



*Original Research Article*

# Teachers' workload in relation to burnout and work performance

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Teaching is a rewarding but demanding profession. Teachers are prone to burnout due to long hours of teaching and a heavy workload. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' workload, burnout, and job performance. In this quantitative study, the descriptive-correlational design was used. The respondents of the study were the 57 elementary teachers selected through convenient and purposive sampling. The Role Overload Questionnaire, Burnout Questionnaire, and Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) were used in this study. The statistical tools used in the study were the Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The findings revealed that teachers have a high level of workload. Their burnout level is also high. Teachers' work performance, on the other hand, is very satisfactory. Workload has a significant impact on the level of burnout experienced by teachers. Workload has an impact on teachers' performance as well. To avoid stress and burnout, it is recommended that every school administrator adhere to proper workload assignment.

**Keywords:** burnout, career, competency, teaching, workload

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching work is a rewarding yet demanding career. With extended hours and a heavy workload, it is easy to fall prey to teacher burnout. Without proper assistance, teachers are in danger of being overworked and not taking care of their own mental and physical health needs. According to the American Federation of Teachers' 2017 Educator Quality of Work Life Survey (2017), 61 percent of teachers indicated that their jobs were always or often stressful. Just as alarming, if not more so, 58 percent of respondents cited poor mental health as a result of that stress.

The teaching profession involves being subjected to various job demands that often underpin a perception of a heavy workload. Other examples of job demands are multiple meetings that interfere with preparation time, administrative paperwork generated by the management, and being subjected to constant reforms and changes that demand re-organization of work and work tasks. Almost half of the group of the interviewed teachers stated that an

increase in administrative work tasks added to the high workload. Thus, the high workload was not associated with the teaching itself but instead to the continuous growth of new demands that were added without removing other work tasks. Teachers stated that they had to deal with new technological systems, new requirements for long term educational planning to align the teaching with the goals, new needs for grading and assessment of students' results, and extensive individual development plans for each student with increasing time pressure. It was perceived to cause unplanned changes in the schedule and a higher workload (Arvidsson et al., 2019).

During the past two decades, teaching is becoming more challenging as a profession: more paperwork, more bureaucracy, and more unruly classes. Teachers have many things in mind, their attention is divided into many tasks, and they also consider many things such as teaching students who lack motivation, maintaining discipline in the

classroom, confronting general time pressures and workload demands, being exposed to a large amount of change, being evaluated by others, having challenging relationships with colleagues, administration, and management, and being exposed to generally poor working condition prospects, unsatisfactory working conditions, the ambiguity of the teacher's role, poor relationships with colleagues, pupils, and administrators, and job insecurity. Teachers are exposed to many sources of stress (Hasan, 2015).

Due to excessive amounts of paper works and at the same time teaching children, teachers compromise the relaxation they needed, and this might lead to stress based on the study conducted in Saudi (Tahseen, 2015). Too much pressure would result in burnout from the inability to handle the demands from work. In Sweden, teaching reported high levels of stress-related symptoms and exhaustion compared to other professions. Nine out of ten teachers stated that they experienced their workload as unreasonable (Jendle and Wallnäs, 2017).

Work overload is one of the factors causing burnout among teachers that causes reduced physical and emotional energy (Malik, 2019). Factors that cause exhaustion may include more extended hours of teaching and the need for ideal conditions that the workplace could not provide (Demirel and Cephe, 2015). There are times that the teaching work is negatively affected by burnout felt by the teachers.

Teachers experience stress because of their workload, as they plan lessons, organize activities, develop curriculum, manage extra-curricular activities, supervise classes, provide information, maintain discipline, provide cover for teacher shortages and absences, maintain records, administer time tables, evaluate and assess students' performance, in addition to the motivation of students by words and actions (Desouky and Allam, 2017).

Research has found that there are many sources of teachers' stress and problem such as teaching unmotivated students, maintaining discipline, time pressures and workload, coping with change, being evaluated by others, dealing with colleagues, self-esteem and status, administration and management, role conflict and ambiguity, and poor working conditions due to their many roles in the society. Competing requests for various tasks results in a degradation of primary task performance (Alkahtani et al., 2016).

Stress in the teaching profession is an international phenomenon that negatively affects both the teacher and the quality of education. Possible consequences of teacher stress are reduced teacher self-efficacy, lower job satisfaction, lower levels of commitment, and higher levels of burnout (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2016). Sometimes the teachers' morale is negatively affected by their burnout.

Unfortunately, the effects of burnout are not limited to the workplace and may manifest themselves in a person's personal life. More teachers leave their jobs due to working conditions than that of other reasons, such as salaries (Tehseen and Hadi, 2015). They transfer to a workplace

they think would not give them much stress and tension.

