 12.9 |
| | Malay Language, Mathematics | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Malay Language, Visual Arts Education | 6 | 2.2 |
| | Malay Language, Design and Technology | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Malay Language, Science | 9 | 3.2 |
| | Malay Language, Science, Visual Arts Education | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Others | 36 | 12.9 |
| | Mathematics | 30 | 10.8 |
| | Mathematics, Islamic Education, design and Technology | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Mathematics, Science | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Mathematics, Science, Music Education | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Islamic Education | 45 | 16.1 |
| | Islamic Education, Arabic Language | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Physical and Health Education, Others | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Physical and Health Education, Islamic Education | 3 | 1.1 |
| | Visual Arts Education | 6 | 2.2 |
| | Design and Technology | 9 | 3.2 |
| | Science | 6 | 2.2 |

As presented in Table 1, the breakdown based on gender showed that most of the respondents were female teachers at 198 respondents (71%) compared to male teachers at 81 respondents (29%). The result indicates that the population of female teachers in this country is exceptionally high compared to male teachers and this suggests that the teaching profession is an unpopular profession among men. This is likely due to the perception about this field where many associate teachings as a profession that requires high commitment and is usually a woman's job.

The breakdown of distribution based on age showed that the highest percentage of respondents belonged to the age range of between 51 to 60 years old at 90 respondents (32.3%), followed by the age range of between 41 to 50 years old at 87 respondents (31.2%), the age range between 20 to 30 years old at 69 respondents (24.7%), and the age range

between 31 to 40 years old at 33 respondents (11.8%). Meanwhile, the distribution based on teaching experience showed that the majority of the respondents were teachers who have teaching experience of more than 20 years at 144 respondents (51.6%), followed by teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience at 69 respondents (24.7%), teachers with 16 to 20 years of teaching experience at 33 respondents (11.8%), teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience at 18 respondents (6.5%), and teachers with 11-15 years of teaching experience at 15 respondents (5.4%). Based on these findings, the majority of the teachers teaching in the district of Setiu are long-serving and experienced teachers, where on average, the teachers serving in the district are also older teachers of the age between 40 to 60 years old. The distribution of age and years of teaching experience among the teachers in the Setiu district indicated a balanced group, comprising both the novice and experienced teachers. Overall, the respondents of this study covered the entire age range and years of teacher service.

The breakdown based on level of education showed that many of the respondents were from among teachers who have a bachelor's degree at 228 respondents (81.7%), followed by Certificate/ STPM/STAM/Diploma level teachers at 30 respondents (10.8%), and teachers of the master's degree level at 21 respondents (7.5%). Next, the distribution based on field of specialisation as shown in Table 1 showed that the highest number of respondents was from among the English language subject teachers at 60 respondents (21.5%). Meanwhile, the second highest number of respondents was from among the teachers who taught the subject of Islamic Education at 45 respondents (16.1%), followed by Malay language subject teachers at 36 respondents (12.9%). Next were the teachers for the subject of Mathematics with a total of 30 respondents (10.8%), followed by elective subjects such as Visual Arts Education, Design and Technology, Physical and Health Education and others with 3 teachers (1.1%) for each of the elective subjects. The difference in the categories of field of specialisation plays a significant role in teachers' choice of coping strategies as the differences in the syllabus and the number of teaching hours will place different pressures and challenges on teachers in the workplace.

**Teachers' Level of Self-resilience**
The subsequent analysis examined the teachers' level of self-resilience. Table 2 shows that the highest score for teachers' self-resilience was for the dimension of existential aloneness (mean=4.23), followed by meaningfulness (mean=4.22), self-reliance (mean=4.10), perseverance (mean=4.03), and equanimity (mean=3.83). Overall, the data showed that the score for level of self-resilience among teachers in the district of Setiu, Terengganu was at a high level (mean=4.08).

TABLE 2
*Teachers' Level of Self-resilience*

| Dimension | Mean | Standard Deviation | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Perseverance | 4.10 | .471 | High |
| Meaningfulness | 4.22 | .374 | High |
| Equanimity | 3.83 | .459 | Moderately High |
| Self-reliance | 4.03 | .538 | High |
| Existential Aloneness | 4.23 | .490 | High |
| Overall | 4.08 | .379 | High |

**Teachers' Level of Self-belief**
Table 3 shows the mean scores for the dimensions of teachers' self-belief. Based on the results presented, it can be observed that the overall mean score of teachers' level of self-belief was at a moderately high level (mean=3.45). The positive dimension obtained a high mean score (mean=4.27). In contrast, the negative dimension was scored at a moderately low level (mean=2.63).

