

Weathering the Storm: Resilience through Job Satisfaction among College Teachers after Pandemic in Thrissur District, Kerala

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Abstract

The post-pandemic realities of college teachers in Kerala, India, are explored in this study by examining the challenges they encountered, the coping mechanisms they employed, and the influence of these variables on their professional fulfillment. By integrating qualitative insights with quantitative data, the research reveals a relatively weak direct association between pandemic-induced challenges (e.g., remote teaching difficulties, workload stress) and job satisfaction. The introduction of coping strategies, including peer collaboration, institutional support, and personal resilience practices, as mediators reveals a notable positive effect on job satisfaction. The results emphasize the mediating role of adaptive coping mechanisms in mitigating the adverse effects of pandemic-related stressors and enhancing educators' professional well-being. This study highlights the resilience of Kerala's college teachers amid unprecedented disruptions and emphasizes the critical importance of fostering effective coping strategies to sustain job satisfaction in post-pandemic educational environments. The results advocate for targeted institutional interventions, including mental health support, training in stress management, and collaborative platforms, to bolster teacher resilience and well-being. These insights contribute to broader discourse on sustainable educational recovery and workforce adaptation in the wake of global crises.

Keywords: College Teacher, Resilience, Coping strategies, Job Satisfaction, Pandemic

Introduction

"Weathering the storm" is a metaphorical expression that signifies enduring and surviving a difficult or challenging situation, such as a crisis, adversity, or hardship, without being overwhelmed or destroyed. The COVID-19 pandemic, a global health emergency, has demanded immediate attention and collective action to curb the spread of the disease, protect vulnerable populations, and mitigate its far-reaching social, economic, and health impacts. Among the sectors profoundly affected by the pandemic, education stands out as one of the most disrupted, with Kerala, a state renowned for its high literacy rate and academic excellence, being no exception. The pandemic has severely impacted the functioning of colleges and universities in Kerala, compelling educators to navigate unprecedented challenges. College teachers, who play a pivotal role in creating lesson plans, delivering courses, assessing student learning, and providing mentorship, have faced immense difficulties in adapting to the new normal. The abrupt transition to online teaching, coupled with inadequate digital infrastructure and limited technical expertise, has posed significant hurdles. Additionally, the emotional burden of addressing student's anxieties, managing increased workloads, and maintaining a work-life balance has taken a considerable

toll on teacher's mental health and well-being. This research aims to investigate the multifaceted challenges faced by college teachers in Kerala during the pandemic and identify potential solutions to support their resilience, well-being, and professional development. By exploring their experiences, this study seeks to inform the creation of tailored interventions designed to strengthen teacher's ability to succeed in post-pandemic academic environments.

Kerala's Higher Education Sector is characterized by a tripartite structure comprising aided, government, and private colleges, each with distinct operational dynamics. Aided colleges, which receive partial government funding, constitute the largest share of institutions, while government colleges, fully funded and administered by the state, prioritize accessibility and equity. Private colleges, managed autonomously by private entities, often struggle with infrastructural and resource-related constraints despite their operational flexibility. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing disparities and introduced unprecedented challenges across these institutions, particularly for college teachers tasked with sustaining academic continuity.

Educators faced multifaceted difficulties, including abrupt transitions to online pedagogy, heightened workloads, and the complexities of maintaining student engagement in virtual environments. In response, teachers adopted diverse strategies—such as harnessing digital platforms, developing multimedia content, and utilizing social media for interactive learning—to adapt to the crisis. Institutional interventions, including technical training and infrastructural support, further facilitated this transition. However, teachers' experiences of job satisfaction varied significantly: while some reported heightened stress and diminished morale due to blurred work-life boundaries and technological inadequacies, others valued the newfound autonomy and pedagogical innovation enabled by remote teaching.

This study examines the interplay of challenges, adaptive strategies, and job satisfaction among college teachers in Kerala's aided, government, and private institutions during the pandemic. By comparing these experiences, the research seeks to illuminate institutional disparities, resilience practices, and policy implications for fostering educator well-being and equitable resource allocation in post-pandemic higher education systems.

