



The interplay dynamics of workload and burnout: Proposed strategies to mitigate

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore which aspects of school-related work contribute to burnout and how these experiences affect teachers' job performance. A qualitative, descriptive phenomenological approach was utilized to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of elementary school teachers in District 1 of Laoag City. Findings revealed that excessive workload remains the strongest contributor to burnout, often resulting in fatigue, emotional strain, extended work hours, and fluctuating motivation. These results support earlier studies linking heavy workloads to lower teaching efficacy (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Pan et al., 2023). Burnout was also found to negatively affect both teaching effectiveness and overall well-being. In conclusion, proper workload management and institutional support are essential to preventing burnout and improving teacher wellness. Consistent with Bakker and Demerouti's (2017) Job Demands–Resources Model, the study suggests that balancing job demands with sufficient professional support can enhance teacher satisfaction and performance. School leaders are encouraged to implement supportive policies, lessen administrative burdens, and promote wellness programs to sustain teacher effectiveness and well-being.

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Introduction

Teaching is often regarded as one of the noblest professions, yet behind its noble purpose lie daily challenges and hidden struggles. Among the most pressing of these challenges is the overwhelming workload faced by teachers, which often results in fatigue, stress, and decreased classroom effectiveness. Overwhelming job demands have been identified as a major cause of teacher burnout, leading to reduced physical and emotional energy (Malik, 2019).

The American Federation of Teachers' (2017) *Educator Quality of Work Life Survey* reported that 61% of educators frequently felt worried and exhausted, while 58% noted adverse effects on their mental

health (American Federation of Teachers & Badass Teachers Association, 2017). Similarly, Demirel and Cephe (2015) emphasized that long working hours and poor workplace conditions contribute significantly to burnout, sometimes hindering the teaching process itself. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016) further noted that teaching-related stress is a global issue that directly impacts teachers' well-being and efficiency, often leading to reduced self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and motivation.

Modern educators are expected to balance numerous responsibilities, including lesson planning, administrative work, policy adaptation, and technology integration. According to Arvidsson et al. (2019), half of the teachers surveyed attributed their increased workload to non-teaching tasks, with little to no reduction in other duties. Over the past two decades, the teaching profession has grown increasingly complex, requiring teachers to handle more paperwork, bureaucratic processes, and behavioral challenges. Teachers are also expected to motivate disengaged learners, manage time effectively, adapt to changing policies, and maintain healthy relationships with students, peers, and administrators (Hasan, 2015).

In Saudi Arabia, Tahseen (2015) observed that excessive paperwork and teaching responsibilities deprived educators of adequate rest, resulting in chronic stress. Similar patterns appeared in Sweden, where nine out of ten teachers reported unreasonable workloads and high stress levels (Jendle & Wallnäs, 2017). Desouky and Allam (2017) also found that teachers often extend their duties beyond classroom instruction by managing extracurricular programs, covering for absent colleagues, maintaining records, and motivating students—all of which increase the risk of burnout.

Teacher stress often stems from student discipline issues, administrative overload, time constraints, and ambiguous job expectations (Alkahtani et al., 2016). As a result, instructional quality suffers. Tehseen and Hadi (2015) noted that many teachers leave the profession not primarily because of salary concerns, but due to overwhelming stress and exhaustion.

Despite global attention to the issue of teacher workload and burnout, limited research has examined how workload directly impacts job performance. This study therefore aims to assess the relationship between workload, burnout, and performance, while identifying coping strategies teachers employ. The goal is to inform the creation of sustainable support systems that enhance teacher wellness and efficacy.

Literature review

This section situates the study within existing research, providing methodological grounding and theoretical context.

The role of workload in teacher burnout

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, remains a critical issue among educators. Maslach and Leiter (2016) identified excessive workload as the primary driver of burnout. A meta-analysis by García-Carmona et al. (2019) confirmed that high workloads—particularly those unrelated to instruction—are strongly correlated with burnout.

Kyriacou (2001) observed that an overwhelming workload increases stress and diminishes motivation, especially when teachers struggle to balance professional and personal life. Similarly, Friedman (2000) highlighted that pressure to meet academic standards intensifies emotional and mental strain.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, burnout rates spiked dramatically; Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al. (2021) reported a global burnout prevalence of 52%, largely due to the sudden shift to online learning and additional responsibilities. In China, Pan et al. (2023) found a strong relationship between workload and teacher well-being, emphasizing the role of organizational support.

