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Burnout Level of Teachers as a Basis for a Wellness Initiative: A Multi-Method Study

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ABSTRACT

The increasing number of instructional, administrative, and organizational requirements that negatively impact the welfare and performance of teachers has made teacher burnout a leading issue. The present research aimed at identifying the levels of burnout among teachers and creating a wellness program based on the school environmental contexts and utilizing a mixed-method approach for conducting research. Quantitative data were collected from 106 teachers in Bunawan National High School through total enumeration via the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey. Qualitative data were gathered by conducting group discussions involving selected teachers to learn about their experiences and job-related causes of their burnout. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied in the process of information analysis, whereas thematic analysis was used to interpret qualitative responses. The results of the quantitative part of the research indicated that teachers face moderate emotional exhaustion, low depersonalization, and high personal achievement. Emotional exhaustion was found to be significantly different according to work experience, whereas depersonalization levels varied based on the teaching post held by a person. The qualitative part of the research revealed excessive workload, difficulties faced in the classroom, low provision of resources, poor implementation of policies, as well as insufficient organizational support among main causes of burnout among teachers. The combination of results of quantitative and qualitative parts of the research made it possible to come up with the Project BALANCE (Building Active Lifestyle and Nurturing Coping for Educators), which is a school-specific wellness initiative aimed at enhancing the well-being of teachers. The research demonstrates the significance of research-driven and school-specific programs in fighting against burnout and ensuring teachers' efficiency in their work life.

INTRODUCTION

Burnout among teachers is one of the major issues facing teaching organizations around the world. Teaching is a complex profession which has made the teachers' roles multi-dimensional in terms of responsibility, and long exposure to stress affects their performance in both teaching and non-teaching aspects of their responsibilities (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022). Stress-related responses, such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a sense of low personal accomplishment, lead to burnout, which worsens the working performance of an individual teacher and harms teaching in general.

Recent studies conducted in different parts of the world show similar trends in the level of burnout in teachers. Burnout leads to negative changes in the working process, such as the decline in teaching effectiveness, decrease in job satisfaction, reduction in student learning performance, and the intention to leave the profession. Teacher burnout can be caused by excessive workload, growing administrative obligations, time pressure, as well as lack of adequate help from the organizations they work for (Vorobyeva & Matveeva, 2025). In short, teacher burnout has become an even more pressing problem in the educational system of the Philippines due to the fact that teachers are busy performing various teaching and

non-teaching tasks at schools.

In addition to classroom instruction, teachers must conduct thorough documentation, implement various school programs, prepare teaching materials, participate in various professional development activities, and handle numerous administrative tasks (Dagoy *et al.*, 2024; Torregosa & Castil, 2026; Tanaman, 2026). Although the Department of Education has adopted rules aimed at decreasing teachers' work in administrative tasks, teachers keep experiencing a lot of pressure connected with their duties, lack of resources, and increase of expectations connected with their performance (Gueriba & Morales, 2025). Thus, these conditions show that there is a need for some measures at schools that will help teachers with their mental health and their responsibilities at work.

Regardless of the great number of studies related to teacher burnout, there are still some gaps in the research in this area. Most of the research done in this field is qualitative because it sees the gauges of rate and severity of the problem but there is no understanding of the context where something happens making teachers exhausted. Moreover, there are not many works that combine qualitative measurement with quantitative inquiry that allows developing practical responses to teachers' problems. Therefore, further research is required

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that will measure the burnout level of teachers and find out the reasons for it and possible solutions.

Based on the theory of Job Demands–Resources Process, the current research discusses how the teachers' issue appears because of unbalanced demands in their job (Hlado & Harvankova, 2024; Silva *et al.*, 2023). Even though it is impossible to get rid of high requirements in education system, the situation can be improved by the introduction of new policies aimed at helping school with the resources necessary for the elimination of the issue fully (Krumsvik, 2022).