Kerala's Higher Education System, comprising 178 government colleges, 101 aided colleges, and 119 private colleges, serves over 250,000 students, reflecting a diverse and expansive academic landscape [1]. The COVID-19 pandemic thrust educators into a critical role as guardians of academic continuity, demanding rapid adaptation to unprecedented disruptions. College teachers across Kerala swiftly transitioned to online teaching, harnessing digital platforms and innovative pedagogical tools to engage students. However, this shift was fraught with systemic challenges: inadequate digital infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity, and an overwhelming surge in workload compounded the stress of navigating uncharted pedagogical terrain. Teachers also grappled with the emotional weight of addressing students' anxieties, often while balancing their own personal and professional uncertainties. To mitigate these pressures, educators adopted multifaceted coping strategies, including peer collaboration, institutional support networks, and participation in skill-building workshops. Many leveraged social media to maintain student engagement, share resources, and provide real-time feedback, fostering a semblance of classroom interaction in virtual spaces. While these efforts yielded positive outcomes—evidenced by student satisfaction with online learning—the crisis starkly exposed

entrenched inequities, disproportionately affecting students from marginalized communities who lacked access to digital resources.

This study explores the dual narrative of resilience and disparity emerging from Kerala's pandemic-era education sector, underscoring educators' adaptability in sustaining learning continuity while advocating for systemic reforms. By examining teachers' challenges, coping mechanisms, and institutional dynamics, this research highlights the urgent need for targeted investments in digital infrastructure, equitable resource distribution, and holistic teacher support programs to fortify Kerala's Education System against future crises.

Most studies on teacher resilience during the pandemic use surveys and statistics, neglecting qualitative insights into teachers' lived experiences in Kerala's socio-cultural context. While earlier work focused on surviving the crisis, little attention is given to how teachers are recovering now, especially with Kerala's move to a mix of online and in-person classes. Resilience is often seen as just "staying strong," not linked to long-term job happiness. There's also little proof of how coping methods (like institutional support vs. personal habits) help teachers stay satisfied despite unequal resources. Few studies explore how these strategies connect problems to job happiness across Kerala's different college types (aided, government, private), leaving gaps in practical solutions.

Resilience

Resilience, a multifaceted construct, is conceptualized diversely within academic discourse. Masten characterizes it as the capacity of dynamic systems to adapt successfully to disruptive threats, ensuring viability and functional continuity (Southwick et al., 2014). Bonanno complements this by framing resilience as the maintenance of healthy functioning despite severe adversity, emphasizing psychological stability post-trauma. Yehuda extends the definition to encompass growth, positing resilience as an integrative process where individuals advance insightfully by internalizing lessons from adverse experiences. Panter-Brick further anchors resilience in pragmatism, defining it as the strategic mobilization of resources to sustain well-being during crises. Together, these scholars, as synthesized by Southwick et al. (2014), present resilience as an adaptive, evolving interplay of stability, growth, and resourcefulness in navigating challenges[2].

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers exemplified extraordinary resilience, defined as "the ability to bounce back from adversity, trauma, tragedy, or significant stress" (Henderson & Mapp, 2002)[3]. Faced with sudden school closures, educators rapidly adapted to digital platforms, transforming traditional classrooms into virtual spaces to ensure instructional continuity (Kirkgoz, 2020)[4]. Beyond technical adaptation, they displayed emotional resilience by prioritizing students' well-being while managing their own stress and anxiety amid uncertainty (Greenberg et al., 2020)[5]. Their flexibility was further evident in overcoming technical challenges and reimagining pedagogical strategies with limited training (Rapanta et al., 2020)[6]. Research by Wang et al. (2020)[7] highlighted that resilience was closely tied to self-efficacy, as teachers confident in their online teaching capabilities reported greater perseverance. Collectively, these efforts underscored educators' unwavering dedication, adaptability, and commitment to sustaining student learning despite unprecedented disruptions, solidifying their role as pillars of resilience during a global crisis.

Resilience has been consistently linked to enhanced job satisfaction, particularly in high-stress professions, as it enables individuals to navigate adversity, adapt to dynamic environments, and recover from setbacks (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004)[8]. Resilient individuals are better equipped to cope with work-related challenges, adapt to changing environments, and bounce back from setbacks (Wagnild & Young, 1993)[9]. Rooted in the capacity to manage stressors effectively, resilient individuals often experience heightened positive emotions such as joy and contentment, which bolster workplace well-being (Fredrickson, 2001)[10]. Studies consistently show that resilience and job satisfaction are strongly positively correlated, with resilient individuals reporting greater fulfillment and reduced susceptibility to burnout (Block & Kremen, 1996)[11]. Moreover, resilience serves as a protective buffer, mitigating the detrimental effects of job stress on satisfaction and overall mental health (Kashdan & Ciarrochi, 2013)[12]. In teaching, resilience proves indispensable for sustaining job satisfaction amid challenges like demanding workloads, student behavioral issues, and resource constraints (Johnson et al., 2014)[13]. Resilient educators demonstrate heightened emotional regulation, forge stronger interpersonal connections, and maintain optimism, fostering a more gratifying professional experience. Collectively, these findings highlight resilience as both a psychological resource and a critical determinant of enduring job satisfaction across diverse occupational landscapes.