In the Philippines, Davapula et al. (2020) identified large class sizes, lack of materials, and heavy administrative loads as major contributors to teacher burnout. Similarly, Magtalas and Eduvala (2024) found a strong correlation between workload and burnout among public school teachers, even among high-performing educators.

Overall, these findings confirm that workload is a central factor in burnout and that systemic changes—such as equitable task distribution, additional staffing, and wellness initiatives—are necessary. Bakker and Demerouti's (2017) Job Demands–Resources Model supports this, noting that excessive job demands deplete energy unless balanced by guidance, autonomy, and appreciation.

Strategies to mitigate workload and prevent burnout

Studies propose strategies at individual, organizational, and policy levels. García-Carmona et al. (2019) and Arvidsson et al. (2019) emphasized that non-teaching duties—such as paperwork and policy compliance—exacerbate stress. In China, Wang (2023) found a significant correlation between workload and poor emotional health, particularly in unsupportive environments. The pandemic further amplified these challenges (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2021).

Klusmann et al. (2021) noted that teachers who *perceive* their workload as unmanageable are more prone to emotional exhaustion, regardless of actual duties. Zhang et al. (2023) stressed that organizational support, collaboration, and professional growth opportunities buffer the negative effects of excessive workload.

Intervention research highlights mindfulness and cognitive-behavioral programs as effective coping tools. Lomas et al. (2017), Emerson et al. (2017), and Taylor et al. (2023) documented reductions in stress and improved well-being through mindfulness-based interventions. Similarly, Aloe et al. (2014) and Iancu et al. (2018) demonstrated that cognitive-behavioral therapy enhances resilience. Professional development programs emphasizing self-care, time management, and peer collaboration (Richards et al., 2016; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008) also reduce burnout.

Institutional strategies remain critical. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) and Collie et al. (2012) showed that supportive school climates and reduced administrative loads improve teacher morale and retention. Collectively, these studies emphasize that mitigating burnout requires an integrated approach that balances structural and emotional supports.

Statement of the problems

This study aimed to examine the relationship between teachers' workload, burnout, and work performance, as well as to identify strategies that can help prevent teacher burnout. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the causes of burnout among teachers and their effects?
2. What are the strategies to mitigate burnout?

Research methodology

A descriptive qualitative design employing a phenomenological approach was adopted to explore teachers' lived experiences of workload and burnout. This method allowed the researcher to gather rich, personal narratives that revealed how workload affects emotional well-being and teaching effectiveness.

Locale of the study

The study was conducted among elementary school teachers in District 1 of Laoag City.

Population and sampling

Fifteen teachers from the Division of Laoag City were purposefully selected to provide contextual insights.

Data gathering instruments

Data were collected through online interview questionnaires using Google Forms. Open-ended questions focused on workload-related stressors and coping strategies.

Data gathering procedure

Permissions were obtained from division supervisors and school principals.

Ethical consideration

The study followed Bryman and Bell's (2007) ten ethical considerations, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, and protection of participants' identities.

Results and discussion

Thematic analysis revealed three main themes: (1) physical and emotional exhaustion due to daily workload, (2) overwhelming administrative and instructional demands, and (3) declining motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers consistently reported long hours, excessive paperwork, and emotional strain as major contributors to burnout.

1. *What are the causes of stress among teachers and their effects?*

Table 1: Causes of stress

Themes	Underlying Factors	Frequency
Theme 1: Physical and emotional exhaustion due to daily workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long hours and lack of rest ● Emotional fatigue from student behavior or admin pressure ● Health issues caused by stress ● Limited time for personal well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 ● 5 ● 7 ● 10
Theme2: Overwhelming administrative and instructional demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paperwork and documentation ● Lesson planning and grading ● Extra duties (e.g., school programs, reports, trainings) ● Time constraints and multitasking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 ● 3 ● 10 ● 11
Theme 3: Declining motivation and impact on job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduced enthusiasm for teaching ● Thoughts of leaving the profession ● Feeling undervalued or unsupported ● Struggles to maintain quality performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9 ● 15 ● 5 ● 1

Sources: Garcia, R. A., & Winston, L. M. (2023), *National Education Association*. (2025, April 7), Sokal, L., Trudel, L. E., & Babb, J. C. (2020)

Theme 1: Physical and emotional exhaustion due to daily workload

Physical and emotional exhaustion emerged as one of the strongest themes in the interviews with teachers. Many participants described their daily responsibilities as overwhelming, citing long hours, tight deadlines, and insufficient time for self-care as major contributors to both mental and physical fatigue. Teachers often start their workday early and end late, juggling lesson planning, classroom instruction, meetings, grading, and administrative tasks—all of which build up over time and contribute to burnout.

