

Teachers Mental Health Check: an Exploration on the Determinants of Burnout in Post Pandemic

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Abstract. This quantitative descriptive correlational research design employed an adapted survey questionnaire that examined the level of stress and burnout risk factors among public secondary school teachers. The main purpose of the study was to describe the perceived level of stress and evaluate if it was significantly influenced by the burnout risk factors. The results were significant for framing feasible solution before it breaks the teachers' well-being. Results of the study showed that in general, there was a moderate level of stress among the teachers under survey. Regression analysis provided that the model can explain 60.8 % of the variability of the response data around its mean ($F=24.854$, $\rho=.000$) at 0.05 level of significance. Specifically, predictor variables demand, control, role and change have significant influence to the level of stress among teachers. Hence, it is assumed that these variables can significantly predict the stress levels of the teachers which calls for consideration in framing faculty development programs.

I. Introduction

As teachers battle exhaustion, so does their ability to cope and The shift to remote and hybrid learning models has frequently necessitated educators to devise novel instructional methodologies, provide digital content, and offer supplementary assistance to students, resulting in a substantial augmentation of their burden (Huang et al., 2020). In addition, Teachers have experienced emotional exhaustion as they have had to deal with the emotional strain of helping pupils during a time of widespread uncertainty and fear, in addition to worrying about their own health and safety (Bianchi et al., 2020).

It is crucial to assess the extent of teacher burnout after the COVID-19 pandemic because of its possible long-lasting effects on both teachers and students. Johnson et al. (2021) surveyed K-12 teachers and found very high levels of burnout since the onset of the pandemic. Undoubtedly, stressors during pandemic have a clear influence on the well-being of teachers, with burnout becoming a notable concern.

1.1 Literature Review

The implementation of remote teaching has led to a decrease in opportunities for collegial engagement and support, so depriving instructors of the vital social connections necessary for managing stress (Johnson et al., 2021).

At the start of 2020, the sudden shift to distance learning compelled administrators to explore new methods of delivering high-quality education, often overlooking the burden placed on teachers. As a result, these circumstances led to an unparalleled increase in teacher burnout (Powers, 2022).

Technological challenges: Numerous instructors have encountered obstacles in adjusting to novel technology and platforms for remote instruction, resulting in irritation and a sense of inadequacy (Dwivedi et al., 2020). It is worth knowing that stress and burnout are two separate issues (Howard & Johnson, 2004), however, prolonged stress that is left unattended can lead to burnout (Pillay, Goddard & Wilss, 2005; Subon & Sigie, 2016).

The findings of Howard and Johnson (2004) pointed out that the incidence of teacher stress and burnout has caused serious concern in Australia and even in other countries; about 10-20% suffered from psychological distress. A study on entry level teachers revealed that they experienced an increased burnout which was attributed by uncomplemented efforts (Goddard & O'Brien, 2003; Pillay et al., 2005). Contributory factors to teacher stress and burnout may include but

not limited to class size (Watts & Robertson, 2011), the actual school environment (Jamaludin & Ghazali, 2012), unable to match one's expectations with the nature of work, role ambiguity and role conflict (Alarcon, 2011) and even on the system itself (Mayben, 2008).

Thus, addressing stress and burnout should be the primary concern of an institution to guarantee operational success. The presence of burnout professionals in the field is a risk factor because their negative emotions and physical conditions have a significant influence in their behavior at work (Demerouti, Le Blanc, Bakker, Schaufeli & Hox, 2009).

1.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored from Hobfoll's (1989) theory of Conservation of Resources Theory (COR). Based on the theory, when the deemed important resources are threatened or when a resource is invested on an endeavor and the latter is uncompensated, stress is likely heightened. Figure 1 describes the conceptual framework of the study.

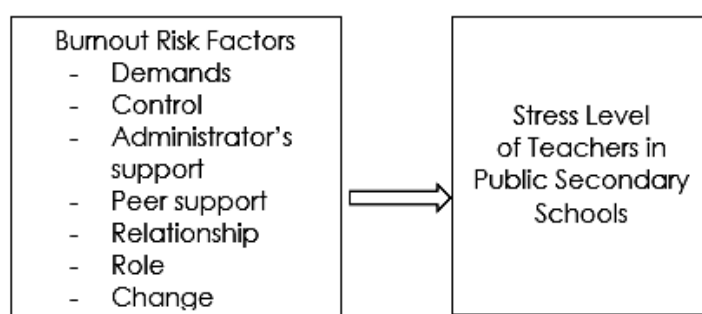


Figure 1. The

conceptual framework

1.3 Research Objectives:

Specifically, the researchers sought empirical evidences in order to:

1. Determine the perceived level of stress and burnout risk factors among public secondary school teachers.
2. Determine the domains that can predict the level of stress

among public secondary school teachers.

3. Determine if there is a significant relationship between the level of stress among teachers and the burnout risk factors in the workplace.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

The study was conducted to describe the level of stress and its relationship to the identified predictor variables among public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Davao del Norte.

II. Research Design

The study utilized quantitative descriptive and regression research approach to provide empirical evidences as described by Creswell (2003). The approach is appropriate for surveys and data collection using predetermined instruments that yield statistical data (Creswell, 2003) as well as the examination of the differences between the characteristics of the variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).