TABLE 3
*Teachers' Level of Self-belief*

| Dimension | Mean | Standard Deviation | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 4.27 | .50 | High |
| Negative | 2.63 | .84 | Moderately Low |
| Overall | 3.45 | 0.39 | Moderately High |

**Teachers' Coping Strategies**
Table 4 shows the mean scores for the dimensions of teachers' coping strategies, namely the dimensions of problem-focused strategies (mean=4.30) and emotion-focused strategies (mean=3.69). Thus, it can be summarised that problem-focused strategies were the strategies of choice for the teachers in Setiu district. However, overall, the use of coping strategies among the primary schoolteachers in Setiu district was still at a moderately high level.

TABLE 4
*Teachers' Coping Strategies*

| Dimension | Mean | Standard Deviation | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Problem | 4.30 | .43 | High |
| Emotion | 3.69 | .44 | Moderately High |

Correlation analysis was performed to achieve the first research objective and answer the first research question on the relationship between teachers' self-resilience and choice of coping strategies among the primary schoolteachers in Setiu district. The null hypothesis for the testing of this inferential analysis was constructed as follows

Ho1: There is no significant positive relationship between level of self-resilience and teachers' choice of coping strategies.

Table 5 shows the results of the hypothesis testing to identify the relationship between the variables of level of self-resilience and teachers' choice of coping strategies. Results of the Pearson correlation analysis showed that the dimension of emotion-focused strategies had a weak negative relationship that was significant ($r = -0.005$, $p > 0.5$), while the dimension of problem-focused strategies showed a strong significant relationship ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.5$). Overall, self-resilience had a moderate positive relationship with teachers' choice of coping strategies ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.5$), and the relationship shown was found to be significant. Thus, the null hypothesis failed to be accepted.

TABLE 5
*Relationship between Self-resilience and Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies*

|  | Self-resilience | |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | r | Sig. p |
| Problem-focused | 0.78* | 0.197 |
| Emotion-focused | -0.005* | 0.930 |
| **Coping Strategies Overall** | **0.44*** | **0.473** |

**p<0.5 (0.10-0.29 = weak, 0.30-0.49 = moderate, 0.50-1.00 = strong)

**Relationship Between Teachers' Self-belief and Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies**
To achieve the second research objective and answer the second research question on identifying the relationship between self-belief and the choice of coping strategies among the primary schoolteachers, a correlation analysis was performed. The following is the null hypothesis for testing this inferential analysis

Ho2: There is no significant positive relationship between level of self-belief and teachers' choice of coping strategies.

Table 6 displays the results of the hypothesis testing to identify the relationship between the variables of level of self-belief and teachers' choice of coping strategies. Results of the Pearson correlation analysis showed that the emotion-focused dimension had a moderate significant relationship ($r = 0.370$, $p < 0.01$) while the problem-focused dimension showed a weak significant relationship ($r = 0.136$, $p < 0.5$) with teachers' choice of coping strategies. Overall, self-belief had a moderate positive relationship with teachers' coping strategies ($r = 0.310$, $p < 0.01$), and the relationship was significant. Thus, the null hypothesis failed to be accepted.

TABLE 6
*Relationship between Self-belief and Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies*

|  | Self-belief | |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | r | Sig. p |
| Problem-focused | 0.136* | 0.023 |
| Emotion-focused | .370** | 0.000 |
| **Overall for Coping Strategies** | **0.310**** | **0.000** |

**p<0.01 (0.10-0.29 = weak, 0.30-0.49 = moderate, 0.50-1.00 = strong )
*p<0.5 (0.10-0.29 = weak, 0.30-0.49 = moderate, 0.50-1.00 = strong )

**Predictor Factors of Self-resilience and Self-belief in Predicting Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies**

Regression analysis was performed to answer the research question on identifying the extent to which the level of self-resilience and self-belief influence the choice of coping strategies of the primary schoolteachers. The hypothesis was constructed as follows:

Ho3: Teachers' level of self-resilience and level of self-belief do not influence teachers' choice of coping strategies.

To test the stated hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis was conducted, and the results of the analysis were tabulated, as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7
*Results of Multiple Regression Model Summary*

| Model | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .334[a] | .112 | .105 |

a. Predictor: (constant), self-belief, self-resilience

Based on the model summary results shown in Table 7, the $R^2$ for the entire model was 11.12% with an adjusted $R^2$ value of 10.5%, where the effect size was identified to be small.