As one teacher shared:

“A typical workday starts with checking emails and planning tasks. I handle meetings, reports, and deadlines, which can be physically tiring and emotionally stressful at times. I experience fatigue from long hours, but I manage stress by staying organized and taking breaks. Despite the challenges, I find it fulfilling.” (P3)

Another respondent emphasized the lack of even basic breaks during the day:

“The workload is packed with only a few minutes of break. It affects me in a way that I can't really take a long breather, or I sometimes forget to attend to my necessities like toilet and food.” (P5)

The cumulative effect of extended work hours, limited rest, and unending tasks was clearly described by another participant:

“A typical day at work starts very early, usually before 7:00 a.m., and sometimes ends late in the evening because of the extra tasks we need to finish after class. Aside from teaching, I handle lesson planning, reports, and school activities, often bringing work home. The long hours and lack of rest have affected my health—I experience frequent headaches and body pain due to stress. Emotionally, I feel drained, especially when dealing with difficult student behavior or pressure from administrators. There are times when I feel mentally and emotionally exhausted. With all the responsibilities, I hardly have time for myself or my family, which makes it even harder to recover from stress.” (P10)

This account highlights the compounding impact of institutional demands, extended workloads, and lack of rest, which take a toll not just physically, but also emotionally. Teachers often sacrifice personal time and well-being, leading to chronic fatigue, physical ailments, and emotional distress.

Another teacher emphasized the dual challenge of instruction and emotional labor:

“As a teacher in both elementary and college, a typical day involves early mornings, preparing lessons, teaching multiple classes, checking outputs, and supporting students' needs. Sometimes the workload is both mentally and physically demanding, especially if there are back-to-back assignments and different student expectations.” (P7)

This reflects the emotional burden of teaching, especially when combined with diverse learner needs, behavior management, and curriculum goals. It reveals the strain of meeting academic expectations while simultaneously addressing students' personal and emotional needs.

This finding echoes Friedman's (2000) conclusion that the pressure to meet academic standards and curriculum demands contributes significantly to the emotional and mental stress experienced by educators. The research suggests that teachers are not just physically overworked, but also emotionally taxed by the complex nature of their role.

Together, these insights illustrate how physical and emotional exhaustion is not solely the result of long hours but also stems from institutional expectations, administrative demands, and the emotional complexities of teaching. These challenges significantly affect teachers' health, work-life balance, and capacity to sustain motivation over time, fully aligning with Theme 1: Physical and Emotional Exhaustion Due to Daily Workload, as presented.

Theme 2: Overwhelming administrative and instructional demands

A dominant theme that emerged in the interviews was the overwhelming nature of both administrative and instructional demands placed on teachers. Participants frequently highlighted the burden of excessive non-teaching responsibilities—such as paperwork, grading, lesson planning, and mandatory trainings—as a major source of stress and fatigue. These duties often come with strict deadlines and

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require teachers to multitask continuously, leaving little time for meaningful instruction, rest, or professional development.

Teachers emphasized that the constant juggling of tasks consumes both their time and mental energy. As one respondent explained:

“The most overwhelming tasks in my teaching role are lesson planning, handling diverse student needs, and managing time effectively. Preparing engaging materials and giving feedback can be time-consuming, especially when balancing multiple classes.” (P3)

“As a teacher in both elementary and college, a typical day involves early mornings, preparing lessons, teaching multiple classes, checking outputs, and supporting students' needs. The work might be both physically and mentally tiresome at times, especially when you have to do a lot of tasks for multiple learners.” (P7)

Teachers also noted that even tasks seemingly unrelated to academics—such as classroom management logistics—added to the daily strain. Another teacher expressed frustration over the never-ending demands of paperwork

“One specific task I find most overwhelming in my teaching role is classroom housekeeping after class. Considering it's the first month of the school year, many of my pupils are still in the adjustment stage when it comes to following class rules and routines, especially in keeping the classroom tidy. While I understand that this is part of their learning process, it can be physically tiring and time-consuming to clean up after a full day of teaching, especially when trying to model the value of responsibility and cleanliness. However, I remain patient and consistent, knowing that as they gradually adjust, this will improve over time.” (P8)