In this study, the researcher sought to determine the relationship between teachers' workload and burnout and work performance.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study determines the teachers' workload in relation to burnout and work performance of the teachers of Mahayag, Zamboanga del Sur. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the workload of teachers;
2. Determine the level of burnout experience of the teachers;
3. Determine the work performance of the teachers;
4. Explore the significant relationship between the teachers' workload and their burnout experience; and
5. Explore the significant relationship between the teachers' workload and their work performance.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized the descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive research aims to accurately portray the characteristics of situations, individuals, or groups and the frequency with which certain phenomena occur using statistics to describe and summarize the data. On the other hand, the correlational research explores the interrelationship among variables of interest without any intervention by the researcher (Polit and Hungler, 2013). The design is considered appropriate in assessing multi-tasking among teachers in relation to burnout and work performance

### **Research Setting**

The research was conducted in Mahayag South District, Zamboanga del Sur Division. Mahayag South District is composed of 15 Schools. They are Bag-ong Dalaguete Elementary School, Balamban Elementary School, Balanan Elementary School, Daniel C. Mantos Elementary School, Diwan Elementary School, E.P. Bacaltos Elementary School, Kabuhi Elementary School, Marquez Elementary School, Pugwan Elementary School, Roman Tagdulang Elementary School, San Isidro Central School, San Jose Elementary School, San Vicente Elementary School, Tuboran Elementary School and Tumapic Elementary School. The schools in Mahayag District are monograde except for Bag-ong Dalaguete Elementary School and San Vicente Elementary School which are multi-grade schools.

### **Respondents of the Study**

The respondents of the study were elementary school teachers of Mahayag South District, Zamboanga del Sur

Division selected through purposive sampling. The respondents of this study were 57 teachers who were chosen based on the criteria that they handle more than two ancillary services, and that their burnout rating is high.

## Instruments

The researchers used two questionnaires and the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) of the teachers for School Year 2018-2019.

The following instruments were used in the study:

**A. Role Overload Questionnaire.** The construct of role overload was measured through the usage of Reilly overload scale developed by Reilly (1982) to assess the work overload of teachers. It consists of 13 items that are scaled on a Likert type scale with the response category ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

The scale below was used in describing the teachers' workload:

Responses	Continuum	Continuum Interpretation
4 - Strongly Agree (SA)	3.25 - 4.0	Very High Engagement (VHE)
3 - Agree (A)	2.50 - 3.24	High Engagement (HE)
2 - Disagree (D)	1.75 - 1.49	Low Engagement (LE)
1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 - 1.74	Very Low Engagement (VLE)

**B. Burnout Questionnaire.** This is adopted from Maslach Burnout Inventory Questionnaire to assess teacher burnout syndrome. It has 21 items or statements and scaled on a 4-point Likert Scale. It has 4 subscales: (1) Career Related Stress, (2) Perceived Administrative Support, (3) Coping with Job-related Stress, and (4) Attitudes towards Students.

The following scale for burnout was used:

Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
4 - Strongly Agree (SA)	3.25 - 4.0	Very High t (VH)
3 - Agree (A)	2.50 - 3.24	High (H)
2 - Disagree (D)	1.75 - 1.49	Low (L)
1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 - 1.74	Very Low (VL)

**C. Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF).** It is an assessment tool for government employees that rates tasks accomplished, and this research used the data gathered during the School Year 2018-2019. It is composed of Key Result Areas (KRAs) which dwell on content knowledge and pedagogy; learning environment and diversity of learners; curriculum and planning; assessment and reporting; and plus factor which refers to performing activities that contribute to the teaching-learning process.

The scale below was used in describing the teachers' work performance:

Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
5 - Role Model	4.50 - 5.00	Outstanding
4 - Consistently Demonstrates	3.50 - 4.49	Very Satisfactory
3 - Most of the time Demonstrates	2.50 - 3.49	Satisfactory
2 - Sometimes Demonstrates	1.50 - 2.49	Unsatisfactory
1 - Rarely Demonstrates	Below 1.49	Poor

## Data Collection

The researchers sought the approval of the Dean of the

Graduate School of Misamis University for the conduct of the study. Similarly, permission was sought from the Schools Division Superintendent of Zamboanga del Sur. The data collected were tallied using the Microsoft Excel application and were subjected to statistical computation.

## Ethical Considerations

The ten principles of ethical considerations by Bryman and Bell (2007) were complied within this study. First, research participants were not subjected to harm in any ways. Respect for the participants' dignity was prioritized. Full consent was obtained from the respondents. Protection of the privacy of the research respondents, and adequate level of confidentiality of the research data, and the anonymity of individuals participating in the research were ensured.