TABLE 8
*ANOVA Table*

| Model | | Sum of square | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 3.974 | 2 | 1.987 | 16.998 | 0.000[b] |
| | *Residual* | 31.560 | 270 | .117 | | |
| | Total | 35.533 | 272 | | | |

a. Dependent variables: Coping Strategies
b. Predictor: (Constant), Self-resilience, Self-belief

Based on the ANOVA table (Table 8), the model was, on the whole, significant in predicting the choice of coping strategies, where F(2, 270) = 16.998, p< 0.000.

TABLE 9
*Coefficient Table*

| Model | | Unstandardised Coefficient | | Standardised Coefficient | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | S.E. | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.452 | .326 | | 7.516 | .000 |
| | Self-resilience | .109 | .056 | .114 | 1.947 | .053 |
| | Self-belief | .315 | .055 | .339 | 5.781 | .000 |

a. Dependent variable: Teacher's coping strategies

The results showed that 10.5% of the variance in teachers' choice of coping strategies was contributed by the two predictors collectively, F(2, 270) = 16.998, p<0.001. Looking at the contribution of the predictors individually, the results showed that level of self-belief

($\beta$=0.339, $t$= 5.781, $p$=0.000) positively predicted teachers' choice of coping strategies. Meanwhile, level of self-resilience ($\beta$=0.114, $t$= 1.947, $p$=0.053) predicted choice of coping strategies insignificantly. Therefore, the equation for the prediction of this multiple regression analysis was

Choice of coping strategies = 2.452 + 0.315 (self-belief) + error
Based on the regression analysis equation, the positive coefficient slope for self-belief was 0.315 which is a predictor of teachers' choice of coping strategies. It is estimated that the score of teachers' choice of coping strategies increases by 0.315 for every one point of increase in the self-belief score. In other words, teachers' choice of coping strategies will increase when teachers' self-belief increases. Hence, teachers who have high levels of self-belief are more comfortable handling their problems by using coping strategies.

**Research Discussion**
The findings of this study identified that the variable of self-belief has a significant positive relationship with teachers' choice of coping strategies and can serve as a predictor to explain the increase in teachers' choice of coping strategies. In contrast, even though teachers' self-resilience was found to have a positive relationship with teachers' choice of coping strategies, it was not a significant predictive factor for teachers' choice of coping strategies.

**Level of Teachers' Self-resilience, Teachers' Self-belief and Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies**
*Research Question 1: What is the level of self-resilience of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district?*
Based on the results of this study, the level of self-resilience of primary schoolteachers in the Setiu district was found to be at a high level. This provided evidence that the teachers are always ready to respond to all challenges or unexpected matters when at school. When teachers have strong self-resilience, they are more likely to be positive in their work, which can simultaneously enhance their work ability (Tahara et al., 2021).
*Research Question 2: What is the level of self-belief of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district?*
One of the objectives of this study was to examine the teachers' level of self-belief towards their mental strength when faced with demanding challenges. Therefore, the subsequent analysis examined teachers' level of self-belief. Data analysis showed that teachers' level of self-belief was at a moderately high level. The self-belief construct was divided into two dimensions which are the positive and negative dimensions. Findings of the study showed that the teachers in Setiu district have a positive attitude of high self-belief compared to negative attitude. A high self-belief will be able to develop teachers' confidence in being proactive in dealing with challenges at work. This is supported by Hambly (1992) who associates self-belief with confidence in one's own abilities to capably deal with all problems or situations effectively. High self-belief will help teachers to feel more confident of themselves and this will enable teachers to act calmly and rationally in facing any challenge in the workplace. Accordingly, these teachers will not be easily flustered and stressed when they are given new tasks or face stressful situations at school such as the sudden presence of superiors at school.
*Research Question 3: What are the types of coping strategies of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district?*

Overall, the results of the study showed that problem-focused coping strategies were the preferred strategies of teachers in Setiu district where the mean score was of a high level compared to emotion-focused coping strategies. However, the use of coping strategies among primary schoolteachers in Setiu district on the whole was found to be at a moderately high level. This proves that there is a lack of exposure to coping strategies among teachers. Hence, the researcher hopes that this coping mechanism can be expanded and shared among teachers in Malaysia in the future. Moreover, the selection of appropriate coping strategies will be able to help teachers protect themselves and safeguard their psychological wellbeing from external and internal pressures (Sitton, 2021; Tahara et al., 2021).