Using mixed methods approach, this research discussed teachers' burnout at Bunawan National School measuring emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal achievements. In addition, particular experience of teachers was checked to find out the factors that lead to burnout which were used for the development of Project BALANCE initiative in the school aimed at helping teachers with all issues connected with their mental health. The research is a good contribution to the rising discipline because it shows the methods of combining qualitative and quantitative research into the solution of the teachers' issue.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Burnout in the Educational Context

Due to the complicated nature of teachers' jobs, teacher burnout has become one of the major issues in occupational health. Burnout is understood to be a psychological condition caused by occupational stress and marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal functioning (Maslach & Leiter, 2021). The three features combined influence teachers' mental health, teaching efficiency and commitment towards their jobs.

Recent international studies provide evidence that burnout has a negative impact on teaching effectiveness, students' involvement in learning and organizational commitment. Madigan and Kim (2021) found a negative correlation between burnout and teaching quality, as well as teachers' engagement in their jobs. The same studies showed that increasing administrative duties and paperwork in combination with growing expectations from the institutions bring additional stress to teachers (Raj, 2024). This means that burnout needs to be treated as an organizational problem rather than the problem of individual teachers.

In the Philippines' educational system, burnout has become visible because teachers perform a range of functions. Their job involves not only teaching but also preparing reports, filling in forms, managing school programs, engaging in professional development initiatives, and carrying out many administrative tasks. The research carried out earlier showed that these complex duties lead to psychological fatigue and stress of public school teachers (Orines *et al.*, 2023; Francisco *et al.*, 2024).

Job Demands and Organizational Resources

The Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R) is a model for explaining the emergence of burnout in teachers. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2017), burnout is observed when job demands exceed the resources available to the employee for an extended period of time. The job demands encompass different aspects of work including physical, psychological, organizational, and social affairs which involve continuous efforts being made, while the job resources are defined by the organizations' support mechanisms that help employees perform their work without being stressed. In educational setting the job demands may encompass such things as high teaching loads, various administrative paperwork, classroom management, curriculum implementation, etc. At the same time, if there is little organizational support available, teachers become more prone to feeling burned out and experiencing psychological distress. At the same time, the existence of various initiatives helping to reduce stress also assists in preventing the cases of burnout. Numerous studies have confirmed that JD-R model is valid in different contexts. For example, by conducting his study García-Carmona *et al.* (2021) claim that excessive workload is one of the strongest predictors of teachers' burnout in education, while Priyono *et al.* (2022) proved in their work that organizational resources can mitigate the negative influence of high job demands.

Teacher Wellness Initiatives

Wellness initiatives have gained more attention as an effective means of promoting teachers' mental health and overall well-being, as these strategies are considered sustainable. School-based wellness initiatives may provide such activities as stress management training, peer-support programs, counseling, workshops on resilience, and organizational strategies aimed at maintaining a proper work-life balance (Jusoh & Zhenni, 2025; Berger *et al.*, 2022). Studies have shown associations between such initiatives and lower burnout rates and higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and teaching effectiveness.

According to Ryan *et al.* (2021), comprehensive wellness programs that include psychological assistance, professional collaboration, and organizational commitment enable more sustainable improvements than programs that focus on reducing stress only. Similarly, organizational support through good leadership, sufficient resources, and good workplace relationships contributes to teacher engagement while reducing depersonalization and emotional exhaustion (Nápoles, 2021; Karacabey *et al.*, 2025).

Nonetheless, structured wellness initiatives are limited in many public secondary schools, especially developing education systems. Often, existing wellness programs are very general and do not use empirical data provided by teachers since they have not been implemented in specific contexts.

Research Gap

Even though earlier studies have greatly advanced the knowledge of teacher burnout, there still remain significant research gaps. The bulk of previous studies have utilized quantitative analysis in measuring burnout even though this technique does not take into consideration the specific contexts that are contributing to the psychological well-being of teachers. Thus, we do not have enough information about how teachers themselves perceive their working conditions leading to burnout issues.

