

## Validating Psychosocial Measures Of Social Support, Coping Strategies, And Burnout In Special Educational Teachers In Jambi

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### Abstract

Teachers in Special Education face various complex professional and emotional challenges. In practice, they are required to possess strong psychological resilience, adaptive social skills, and the ability to manage stress effectively. This study aims to examine the validity and reliability of three psychosocial instruments used to measure social support, coping strategies, and burnout among Special Education teachers in Jambi Province. The instruments consist of a social support scale (12 items), a coping strategy scale (28 items), and a burnout scale (42 items). This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach involving 30 purposively selected Special Education teacher respondents. Validity testing was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation, while reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha. The results showed that all items in the social support instrument were valid and reliable ( $\alpha = 0.852$ ). In the coping strategy instrument, two items were invalid and removed, resulting in high reliability ( $\alpha = 0.940$ ). In the burnout instrument, 10 items were invalid and eliminated, yielding very high reliability ( $\alpha = 0.960$ ). These findings indicate that the three instruments are suitable for measuring the psychosocial aspects of Special Education teachers in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** validity, reliability, special education teachers, social support, coping strategies, burnout

### Abstrak

Guru di Pendidikan Khusus menghadapi berbagai tantangan profesional dan emosional yang kompleks. Dalam praktiknya, mereka dituntut untuk memiliki ketahanan psikologis yang kuat, keterampilan sosial yang adaptif, dan kemampuan mengelola stres secara efektif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji validitas dan reliabilitas tiga instrumen psikososial yang digunakan untuk mengukur dukungan sosial, strategi coping, dan kelelahan kerja (burnout) pada guru Pendidikan Khusus di Provinsi Jambi. Instrumen tersebut terdiri dari skala dukungan sosial (12 item), skala strategi coping (28 item), dan skala kelelahan kerja (42 item). Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif yang melibatkan 30 responden guru Pendidikan Khusus yang dipilih secara purposif. Uji validitas dilakukan dengan menggunakan korelasi Pearson Product-Moment, sedangkan uji reliabilitas menggunakan Alpha Cronbach. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua item dalam instrumen dukungan sosial valid dan reliabel ( $\alpha = 0,852$ ). Pada instrumen strategi coping, dua item tidak valid dan dihilangkan, sehingga menghasilkan reliabilitas yang tinggi ( $\alpha = 0,940$ ). Pada instrumen kelelahan kerja, 10 item tidak valid dan dihilangkan, sehingga menghasilkan reliabilitas yang sangat tinggi ( $\alpha = 0,960$ ). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa ketiga instrumen tersebut cocok untuk mengukur aspek psikososial guru Pendidikan Khusus di Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:** validitas, reliabilitas, guru SLB, dukungan sosial, strategi coping, burnout, adaptasi instrumen, psikometri, kesejahteraan guru.

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## INTRODUCTION

Special Education teachers play a central role in providing education for children with special needs, including students with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, autism spectrum disorder, and other developmental challenges. Their responsibilities go beyond general pedagogical skills, requiring emotional resilience and the ability to address complex, individualized learning demands (Fauziah & Kartikasari, 2017; Machado et al., 2022). In practice, Special Education teachers often face limited school facilities, insufficient psychosocial support, and high administrative workloads, all of which can lead to chronic work-related stress and increase the risk of burnout (Brunsting et al., 2014; Pratiwi & Mardianty, 2022; Maisaroh & Harsiwi, 2024).

Based on interviews and direct observations with six Special Education teachers in Jambi Province conducted in early 2025, five of them (83%) reported experiencing emotional exhaustion and a significant decrease in motivation to teach. Several also stated that they lacked access to coping strategy training or psychological support, either from their schools or local education authorities. These findings were reinforced by a visit to the Jambi Provincial Education Office, which confirmed the absence of specific studies addressing the psychosocial well-being of Special Education teachers in the region. This situation highlights a clear literature gap in the availability of locally relevant assessment tools for evaluating the mental health and well-being of Special Education teachers in Jambi.

Burnout is a chronic condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Suralaga, 2021; Neckel et al., 2017). Common symptoms include physical complaints, sleep disturbances, feelings of frustration, social withdrawal, and increased absenteeism (Absari, 2023). To mitigate this, recent research emphasizes the importance of two key protective factors: coping strategies and social support. Coping refers to the cognitive and behavioral efforts individuals use to manage psychological stress (Caes et al., 2022). Meanwhile, social support from family, colleagues, and educational institutions can serve as a buffer against excessive psychological pressure (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

Although numerous studies have explored burnout and coping strategies among teachers, most have focused on general education contexts or international settings. There is a lack of research specifically developing or validating psychosocial instruments for Special Education teachers in Indonesia, particularly at the provincial level, such as in Jambi. This study addresses that gap by examining the validity and reliability of three key instruments: social support, coping strategies, and burnout, adapted from the original scales by Sarason, Lazarus & Folkman, and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. While these instruments have proven reliable in various international contexts, their applicability in local settings needs further investigation.