Moreover, deception and exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research were avoided. Affiliations in any form, sources of funding, as well as any possible conflicts of interest, were declared. Lastly, any communication about the research was done with honesty and transparency and any misleading information, as well as the representation of primary data findings in a biased way, was avoided.

## Data Analysis

The following statistical tools were used in analyzing the data gathered:

**Mean and Standard Deviation.** These statistical tools were used to determine the teachers' workload, burnout and work performance.

**Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.** This statistical tool was used to test the significant relationship between teachers' workload and their burnout and work performance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Workload of Teachers

Table 1 shows the level of the workload of teachers. It is shown that the Mean and Standard Deviation ( $M=3.13$ ;  $SD=0.38$ ) are high. The finding implies that the teachers of Mahayag South District who got more than two ancillary services have a lot of work to do due to many work demands, and this leads to role overload. There are times that they are pressured not only by their work in the class but also by their responsibilities in the community.

The level of workload of teachers is high. The finding of this study can be an eye-opener for the DepEd in their loading or assignment of workload to teachers. The task or distribution of work has to be done with utmost care and tact. Work assignments should be distributed relatively, i.e., no teacher should be overworked, and no teacher also should be excused from carrying out specific responsibilities like handling co-curricular and extra-

**Table 1.** Workload of Teachers

Construct	M	SD	Interpretation
Workload	3.13	0.38	High

Scale: 3.25-4.0 (Very High); 2.50-3.24 (High); 1.75-2.49(Low); 1.0-1.74( Very Low)

**Table 2.** Level of Burnout Experience of the Teachers

Constructs	M	SD	Interpretation
Career Satisfaction	3.08	0.34	High
Perceived Administrative Support	2.59	0.42	High
Coping with Job-Related Stress	2.81	0.46	High
Attitudes Towards Students	2.80	0.40	High
Overall Experience	2.81	0.41	High

Scale: 3.25-4.0 (Very High); 2.50-3.24 (High); 1.75-2.49(Low); 1.0-1.74( Very Low)

**Table 3.** Work Performance of the Teachers

Construct	M	SD	Interpretation
Work Performance	4.09	0.20	Very Satisfactory

Scale: 4.20-5.0(Outstanding); 3.20-4.19 (Very Satisfactory); 2.61-3.19 (Satisfactory); 1.81-2.60(Fair); 1.0-1.80(Poor)

curricular activities initiated by the school.

In the teacher workload survey 2016, the amount of time spent on non-teaching tasks was significant: an average of 33.2 hours for primary classroom teachers. About half of this time was spent on two activities: Individual planning or preparation of lessons either at school or out-of-school, and marking/correcting pupils' work. Furthermore, most teachers said they generally spent too long on each of these activities, alongside general administrative work. As per prior workload studies, the primary classroom teachers of England self-reported higher total working hours in the reference week (a mean of 55.5 hours) than teachers in the secondary schools (53.5 hours). Primary teachers were also more likely to report total working hours in the reference period of more than 60 hours. As a result, teachers at the fundamental level faced more workload pressures (Higton et al., 2017).

### Level of Burnout Experience of the Teachers

Table 2 shows the level of burnout experience of the teachers. It is shown that the Mean and Standard Deviation for the Career Satisfaction (M = 3.08; SD = 0.34) is higher than perceived administrative support (M = 2.59; SD = 0.42), coping with job related stress (M = 2.81; SD = 0.46), and attitudes towards students (M = 2.80; SD = 0.40). However, the four components fall on the same range of burnout being described as high. The finding implies that the teachers experience burnout in the areas of career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related stress, and attitudes towards students.

The levels of teacher burnout in career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related

stress, and attitudes towards students are high, as shown above. The research finding may be a guide in identifying the causes of burnout of teachers as bases for improving the workload assignment of teachers. This matter should be looked into by every school administrator not only in Mahayag South District but in all school districts.

In terms of burnout, teachers have the highest burnout level when they experience emotional exhaustion, which is followed by a lack of personal accomplishment and depersonalization, respectively. Teachers' lack of personal achievement is predicted by all aspects of emotional labor (Yilmaz et al., 2015).

Teachers should possess knowledge and ability in managing burnout because if this is not minimized, this will affect their performance in teaching. They will not be at ease performing their job because of stress that they experience in the workplace. With this, teachers need to widen their understanding that teaching is a complex and in some cases a frustrating job.