**Relationship between Teachers' Self-resilience and Teachers' Self-belief with Teachers' Choice of Coping Strategies**
*Research Question 4: What is the relationship between teachers' self-resilience and teachers' self-belief with the choice of coping strategies of primary schoolteachers in Setiu district?*
To answer the question above, an inferential analysis using the Pearson correlation method was performed. Accordingly, a null hypothesis was constructed to test the initial assumption in terms of whether the research hypothesis is accepted or rejected. The following is the first null hypothesis proposed

Ho1: There is no significant positive relationship between level of self-resilience and teachers' choice of coping strategies.

The results showed that the construct of level of self-resilience, overall, had a positive moderate relationship with the construct of teachers' choice of coping strategies. Thus, the null hypothesis failed to be accepted. This result is consistent with Wagnild and Young's (1993) view that self-resilience is an individual's ability to adapt themselves to face current challenges. The changes that often occur in our education system sometimes pose challenges for teachers to adapt and overcome these changes. The impact is that these challenges have exerted mental pressure on teachers such that the performance of the teachers would be affected and would deteriorate, causing many teachers who are unable to adapt themselves to these changes to choose to retire earlier. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to measure their level of resilience so that they would be able to cope with the pressures at work more efficiently. In this regard, there is a need for further research to evaluate the relationship of teachers' level of self-resilience in relation to students' cultural and socioeconomic factors in Malaysia.

Ho2: There is no significant positive relationship between level of self-belief and teachers' choice of coping strategies.

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis showed that the emotion-focused dimension had a moderate significant relationship while the problem-focused dimension had a weak significant relationship. Overall, self-belief had a positive moderate relationship with teachers' coping strategies, and the relationship was found to be significant. Thus, the null hypothesis failed to be accepted.
The findings of this study are consistent with the ones by Lindqvist et al. (2019) who described four types of coping mechanisms often used by teachers in overcoming the negative effects caused by emotional disturbances at work. The four mechanisms are

diverting thoughts, acting according to appropriateness, expressing one's emotions, and seeking support from others around them (Lindqvist et al., 2019) (In light of this, there is a need to conduct further research to evaluate the relationship between these dimensions of self-belief (positive and negative) with challenges in the workplace among teachers in Malaysia.

Ho3: Teachers' level of self-resilience and level of self-belief do not influence teachers' choice of coping strategies.

Based on the correlation analysis performed, it was demonstrated that both the variables of teachers' level of self-belief and level of self-resilience had a significant relationship with the variable of teachers' choice of coping strategies. Therefore, based on this result, the study then proceeded to identify the ability of both variables in predicting choice of coping strategies among the teachers. To answer the above question, a multiple regression analysis was performed.

The results of the multiple regression analysis showed that level of self-belief positively predicted teachers' choice of coping strategies. However, level of self-resilience predicted choice of coping strategies insignificantly. In other words, teachers' choice of coping strategies will increase when teachers' self-belief increases. Consequently, teachers who have high levels of self-belief are more comfortable at handling their problems by using coping strategies.

**Conclusion**
The rapid development of technology has had a great impact on the education system worldwide, where the education system used needs to be able to be a platform that can maximise a student's potential in line with the national education philosophy which aims to produce human capital that is capable of competing at the global level. However, these frequent changes in the education system have also contributed to teachers' source of stress, increasing workload, and early retirement.

The limitation of this study concerns the scope of the study's sampling population. This study was only conducted among teachers in the district of Setiu, Terengganu. Additionally, this study was also conducted against the backdrop of primary schoolteachers. Thus, this study is limited to the primary schoolteachers serving in the district of Setiu, Terengganu.

In addition, this study fully used the survey method in its research design. Data were obtained from the results of the survey questionnaire which was used as the main data collection instrument. Furthermore, no feedback was collected from the respondents, and thus, the reliability of this study's findings was only based on the analysis of the study's results.

This study was conducted to help teachers alleviate the feeling of being burdened and stressed at work through exposure to appropriate coping strategies. The findings of this study will help teachers to see or explore ways of overcoming stress that are appropriate to their level of self-resilience and self-belief. This study was also conducted to provide general exposure for teachers on the importance of coping strategies as one of the steps in overcoming challenges at work. Furthermore, relevant parties such as District Education

Officers or State Department of Education will also be able to use the findings of this study as a reference in refining the issue of teacher stress and improving the mental wellbeing of teachers.

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