Moreover, there are very few studies that have stated how qualitative research connects its findings with quantitative assessments in coming up with relevant interventions to help in solving the problem of teacher burnout (Avola *et al.*, 2025). In fact, the research linked to teachers' burnout is limited in its applicability because there are very few research evidence-based initiatives which are thought to result in positive wellness in different school situations (Berger *et al.*, 2022).

In this regard, the present study has applied the multi-method approach in order to establish the level of teacher burnout and explore their workplace experiences which contribute to the problem. The present study has provided the evidence-based empirical data for the development of Project BALANCE (Building Active Lifestyle and Nurturing Coping for Educators) wellness program, which is proposed in order to improve mental, emotional and professional conditions of teachers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The multi-method methodology of the research was used in this research to study teacher burnout and develop a school-based wellness program in detail. Quantitative stage involved descriptive-comparative method which means measuring the burnout levels of teachers and looking at the differences according to demographic factors. The qualitative phase involved looking into teachers' experiences of burnout which allowed contextualizing the quantitative results of the phase 1. Combining quantitative and qualitative data made it possible to design Teacher Wellness Initiative based on evidence that is directly applicable to teachers' requirements at Bunawan National High School.

Research Setting and Participants

The research has taken place in Bunawan National High School (BNHS) located in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur, Philippines. BNHS is one of the biggest government secondary schools in the region, offering both Junior High School and Senior High School. Teachers at school perform all the types of activities needed for teaching, hence the research should be appropriate for the topic of teacher burnout.

As many as 106 full-time teachers participated in the quantitative phase of enumeration. The sample was

composed of Teachers I–III and other teachers working for the school in the current educational year 2025-2026. As for the qualitative phase of the research, 10 teachers with moderate to high levels of teacher burnout according to the previous stage were chosen for focus group discussions. Each respondent had a varied background in terms of teaching post and duration in service, which offered diverse insights into the area of burnout in the workplace.

Research Instrument

The Maslach Burnout Inventory used (MBI-ES) was created by Maslach, Jackson, and Schwab. It records three dimensions of burnout which include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and accomplishment. The scores of the responses were interpreted as specified by the instrument.

An interview guide was used in the qualitative phase of the research. The interview guide was validated by experts to verify its relevance and authenticity before conducting interviews.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher got approval from Division of Schools in Agusan del Sur and Bunawan National High School before doing the research. Once that was done, the orientation was necessary.

Quantitative data was gathered using Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The collected data was checked for completeness before starting the analysis process.

Qualitative data was obtained by conducting focus group discussions. The discussions were recorded and transcribed for further investigation.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was employed to analyze demographic data and the level of burnout. Shapiro-Wilk test was used to check for the normality of the data. In analyzing variations in burnout, ANOVA was applied for normally distributed data and Kruskal-Wallis test for non-normally distributed data.

The qualitative data obtained from focus group discussions were processed using thematic analysis. The transcripts were reread and analyzed to find occurrences of similar themes in teachers' experiences.

Ethical Considerations

The ethics that are applicable to educational research were adhered to in the study. Appropriate educational authorities give the necessary permissions for collecting data. All participants entered voluntarily and gave their informed consent before participating in the study. They were given information about their right to leave the study at any time.

The identification codes assigned to the participants replaced their names in order to respect their confidentiality and anonymity. All data was kept safe and

used for research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

The number of teachers who took part in the research is 106. Predominantly they were women representing 80%, aged from 31 to 40 corresponding to 44% of all the participants, and holding the positions of Teacher I (35%) or Teacher III (38%). Over one-third of them (37%) had experience in teaching ranging from one to five years, and only 70% worked in Junior High School. Demographic information speaks about the fact that the teaching labor force mainly consisted of teachers who were just beginning their careers but were already able to cope with new teaching and administration tasks. It should be mentioned that teachers who are just at this phase of career have to cope with many professional challenges in their work because they are expected to make proper management in the classroom, acquire necessary teaching skills, and participate actively in other activities (Noor *et al.*, 2025; Szöcs, 2024). It should be also noted that the research conducted in this area shows that some studies claim that teachers at the beginning of their professional lives have to deal with work-related stress in view of the fact that they are still adjusting to their new positions.