Purpose of Study

This research seeks to address a critical knowledge gap by shedding light on the challenges arising from the pandemic experienced by college teachers, a group that has received less attention in resilience research compared to students or healthcare professionals. By focusing on their unique experiences, this investigation aims to uncover the distinct stressors encountered during the COVID-19 crisis, such as abrupt transitions to remote teaching, fluctuating institutional demands, and balancing personal and work-related commitments.

The study further seeks to identify the adaptive strategies these teachers employed to sustain well-being and job satisfaction under unprecedented conditions. By contrasting these findings with pre-pandemic studies on teacher resilience, the research will delineate how the crisis uniquely amplified or reshaped existing stressors, offering insights into the pandemic's long-term impact on academic professionals. Ultimately, this analysis intends to inform evidence-based interventions and institutional support systems tailored to bolster college teachers' resilience, enhance job satisfaction, and mitigate adverse effects of future crises on higher education ecosystems.

The study is to establish a theoretical model that examines the interplay between pandemic-induced challenges faced by college teachers such as increased workload, work-life imbalance, classroom management difficulties, and heightened emotional demands and their coping strategies, to investigate how these dynamics influence job satisfaction, emotional well-being, and teacher efficacy. The framework proposes that these challenges directly diminish satisfaction, but the application of coping strategies, such as emotional regulation, social support, and problem-focused approaches, can mitigate these negative effects. Conversely, ineffective strategies like avoidance coping may exacerbate stress and dissatisfaction. Additionally, contextual factors, including institutional support, access to training, technological infrastructure, and community dynamics, are posited to shape the efficacy of coping mechanisms and their outcomes. By analyzing these relationships, the study seeks to uncover actionable insights for designing targeted interventions that enhance resilience, optimize coping strategies,

and bolster teachers' professional satisfaction amid crises. This framework not only illuminates the unique pressures experienced by teachers amid the pandemic but also provides a roadmap for fostering sustainable support systems to safeguard teacher well-being and educational quality in future disruptions.

Objectives

This study is driven by three main research goals. First, it aims to identify the challenges teachers encountered during the pandemic such as workload, work-life imbalance, and emotional stress and analyze how these issues shaped the coping strategies they adopted. Second, it seeks to assess how these strategies, whether adaptive or maladaptive, influenced their professional fulfillment and general quality of life. Third, it explores the direct and indirect links between pandemic-related challenges and job satisfaction, while identifying mediating factors like coping mechanisms, institutional support, or resource accessibility that may alter this relationship. The findings will inform targeted interventions to enhance teacher resilience and job satisfaction in crises.

Hypothesis

H1: Teachers encountering more pandemic-related problems will utilize more adaptive coping strategies.

H2: Teachers employing effective coping strategies will exhibit higher job satisfaction levels.

H3: Coping strategies will mediate the relationship between pandemic-related problems and job satisfaction, with effective strategies mitigating the negative impact of problems, leading to higher job satisfaction despite challenges.

METHODOLOGY

Population

The study population comprised college teachers from Arts & Science institutions in Thrissur district, Kerala, India. This included 5 government colleges (190 teachers), 16 aided colleges (1,482 teachers), and 32 private colleges (975 teachers), totaling 2,647 teachers across 53 colleges. The sample was drawn from this heterogeneous population to ensure representation of diverse institutional contexts (government, aided, and private) and teaching experiences.