2.1 Respondents

Due to the limited interaction even during the declaration of regular class schedules or post-pandemic, the researcher utilized quota sampling. A total of 120 respondents were considered in the study. The number of respondents vary in terms of sex, age and years of experience since they were not purposively picked.

2.2 Research Instrument

Validated adapted questionnaire was used to gather data. For the stress audit, a total of over 100 points (3.74-5) in the 27-item survey is interpreted as low evidence of stress, 51-100 (1.89-3.70) is interpreted as moderate evidence of stress

while a score lower than 50 (1.81 and below) is interpreted as high evidence of stress. For the burnout risk factors, the scales used in the survey were as follows: 1 = Not at all ; 2 = Not much; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Mostly ; 5 = Very much so.

III. Data Recording and Analysis Procedure

The researchers collated the data in tabular form in preparation for the descriptive and correlation statistical analysis. Descriptive data were obtained from the mean of the responses and the variability was shown in the standard deviation. The influence of the predictor variable to the outcome variable was determined through multiple regression analysis. The set alpha level of significance to test the assumptions was 0.05.

IV. Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics of the data is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean level of stress and burnout risk factors

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Stress level	3.67	.62	Moderate
Demands	3.07	.61	Sometimes
Control	3.63	.63	Sometimes
Administrator's Support	3.54	.71	Sometimes
Peer Support	4.16	.56	Mostly
Relationship	2.17	.89	Not much
Role	4.01	.70	Mostly
Change	3.92	.64	Sometimes

Table 1 presents the mean level of stress and burnout risk factors. In general, the level of stress of the respondents is *moderate* while majority of the conditions stipulated in the burnout risk factors are described *sometimes* evident. On the average, personal relationship is *not much* evident which implied the presence of friction in the organization. Peer support for the achievement of goals and clarity of role are described *mostly* evident.

Presented in Table 2 is the significance of the domains that influence burnout. The estimated model coefficients revealed that the variables demands, control, role and change significantly influence or predicts the stress level. Hence, a working model to predict the level of stress among the public secondary school teachers within the scope of the study can be framed: $\text{Stress level} = -.470 + (.175 \times \text{demands}) + (.175 \times \text{control}) + (.117 \times \text{admin support}) + (.083 \times \text{peer support}) - (.005 \times \text{relationship}) + (.249 \times \text{role}) + (.326 \times \text{change})$. Furthermore, the predictor variables have provided a good level of prediction ($R=.780$; $R^2=.608$). The model explains 60.8% of all the variability of the response data around its mean.

Table 2. Significance of the domains that influence burnout

Indicators	B	β	t	Sig
(Constant)	-.470		-1.017	.311
Demands	.175	.174	2.768	.007
Control	.175	.178	2.089	.039
Administrators' Support	.117	.134	1.639	.104
Peer Support	.083	.076	1.077	.284
Relationship	-.005	-.007	-.108	.914
Role	.249	.0283	3.323	.001
Change	.326	.326	4.444	.000

R .780
 R² .608
 F 24.854
 Sig. .000

The moderate level of stress does not mean that there is no risk of increasing its level nor the development of burnout particularly that the experienced pandemic brought a havoc in everyone's life (Dwivedi, et al., 2020).

The variable change has the highest influence among the predictor variable. The findings parallels to the report that changes done in the system, when badly planned, \would elevate stress and eventually burnout (Dlamini, Okeke & Mammen, 2014; Ngidi & Sibaya,2002). Teachers were not against changes but were more concerned on the manner by which they were implemented. This is further supported by the assertion that high percentage of teachers experienced stress because they lack involvement in the implementation of changes (Demjaha, Minov, Stoleski & Zafirova, 2015; Nayak, 2008). Ambiguity on the roles in the organization is also a significant predictor of stress (Alarcon, 2011; Koustelios, Theodorakis & Goulimaris, 2004). Work demands and the control over them are also influential predictors of stress. This parallels to the study which found out that high level of occupational stress is due to the challenges they experience as they cope with the mismatched work demands and pressures in work and their personal work knowledge and abilities (Mayuran, 2013; Rai, 2013).

In view of these, the findings is in association with Hobfoll's (1989) theory. The resources that teachers value in this context are their capacity to meet the demands of work and their control over them, sufficient support from the administrators and peers, positive relationship, clear roles and participation in framing and implementing changes. Mechanisms to battle with stressors associated with these should be given more emphasis by the administrators to prevent the burnout risk factors from accumulating.

V. Conclusion

Based on the statistical findings, the researchers concluded the following:

1. There is a moderate evidence of stress among the teachers in the public secondary schools in the locale.
2. The determination of regression coefficient is 0.608 which implied that the 60.8% of the variability of the response data around the mean is explained by the model.
3. The variables demand, control, role and change have a significant impact on the stress levels of the teachers in the public secondary schools. Hence, the following recommendations were framed:
4. Determine the actual implemented program/s of public secondary schools that put emphasis on burnout risk factor reduction.
5. Evaluate the impact of these program/s on the level of stress experienced by the public secondary school teachers.

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