Burnout Levels among Teachers

The quantitative study showed that, on average, teachers suffered from a moderate level of emotional exhaustion ($M = 22.69$, $SD = 11.93$), a low level of depersonalization ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 6.43$) and a high level of personal accomplishment ($M = 39.50$, $SD = 9.03$). These results indicate that while teachers reported high levels of fatigue, they tended to have positive relations with students and be confident in their abilities as professionals.

Emotional exhaustion was found to be the leading dimension of burnout, reflecting cumulative effects of increased teaching duties, administrative work, and organizational requirements. Similar results have been found internationally, where high workload and time constraints are good predictors of emotional exhaustion among teachers (Alaiki *et al.*, 2025). The low level of depersonalization can be interpreted as the evidence of teachers' emotional involvement in their students' lives and their dedication to their profession.

Furthermore, the high rate of personal accomplishment indicates that teachers are able to perceive their job as meaningful despite the challenges that they face in their work. High professional efficacy may decrease negative consequences of emotional exhaustion as teachers keep being committed to their profession (Garg, 2024; Wang *et al.*, 2026). These results confirm other studies that have shown that teachers can experience emotional exhaustion even though they possess high motivation and fulfillment.

Differences in Burnout Levels across Demographic Characteristics

Statistical analysis has shown that emotional exhaustion

varies significantly according to years spent on the job ($p=.012$), though no significant differences in level of emotional exhaustion were noted for sex, age, occupation, or faculty. By contrast, responses in terms of depersonalization differ by occupation, while the personal sense of accomplishment does not differ by any of the demographic factors.

The fact that emotional exhaustion varies significantly depending on the number of years spent in the job indicates that teaching experience impacts teachers' effectiveness in dealing with job-related stress. Teachers may have different expectations in their job and different workload depending on their stage in career and the manner in which they approach the teaching job, which leads to variation in their emotional exhaustion (Nyamugoro *et al.*, 2023; Spiridon *et al.*, 2026).

The present study confirms the Job Demand-Resources Theory as burnout occurs when job demands thrive the individual's organizational and personal resources. Teachers who have a lot of responsibilities and suffer from prolonged occupational demands may be in need of more organizational support.

Teachers' Experiences Contributing to Burnout

The qualitative results have given a more thorough understanding of the everyday experiences related to teacher burnout. The discussions yielded five overarching themes, namely, excessive workload, issues in the classroom, lack of instructional materials, inconsistency of policies, and lack of support from the school.

Excessive administrative burdens were named by teachers as one major cause of their emotional exhaustion. Apart from teaching students in class, teachers spent a lot of time dealing with reports, filling in papers, managing school programs, and completing administrative tasks. Due to this, they had little time to prepare lesson plans, reflect professionally, or recuperate (Shen *et al.*, 2025; Nath & Pandey, 2025; Elvina *et al.*, 2026).

Participants recognized behavioral and classroom management problems due to their dealing with various learning requirements and increasing number of behavioral problems in class. They also mentioned the resource problems like lack of teaching materials and technology assistance in their classroom practice. There was also a problem of inconsistency of educational policies which raised uncertainty in teachers about their work. The same is true for organizational issues which hindered teachers in regulating the occupational stress properly. The main conclusions drawn from qualitative research coincide with the quantitative results obtained in this research.

Development of the Teacher Wellness Initiative

The establishment of Project BALANCE (Building Active Lifestyle and Nurturing Coping for Educators), a school-based wellness program made to help staff cope with their emotional, mental, and work-related challenges, was accomplished with the use of both qualitative and

quantitative findings.