This study aims not only to statistically validate these instruments but also to provide practical tools for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to design more targeted psychosocial intervention programs. In doing so, this article contributes both methodologically and practically to efforts that promote the well-being of Special Education teachers in Indonesia, with a particular focus on the under-researched context of Jambi Province.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive design, aiming to examine the validity and reliability of three instruments used to measure psychosocial



constructs among teachers at Special Education in Jambi Province, namely social support, coping strategies, and burnout.

### Research Subjects

The subjects of this study consisted of 30 active teachers from various Special Education across Jambi Province. A purposive sampling technique was used with the following criteria: (1) actively teaching in a Special Education, (2) having at least one year of teaching experience, and (3) willing to complete the entire questionnaire. These criteria were designed to ensure that respondents had direct experience and sufficient understanding of the work dynamics of Special Education teachers (Guetterman & Creswell, 2019).

### Research Instruments

Three types of instruments were used in this study, 1) A Social Support Scale consisting of 12 items, adapted from the Sarason Social Support Questionnaire, 2) A Coping Strategies Scale consisting of 28 items, based on Lazarus and Folkman's coping theory, and 3) A Burnout Scale consisting of 42 items, constructed based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Each instrument underwent a content validation process by experts in special education and educational psychology to ensure cultural and professional relevance to the context of Special Education teachers in Jambi.

### Data Collection Procedure

The data collection method used in this study was a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection tool in the form of a list of questions regarding a problem or subject to research. This tool is used to obtain information about a problem simultaneously and relevant to the research objectives (Marlina, 2021). All data collection was conducted online. The questionnaires were distributed using Google Forms via Special Education teacher community WhatsApp groups and private messages to eligible participants. During the process, the researcher provided technical instructions and included an active contact number for consultation throughout the data collection period. To maintain data quality, supervision was carried out indirectly by monitoring response status, following up with non-respondents, and clarifying incomplete responses. This approach ensured that the collected data were valid, reliable, and reflective of real conditions in the field.

### Data Analysis Techniques

Validity testing was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation. An item was considered valid if its correlation coefficient with the total score exceeded the critical  $r$  value at a 0.05 significance level. With 30 respondents, the critical  $r$  value used was  $\geq 0.361$  (Utami et al., 2020).

Reliability testing in this study was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha technique to assess the internal consistency of each instrument. An instrument was considered reliable if it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha value of at least 0.70, indicating that the items were consistently measuring the same construct. A value of  $\geq 0.80$  was interpreted as high reliability, suggesting that the instrument demonstrated strong internal coherence (Taber, 2018).

However, extremely high alpha values particularly those exceeding 0.95 were interpreted with caution. Such values may suggest item redundancy, where statements are too similar to each other, thereby limiting the diversity of content and narrowing the scope



of the construct being measured (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Therefore, the evaluation of reliability in this study went beyond numerical thresholds, taking into account the representativeness and conceptual breadth of each instrument's items. All statistical procedures for reliability analysis were performed using SPSS for Mac version 27, ensuring accuracy and efficiency in the computation of internal consistency coefficients.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The validity analysis of the Social Support Scale indicated that all 12 items demonstrated correlation coefficients exceeding the critical  $r$ -value of 0.361 at the 5% significance level, based on responses from 30 Special Education teachers. These results suggest that each item has a statistically significant relationship with the total score, thereby confirming its appropriateness for assessing perceived social support. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.852, which is categorized as very high, indicating excellent internal consistency of the instrument. These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Sarason et al. (1983), who emphasized that social support encompasses both emotional and instrumental dimensions that can be validly measured when participant responses exhibit consistency across relevant items (Sarason et al., 1983).

**Table 1.**  
Reliability Test for Social Support Instrument

Case Processing Summary			
Cases	N		N
	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

<sup>a</sup> Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.852	12

The initial version of the Coping Strategies Scale comprised 28 items, of which two items (items 25 and 27) were found to be invalid, as their correlation coefficients fell below the critical  $r$ -value. The lack of validity for these two items may be attributed to ambiguous wording or a lack of relevance to the everyday stress management experiences of Special Education teachers, potentially leading to respondent confusion. After the



removal of these items, the remaining 26 items demonstrated satisfactory validity, with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.940, indicating a high degree of internal consistency. This suggests that the majority of the scale's items effectively capture coping mechanisms utilized by special education teachers. The coping strategies assessed in this study are based on the theoretical model proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which distinguishes between problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. Teachers who are able to regulate their emotions and develop constructive problem-solving strategies are more likely to manage occupational stress effectively, thereby reducing the risk of burnout.