Sample

A sample of 250 college teachers from Thrissur district, Kerala, was selected via convenience sampling, comprising 148 teachers (59%) from government/aided colleges and 102 (41%) from private institutions, reflecting the district's institutional diversity (5 government, 16 aided, 32 private). Thrissur was chosen for its dense concentration of varied colleges, enabling efficient data collection and representative insights. Data was collected through an online survey using Google Forms from October to December 2024. Participants completed an adapted questionnaire using a 5-point Likert Scale, with gradations ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) to assess pandemic-related problems (independent variable), coping strategies (mediator), and job satisfaction (dependent variable). The suitability of the data for factor analysis was confirmed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and relationships were analyzed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Questionnaire

The researcher developed a customized questionnaire by adapting established instruments to assess teachers' pandemic-related challenges, coping strategies, and job satisfaction. The study drew upon established measures of job satisfaction, including the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967) [14], which assesses both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of job satisfaction, and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 1997)[15], evaluating facets like supervision and pay. Teacher-specific insights were drawn from the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) (Lester, 1982)[16], focusing on teaching experiences and administrative dynamics. Additionally, the study utilized the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), a widely recognized measure of burnout developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) was utilized to evaluate the connections between burnout and satisfaction. These validated tools were synthesized to create a comprehensive survey, incorporating Likert-Scale items to capture pandemic-specific stressors, adaptive coping mechanisms, and satisfaction outcomes, ensuring robust measurement of teacher well-being and resilience during crises.

Scale Modification and Assessment

The scale was modified through a systematic review of established questionnaires (e.g., MSQ, JSS, TJSQ, MBI), incorporating feedback from prior users to refine item wording and eliminate irrelevant content. Items were rephrased for clarity and contextual relevance to pandemic-related challenges, resulting in a finalized tool with three subscales. The questionnaire included sections on common challenges (6 items), coping mechanisms (6 items), and job satisfaction (5 items). The survey utilized a 5-point Likert Scale to quantify respondent's answers, with response options anchored by Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (5), allowing participants to express varying degrees of agreement with each statement. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to establish construct validity, which validated the three-factor structure, while reliability tests (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) demonstrated high internal consistency. Concurrent validity was established by aligning results with theoretical frameworks, ensuring the tool's robustness for assessing teachers' pandemic experiences.

Data Analysis

This study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 21.0.0 to investigate the causal relationships between pandemic-related problems, coping strategies, and job satisfaction among college teachers (Richtayer et al., 2016) [18]. The model fit was evaluated using multiple indices, including the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the Chi-Square to Degrees of Freedom ratio (CMIN/DF), to ensure a strong alignment between the hypothesized model and observed data. These metrics are widely accepted and have been used in prior studies to validate model fit (Dash et al., 2024 [19]; Sashittal & Jassawalla, 2019 [20]; Dash & Paul, 2021; Hooper et al., 2008 [21, 22]; MaCallum & Austin, 2000 [23]; Bairrada et al., 2018 [24]).

Hypotheses posited that coping strategies mediate the impact of problems on job satisfaction. A correlation matrix mapped initial associations between variables, while beta weights derived from SEM identified coping strategies as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. F-tests assessed overall model significance, and t-tests evaluated path coefficients, confirming coping strategies mediating role in

mitigating the negative effects of problems on satisfaction. To validate the measurement model, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted, providing evidence for the model factorial structure. Subsequent Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between adaptive coping strategies and job satisfaction, suggesting that the use of effective coping mechanisms can contribute to enhanced job satisfaction, even in the face of pandemic-related challenges. This approach provided robust empirical evidence to support targeted interventions for improving teacher resilience and well-being during crises.

Results

The sample of 250 teachers comprised 43% women and 57% men, with the largest age cohort being 31–40 years (44%), followed by those over 40 (31%) and 25–30 years (25%). A majority (63%) reported being married, while 37% were unmarried. Salary distribution revealed that over half (51.0%) earned between ₹50,000–1 lakh, 23.3% earned ₹20,000–50,000, 11.7% earned below ₹20,000 and 14.0% earned above ₹1 lakh. Institutionally, 59% represented government/aided colleges, and 41% were from private colleges. This demographic profile highlights the sample's diversity in age, gender, marital status, income, and institutional affiliation, ensuring a representative cross-section of college teachers in Thrissur district during the pandemic.

Reliability and Validity

The measurement scale demonstrated robust psychometric properties, with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.893, indicating high internal consistency across its 17 items. The scale structural validity was further supported by a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.897, exceeding the recommended threshold, and a statistically significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($\chi^2 = 2054.340$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the data's suitability for factor analysis. Notably, the scale accounted for 62.519% of the total variance, underscoring its effectiveness in capturing the latent constructs of problems, coping strategies, and job satisfaction. Overall, these findings corroborate the scale reliability, structural integrity, and utility in examining teacher experiences during the pandemic.