The key issues in the workplace that participants pointed out were solved through the project's programs dealing with stress management, peer mentoring, professional cooperation, work-life balance, and wellness in organizations. The main essence of the program is to shift the focus from an individual use of coping strategies to institutional accountability in promoting an adequate

work climate for teachers (Palanca, 2025; Gipson *et al.*, 2023).

The most important contribution of the research was the creation of the context-specific wellness project. While in earlier studies burnout was assessed quantitatively, this one used what was found out to develop some practicable ideas to apply in a certain public school

The Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of Project

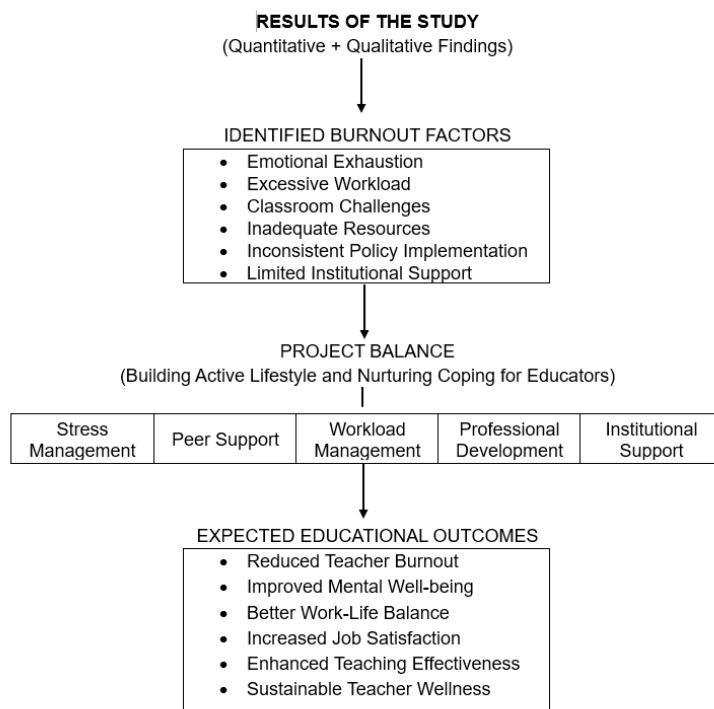


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Project BALANCE

BALANCE, which was created through the combination of both quantitative and qualitative results. The model shows how the data collected from the burnout levels of teachers and their experience at work helped identify important organizational and individual factors that lead to burnout. The results of the study formed a basis for the creation of five complementary components of the intervention, which include stress management, support from colleagues, workload management, professional development, and support from the institution. Overall, these activities aim at decreasing burnout, enhancing teachers' psychological well-being, improving work-life balance, increasing effectiveness in teaching, and promoting sustainable wellness culture in the educational establishment.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that teacher burnout is still a major issue for secondary school teachers in public institutions, even when they are dedicated to the profession. The outcome confirmed that the teachers reported quite high personal accomplishment but experienced considerable emotional exhaustion at the same time. It

is also interesting to mention that emotional exhaustion fluctuated based on the number of years in the profession while depersonalization was much more influenced by the current position.

The qualitative findings matched with quantitative data by recognizing unmanageable workload, challenges during teaching process, lack of relevant materials, inconsistency of the policies used, and deficiency of support from the administration as the main causes of teacher burnout. The results point out that burnout is not as easy to cope with as it requires sufficient organizational conditions.

The key finding of the research is the development of Project BALANCE (Building Active Lifestyle and Nurturing Coping for Educators) which is a school wellness concept based on an evidence-based approach. Unlike any other programs, Project BALANCE is based on the principles identified by teachers in the process of the research and provides solutions according to their needs.

All in all, the research proves that the combination of qualitative and quantitative data allows developing a deep understanding of the problem as well as coming up with practical solutions.

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