**Table 2.**  
Reliability Test for Coping Strategies

Case Processing Summary			
Cases	N		N
	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

<sup>a</sup> Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.940	26

The initial Burnout Scale consisted of 42 items. Validity testing revealed that 10 items (x17–x26) did not meet the validity criteria and were subsequently removed. Notably, one of the invalid items contained a statement related to the use of addictive substances as a coping mechanism for stress, an item deemed culturally and ethically inappropriate within the Indonesian context, particularly in relation to the professional standards and responsibilities upheld by Special Education teachers. This cultural incongruity likely caused discomfort or reluctance among respondents to answer truthfully, thereby resulting in a low correlation between the item and the total score. In addition, several other items were suspected to be overly general, ambiguous, or insufficiently reflective of the specific experiences of Special Education teachers in Jambi, such as administrative burdens or the challenges of working in inclusive school environments. Following the removal of these items, the scale's reliability improved significantly, reaching a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.960, indicating excellent internal consistency among the remaining 32 items. This high reliability suggests that the retained



items are strongly interrelated in measuring the three core dimensions of burnout as conceptualized by Maslach and Jackson (1986): emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Within the context of Special Education teachers in Jambi, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization appear to be the most salient dimensions, likely due to the complex needs of students and the limited availability of resources.

**Table 3.**  
Reliability Test for MBI Instrument

Case Processing Summary			
Cases	N		N
	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

<sup>a</sup> Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.960	36

These empirical findings reinforce the notion that burnout is not merely an individual phenomenon but is also closely linked to work-related contexts and the surrounding social environment. The availability of adequate social support and the adoption of adaptive coping strategies can serve as protective factors against psychological exhaustion. Furthermore, the results of this study underscore the importance of rigorous validation processes in the development and adaptation of measurement instruments, ensuring that the assessments accurately and objectively reflect the actual conditions experienced by respondents.

To further clarify the results, the table below presents the reliability coefficients for each instrument:

**Table 4.**  
Reliability Scores of the Instruments

Instrument	Number of Item	Invalid Item	Cronbach's alpha
Social Support	12	0	0,852
Coping Strategies	28	2	0,940
Burnout	42	10	0,960

This study makes a meaningful contribution as an initial step in the development





of valid and reliable psychosocial assessment instruments specifically designed for special education teachers in Indonesia. In the context of special education, where empirical research is still relatively scarce, particularly for teachers in Special Schools (Sekolah Luar Biasa/SLB), the validation results presented in this study address a critical gap in the literature while strengthening theoretical and methodological foundations in the fields of educational psychology and special education (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021).

The findings affirm the importance of contextually appropriate psychometric validation. This aligns with the theoretical framework proposed with conceptualized stress as a product of the interaction between environmental demands and the individual's coping resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). For SLB teachers, the ability to engage in adaptive problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies is crucial in mitigating work-related stress and preventing burnout.

Moreover, it is emphasized that burnout is not solely an individual experience but a systemic issue influenced by organizational values, work conditions, and social support (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This view is supported by finding that social support and adaptive coping styles significantly contribute to teachers' psychological well-being (Rajesh et al., 2022). Similarly, a local study noted that workplace stress among SLB teachers is inversely related to the presence of supportive school environments (Pratiwi & Mardianty, 2022; Machado et al., 2022). The importance of coping strategies highlights the benefits of structured coping training not only for parents of children with special needs but also for educators (Fatirahma & Hendriani, 2025; Shaukat et al., 2019).

The validation process in this study also considered cultural relevance, particularly regarding the burnout instrument. As contextual adaptation is essential when applying internationally developed tools like the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Soares et al., 2023). Removing items containing sensitive or culturally inappropriate content (e.g., substance use) reflects a commitment to respecting the values upheld in the Indonesian educational and professional context.

Practically, these validated instruments provide a robust foundation for data-driven psychosocial interventions aimed at improving teacher well-being. Programs that focus on peer support systems, emotional regulation, and adaptive coping can play a significant role in fostering sustainable teacher engagement and resilience. This is in line with the findings that underscore teacher efficacy and job satisfaction are closely linked to institutional support and social recognition (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. The sample size was relatively small ( $n = 30$ ), and the use of purposive sampling may limit generalizability. Future research involving larger and more diverse populations and employing mixed-method approaches is recommended to deepen our understanding of the psychosocial experiences of SLB teachers across different regions in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION



This study confirmed that the instruments used to measure social support, coping strategies, and burnout among Special Education School (SLB) teachers in Jambi Province possess strong validity and reliability. All items in the social support scale met the validity criteria. In contrast, two invalid items from the coping strategies scale and ten from the burnout scale were removed, resulting in improved internal consistency. These findings emphasize the importance of proper adaptation and validation procedures to ensure the accuracy and cultural relevance of psychological measurement tools.

The validated instruments provide a solid foundation for future empirical studies and can be utilized as effective tools in assessing psychosocial conditions among special education teachers. Practically, the results may contribute to the design of intervention programs aimed at enhancing teachers' well-being, particularly by strengthening social support systems and promoting adaptive coping strategies in inclusive and special education settings.

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