The questionnaire validity and reliability were rigorously assessed, yielding robust factor loadings that consistently exceeded 0.7. Face validity was confirmed through expert review by field specialists. Convergent validity was established, as evidenced by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpassing 0.5 and Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.7, thereby demonstrating strong internal consistency (Gohary et al., 2016)[25]. Furthermore, discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion[26], where the square root of each construct AVE exceeded its correlations with other constructs (Table 1). These findings collectively attest to the reliability and distinctiveness of the constructs, ultimately lending credibility to the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis.

Table 1

	CR	AVE	Common Problems	Coping Strategies	Job Satisfaction
Common Problems	0.8785	0.5468	0.7395		
Coping Strategies	0.8819	0.5546	0.313	0.7447	
Job Satisfaction	0.8419	0.5158	0.235	0.641	0.7182

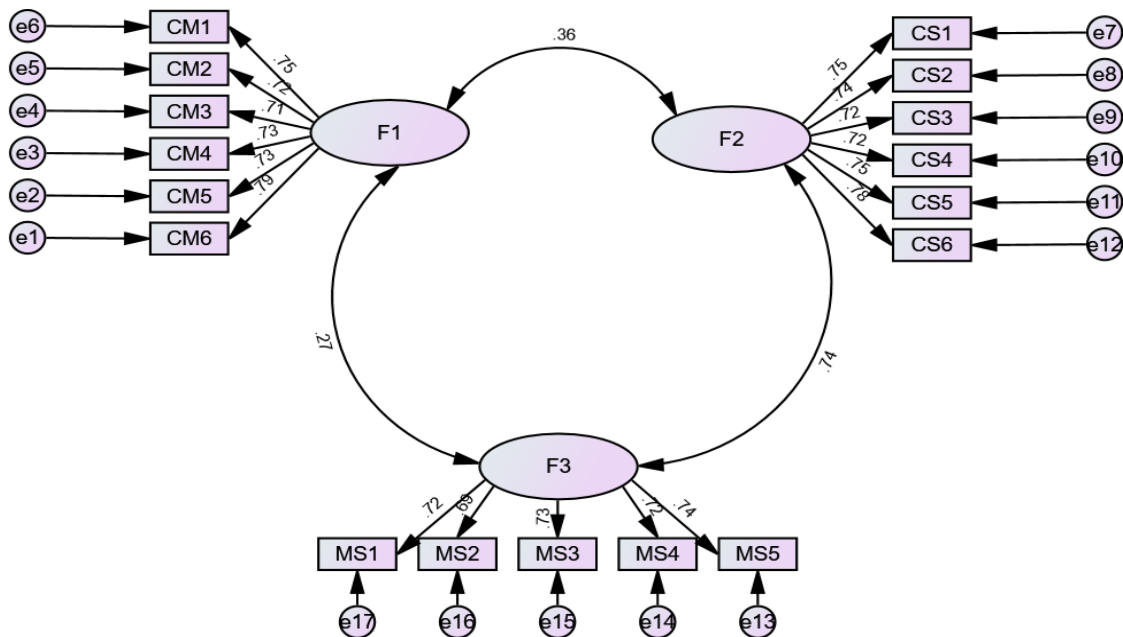
The findings of the study revealed a substantial positive association between common factors and coping strategies ($r = 0.313, p < 0.01$), highlighting a meaningful relationship between these variables. Moreover, a robust positive association was identified between coping strategies and job satisfaction ($r = 0.641, p < 0.01$), indicating that effective coping mechanisms are closely tied to increased job satisfaction. A notable relationship was also observed between common problems and job satisfaction ($r = 0.235, p < 0.01$). An examination of the questionnaire construct validity was conducted via factor analysis, with the results summarized in Table 2. To evaluate reliability, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated, and all values surpassed the conventional 0.7 threshold, thereby confirming the questionnaire internal consistency.

Table 2

Constructs	Item code	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha
COMMON PROBLEMS (F1)	CM1	Managing my workload during the pandemic was overwhelming.	0.748	0.878
	CM2	I found it challenging to manage online classrooms and maintain student engagement.	0.716	
	CM3	Managing parental expectations and communicating with parents during the pandemic was challenging.	0.714	
	CM4	Insufficient technical support hindered my ability to teach online.	0.735	
	CM5	I lacked the necessary training and resources to support students with special needs online.	0.728	
	CM6	I found it difficult to manage work and personal life effectively during the pandemic.	0.793	
COPING	CS1	I prioritized self-care activities, such as meditation or yoga, to manage stress during the pandemic.	0.752	
	CS2	I learned to say "no" to non-essential tasks and commitments.	0.738	