### Work Performance of the Teachers

Table 3 shows the work performance of teachers based on the Individual Performance and Commitment Review (IPCR). It is shown that, on average, teachers have a very satisfactory performance (M = 4.09; SD = 0.20). The performance of the teachers ranged from very satisfactory to outstanding. The teachers earned a minimum score of 3.55 and a maximum score of 4.80. There are no teachers who obtained a score between fair and poor based on the IPCR reports. The findings mean that teachers showed very satisfactory performance in their job.

The importance of measuring the performance of

**Table 4.** Significant Relationship Between the Teachers' Workload and their Level of Burnout Experience

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Workload and burnout experience:			
1. Career Satisfaction	0.38**	0.01	Highly Significant
2. Perceived Administrative Support	0.47**	0.00	Highly Significant
3. Coping with Job Related Stress	0.61**	0.00	Highly Significant
4. Attitudes Towards Students	0.41**	0.00	Highly Significant

Note: \*\* means  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.01$ ; Highly Significant at 1% level

**Table 5.** Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Workload and their Work Performance

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Teachers' Workload and Performance	0.40**	0.00	Highly Significant

\*\* means  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.01$ ; Highly Significant at 1% level

teachers in the Department of Education is usually the basis of appraisal and evaluation in which areas are achieved and which area needs improvement. The level of job performance scores is an indication that the teachers are performing according to their targets.

Competence and job satisfaction affect positively and significantly teacher performance (Arifin, 2015). The overall performance of a teacher is essential for the betterment of the students, development of the institution, and improvement of the society and nation. There is an increased consensus that highly qualified, quality, and competent teachers are essential in improving the academic performance of the students (Thakre et al., 2017).

Even if teachers are given additional assignments in school, they show satisfactory performance in their job. It is believed that they possess dedication and commitment, that even if their work condition seems not right, they still have the inner drive to go on working. Teachers consider their work as a mission, that even if they are sometimes choked with various activities in school they go on working with gratefulness in the heart.

Table 4 presents the relationship between the teachers' workload and their level of burnout experience as to career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related stress, and attitudes towards students. There was a highly significant relationship between workload and career satisfaction ( $r\text{-value} = 0.38^{**}$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.01$ ); workload and perceived administrative support ( $r\text{-value} = 0.47^{**}$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.00$ ); workload and coping with job related stress ( $r\text{-value} = 0.61^{**}$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.00$ ); and workload and attitudes towards students ( $r\text{-value} = 0.41^{**}$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.00$ ). The correlations between workload and the four components of burnout are indicative of how workload affects the burnout experience of teachers. The most highly significant relationship between workload and burnout is career satisfaction and burnout, and it indicates that teacher burnout is most likely affected by the career dissatisfaction. Moreover, other factors must be taken into consideration for greater understanding.

In the study by Morgan and Craith (2015), the results

showed that the vast majority thought teaching had become more stressful. Catering to individual differences and the overcrowded curriculum are significant contributors to stress, as was the number of children with behavior difficulties.

A teacher who is given an increased workload is likely to experience burnout. There are times when a teacher's extra workload brings him or her honour and prestige. However, studies show that increased workload leads to burnout and stress.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in determining the significant relationship between the teachers' workload and their work performance. As shown in Table 5, the p values are less than 0.01 alpha level. It means that the teachers' workload and work performance are highly significantly related. The teachers' work performance may improve if they are not to attend to a lot of school activities.

The research findings make a significant contribution toward identifying strategies to decrease teachers' occupational stress and increase work performance. However, teachers' workload is just one of the many factors that contribute to the production of teachers. There are many factors which contribute to their performance as a teacher.

A study in Poland has confirmed that mismatches on workload aggravate exhaustion, and increased workload has a consistent relationship with burnout. Therefore, an extensive workload might be the most sensitive factor that allows for discriminating burnout from inefficacy (Mojsa-Kaja et al., 2015).

A moderate amount of workload is what teachers need in the workplace. They are motivated to work if their workload is not too much to realize in school. If too much, their work performance is negatively affected.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mahayag South Elementary teachers experience

burnout because of work overload. Nevertheless, they still perform in their respective jobs. No matter how they feel tired, they always give their very best to fulfill their duty; thus, their performance is very satisfactory.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the school authorities systematically provide a balanced work for teachers and review the workload of teachers as a move towards improving the quality of teaching in public schools. They should see to it that proper work assignment is observed in every school. Teachers, on the other hand, should understand that teaching is a problematic form of profession, that they need to be patient all the time to avoid stress. Moreover, a similar study be conducted to include all teachers in the Department of Education in Zamboanga del Sur Division to gain a broader perspective of teachers' burnout and performance and the influence of exhaustion on work performance.

### Conflict of interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript

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