STRATEGIES (F2)	CS3	Spending quality time with my family helped me reduce stress and improve my mood.	0.725	0.881
	CS4	Seeking support from others helped me feel less isolated and more resilient.	0.721	
	CS5	Sharing resources with colleagues helped me feel more connected and supported.	0.754	
	CS6	I acknowledged and celebrated my own successes and accomplishments during the pandemic.	0.777	
JOB SATISFACTION (F3)	MS1	I adapted to new Teaching methods	0.723	0.841
	MS2	I am able to foster a growth mindset	0.685	
	MS3	I feel more empathetic & understandable person	0.727	
	MS4	I realised Technology can enhance network skills	0.718	
	MS5	I am able to create inclusive Learning environment	0.737	

Model



The structural equation model demonstrated an excellent fit to the empirical data, as evidenced by the favorable fit indices presented in Table 3. Specifically, the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (CMIN/DF = 1.455) indicated a highly parsimonious model, well below the recommended threshold. Moreover, the Comparative Fit Index (CFIN = 0.973) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI = 0.965) exceeded the 0.95 benchmark, confirming exceptional model fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.043) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR = 0.0387) values were both

below 0.05, suggesting minimal approximation error. Additional indices, including the Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 0.974), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = 0.932), and Parsimony Normigan Fit Index (PNFI = 0.742), further substantiated the model alignment with the observed data. Together, these findings confirm the model’s robustness in elucidating the relationships between pandemic-related challenges, coping strategies, and job satisfaction among teachers, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3

	Threshold	Value	Decision
CMIN/DF	<3 Great, <5 Acceptable	1.455	Great
CFI	>0.95 Great, >0.90 Acceptable	0.973	Great
SRMR	<0.05 Excellent <0.08 Adequate fit	0.0387	Excellent
NFI	>0.90 Good	0.920	Good
RMSEA	<0.05 Very Good <0.08 Acceptable >0.10 Poor	0.043	Very Good
TLI	>0.90 Acceptable	0.969	Acceptable
IFI	>0.90 Acceptable	0.974	Acceptable
GFI	>0.90 Acceptable	0.935	Acceptable
PNFI	>0.5, Acceptable	0.709	Acceptable

Relationship Structure of Variables

The regression analysis indicated a statistically significant, although weak, association between the predictor variable (CM) and the dependent variable (MS). The model showed a low correlation ($R = 0.235$), with CM explaining only 5.5% of the variance in MS ($R^2 = 0.055$). Despite this limited explanatory power, the ANOVA results confirmed the regression model significance ($F = 14.485, p < 0.001$), indicating that CM is a valid predictor of MS (Table 4). However, the model’s practical utility is constrained by the high standard error of the estimate (2.866), suggesting limited precision in predicting MS based on CM. These findings underscore CM’s modest role in influencing MS, warranting further exploration of additional predictors to enhance the model’s robustness.

A statistically significant relationship was found between predictor (Common Problems, CM) and outcome variable (coping strategies, CS).The model demonstrated a moderate correlation ($R =$

0.313), with CM explaining 9.8% of the variance in CS ($R^2 = 0.098$). ANOVA confirmed the model's significance ($F = 26.882, p < 0.001$), indicating CM as a robust predictor of CS (Table 4). However, the standard error of the estimate (3.469) highlighted variability in predictions, suggesting additional unmeasured factors may influence CS. Notably, the results aligned with Hypothesis 1 (H1), as increased problems correlated with heightened use of coping strategies (Table 5). While CM exerts a meaningful impact on CS, the moderate explanatory power underscores the need to explore other contextual or individual factors shaping this dynamic.

The regression analysis demonstrated a robust and statistically significant relationship between coping strategies (CS) and job satisfaction (MS). The model revealed a high correlation ($R = 0.641$), with CS explaining 41% of the variance in MS ($R^2 = 0.410$). ANOVA confirmed the model's high significance ($F = 172.655, p < 0.001$), solidifying CS as a strong predictor of MS (Table 4). The low standard error of the estimate (2.264) indicated minimal variability in predictions, underscoring the precision of the model. These results strongly support Hypothesis 2 (H2), as effective coping strategies were shown to substantially enhance job satisfaction (Table 5). The findings highlight CS as a critical determinant of teachers' professional fulfillment during the pandemic.

Table 4

No.	Independent	Dependent	β	F	Sig
1	CM	MS	0.190	14.485	0.000
2	CM	CS	0.314	26.882	0.000
3	CS	MS	0.517	172.655	0.000

CM- Common Problems, CS-Coping Strategies, MS- Job Satisfaction

As demonstrated in Table 4, CM exhibits a weak but significant direct effect on MS. Additionally, CM shows a moderately significant relationship with CS. Furthermore, CS is positively and significantly associated with MS.

The outcomes of the regression analysis showed that the initial model, which included only Common Problems (CM) as a predictor, showed a significant but weak relationship with Mental Satisfaction (MS), explaining approximately 5.5% of the variance in MS ($R^2 = 0.055, F = 14.485, p < 0.001$). In contrast, the second model, which included both Coping Strategies (CS) and CM as predictors, demonstrated a strong and significant relationship with MS, explaining approximately 41.2% of the variance in MS ($R^2 = 0.412, F = 86.451, p < 0.001$). The addition of CS as a predictor substantially improved the model explanatory power, indicating that CS is a stronger predictor of MS than CM. Specifically, the increase in R^2 ($\Delta R^2 = 0.412 - 0.055 = 0.357$) and F-value ($\Delta F = 86.451 - 14.485 = 71.966$) indicates a stronger and more significant relationship, suggesting that coping strategies are indispensable in mitigating the negative impact of problems on job satisfaction (Table 5).

The regression analysis indicated that the inclusion of Coping Strategies (CS) in the model renders the relationship between Common Problems (CM) and Job Satisfaction (MS) statistically non-significant ($\beta = 0.038, p = 0.457$). This implies that CS acts as a mediating factor, suppressing the direct influence of CM on MS. Additionally, CS demonstrates a positive association with MS, as presented in Table 5, highlighting its role in enhancing MS. The mediating effect of CS is further evidenced by the decline in the beta coefficient of CM on MS, shifting from a significant ($\beta = 0.235, p = 0.000$) to a non-

significant value ($\beta = 0.038$, $p = 0.457$), underscoring the regulatory impact of CS on the CM-MS relationship.

The introduction of Coping Strategies (CS) as a predictor in the regression model significantly altered the relationship between Common Problems (CM) and Mental Satisfaction (MS). Initially, the results showed that CM was a significant predictor of MS, characterized by a beta coefficient (β) of 0.235 and a t-statistic of 3.806 ($p < 0.001$). However, upon incorporating CS into the model, the predictive power and significance of CM decreased markedly, as evidenced by a reduced beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.038$) and a non-significant t-statistic ($t = 0.746$, $p = 0.457$). Conversely, CS emerged as a robust predictor of MS, with a substantial beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.629$) and a highly significant t-statistic ($t = 12.236$, $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that CS plays a pivotal role in explaining the variance in MS, overshadowing the impact of CM and lending support to the third hypothesis (Table 5). Notably, the results indicate a significant mediation effect of CS on the relationship between CM and MS.

Table 5

Hypothesis	Regression Path	Beta(β)	R ²	F	t-Test	P-value	Result
H1	CM->CS	0.313	0.098	26.882	5.185	.000	Supported
H2	CS->MS	0.641	0.410	172.655	13.140	.000	Supported
H3	CM->MS	0.235	0.055	14.485	3.806	.000	Supported
	CM->CS->MS	0.038 0.629	0.412	86.451	0.746 12.336	.457 .000	

Discussions

The results based on the regression analysis highlight the pivotal role of coping strategies in alleviating the adverse effects of common problems related to job satisfaction among educators. The significant positive correlation between common problems, coping strategies, and job satisfaction suggest that teachers who experience more problems tend to employ more coping strategies, which in turn predict higher job satisfaction. The introduction of coping strategies as a mediating variable significantly enhanced association between common problems and job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of effective coping strategies in promoting job satisfaction.

This research examines the relationship between problems, coping strategies, and job satisfaction among college teachers, revealing that both problems and coping strategies positively influence job satisfaction. Notably, the adoption of coping strategies as a mediating variable significantly strengthens this relationship, emphasizing its essential role in improving job satisfaction. This finding aligns consistent with earlier studies, including the research by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) [27], which emphasizes the importance of coping mechanisms in managing stress and improving well-being. Similarly, studies by Kyriacou (2001) [28] and Klassen and Chiu (2010) [29] have demonstrated that effective coping strategies can mitigate the negative impact of workplace challenges on job satisfaction.

However, the current study advances this understanding by explicitly demonstrating the mediating effect of coping strategies, thereby providing a more nuanced perspective on how teachers

navigate problems to achieve higher job satisfaction. This insight is particularly significant in the context of higher education, where increasing workloads and institutional pressures often lead to burnout and dissatisfaction. By underscoring the pivotal role of coping strategies, the study offers practical implications for educational institutions to foster supportive environments and provide resources that enhance teachers' coping abilities, ultimately improving their satisfaction at work and general wellness. The results add to the expanding research on teacher wellness and stress management, providing new insights into the factors that influence job satisfaction in academic environments.

Conclusions

This study helps us better understand how college teachers dealt with challenges during the pandemic. It looks at the problems they faced, how they handled them, and how these experiences affected their job satisfaction. In simpler terms, it shows the connection between the difficulties teachers went through, the ways they managed stress, and how happy or fulfilled they felt in their work during such a tough time. The findings highlight the significant challenges faced by college teachers, including workload, technological challenges, and mental health concerns, and the various coping strategies employed to mitigate these challenges. A tailor-made questionnaire, developed based on standardized questionnaires, was utilized to collect data, ensuring a nuanced understanding of the pandemic impact on college teachers.

The study's SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) analysis reveals that effective coping strategies are crucial for boosting job satisfaction among teachers. It also shows that support from institutions and personal resilience practices play a significant role in helping teachers manage pandemic-related challenges and maintain their job satisfaction. In simpler terms, the SEM model developed in this study highlights that when teachers have good ways to handle stress, receive support from their schools, and practice staying mentally strong, they are better equipped to stay happy and fulfilled in their jobs, even during difficult times like the pandemic. The comparative analysis of challenges, coping strategies, and job satisfaction among college teachers in Kerala aided, government, and private institutions reveals institution-specific disparities in pandemic adaptation, emphasizing the need for tailored support systems. The proposed contextual resilience framework offers actionable recommendations for policymakers and institutions to foster equitable support systems and promote long-term teacher resilience in diverse educational settings, ultimately contributing to the sustainability of the education sector. The findings of this study are important for those who make decisions about education, school leaders, and programs that train teachers. They show that it's crucial to take specific steps to support teachers' mental health and ability to cope, especially when times are tough. By identifying and addressing existing gaps while offering a detailed understanding of the pandemic's effects on college teachers, this study contributes to the development of evidence-based strategies focused on boosting teacher job satisfaction, retention, and overall wellness. These insights are crucial for ensuring the sustainability and resilience of the education sector in the long term.

Further Study

Future study options in teacher resilience based on this study could explore additional factors influencing the relationship between problems, coping strategies, and job satisfaction among college teachers during the pandemic. Potential areas of investigation include the role of institutional support, demographic factors (age, gender, teaching experience), technological factors (digital literacy, access to

digital resources), and pandemic-related policies (remote work arrangements, online teaching requirements). Furthermore, studies could examine the impact of geographical factors, such as teacher's hometowns in other districts or states, family members residing in other places, and commuting challenges, on teacher resilience and job satisfaction. Additionally, research could delve into the effects of physical, social, and psychological issues, such as chronic illnesses, caregiving responsibilities, and trauma, on teachers' ability to cope with pandemic-related stressors. Examining these factors could offer a deeper insight into teacher resilience and guide the development of evidence-based approaches for organizations to improve teacher wellness and promote job satisfaction, especially during difficult periods.

Contributions

This study provides significant insights and enhances the current understanding of teacher resilience, particularly in the context of the pandemic. By identifying various problems faced by college teachers in Kerala, including workload, technological challenges, and mental health concerns (Kumar et al., 2020)[30], this study builds upon existing research highlighting the challenges faced by teachers during crises (Liu et al., 2020)[31]. Furthermore, the study emphasis on the importance of coping mechanisms, including seeking social support and participating in self-care practices and adopting flexible teaching methods, in mitigating the negative impact of problems on job satisfaction, aligns with previous research (Demir et al., 2020)[32]. Notably, this study finding that coping strategies act as a mediatory variable, enhancing the connection between problems and job satisfaction, contributes to the understanding of teacher resilience and well-being. Moreover, This study demonstrates the possibilities of new-generation technologies, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and social media, in enhancing teacher resilience, improving student outcomes, and building stronger student communities for the future. By supporting teacher resilience, we can ultimately benefit society as a whole, as teachers hold a pivotal role in molding the minds of future generations and developing all other professions. Therefore, investing in teacher resilience is essential for building a stronger, more resilient nation, and this study offers significant insights and practical implications for decision-makers, key players, and mental health to enhance teacher welfare and job satisfaction.

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