“The most overwhelming tasks in my teaching role are the paperwork and documentation we're required to submit regularly. Lesson planning and grading also take a lot of time, especially when done alongside extra duties like school programs, reports, and trainings. With so many responsibilities and tight deadlines, multitasking becomes stressful and exhausting.” (P10)

“The most overwhelming tasks are checking piles of papers, meeting deadlines for reports, and handling too many class requirements at once. It often feels like there's not enough time to rest or focus on teaching itself.” (P11)

This sentiment illustrates how the combination of lesson preparation, student support, and instructional delivery, compounded by time pressure and administrative responsibilities, leads to emotional exhaustion. The mental fatigue caused by constantly shifting between tasks throughout the day erodes teachers' focus and engagement. A participant noted the challenge of institutional demands that stretch into personal time:

“The most overwhelming tasks are the paperwork and reports required by the school and the Department of Education, like lesson logs, learner progress reports, and different forms. Aside from teaching, we also handle administrative work, join school programs, and sometimes attend training even on weekends. All these added tasks make it hard to focus fully on teaching.” (P9)

This response reinforces how school and system-level requirements spill beyond classroom hours, often into weekends and personal time. Teachers are expected to fulfill multiple roles—educators, record-keepers, event participants—without sufficient support or boundaries. As a result, their capacity to focus on quality instruction diminishes, and stress accumulates over time. The findings are aligned with the study by the National Education Association (2025), which emphasized that excessive instructional and administrative demands are among the leading contributors to teacher burnout. The compounded responsibilities of lesson planning, documentation, extracurricular involvement, and ongoing trainings lead to chronic fatigue, lower job satisfaction, and emotional strain.

Overall, the interviews strongly support Theme 2: Overwhelming Administrative and Instructional Demands, as outlined in Table 1. Teachers are increasingly burdened by responsibilities that go beyond teaching, with insufficient time, resources, or structural support to manage them effectively. This relentless multitasking not only undermines their performance but also deteriorates their morale, motivation, and overall well-being.

Theme 3: Impact of workload on motivation and job satisfaction

Another key theme that emerged from the structured interviews was the impact of workload on teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers shared a range of experiences that reflected both the rewarding and discouraging aspects of their professional roles.

Some respondents highlighted the positive aspects of teaching, emphasizing how student appreciation and academic progress helped sustain their motivation, even amid challenging workloads. One teacher reflected:

“The workload can lower motivation and satisfaction at times but has also improved my efficiency and performance.” (P1)

Another elaborated on the dual effect of workload:

“My workload has influenced my motivation and job satisfaction in both positive and negative ways. A lot of work can occasionally be draining and demotivating. However, seeing student progress and receiving positive feedback helps me stay driven. Over time, I’ve learned to manage my tasks better, which has improved my performance and kept me more satisfied in my role.” (P3)

However, several respondents expressed frustration and declining motivation due to long hours, administrative burdens, and a perceived lack of fairness and recognition. One teacher shared:

"It sometimes makes me rethink my life and professional choices. I hear a lot of feedback from teachers abroad that their load aren't that full and yet getting more perks out of teaching (salary, resources and support). It's unfair." (P5)

Others admitted that the sustained pressure had diminished their passion for teaching:

"Over time, the heavy workload has lowered my motivation and job satisfaction. At first, I was very passionate about teaching, but with so many extra tasks, I often feel tired and overwhelmed. It affects my performance because I have less time and energy to focus on preparing quality lessons and giving attention to my students. Sometimes, I even think about leaving the profession." (P9)

"My workload has sometimes lowered my motivation and job satisfaction, especially during stressful weeks. It's hard to stay focused and energetic when there's too much to do. At times, I almost feel like giving up on teaching, but then I remember that this is my passion and that I care about my student's learning." (P15)

Another respondent echoed this concern, citing emotional exhaustion and lack of support:

"Over time, the heavy workload has reduced my enthusiasm for teaching. There are moments when I've thought about leaving the profession because I feel undervalued and unsupported. The pressure makes it hard to stay motivated, and I struggle to maintain the quality of my performance despite my best efforts." (P10)

In contrast, some teachers demonstrated a strong sense of resilience and dedication, rooted in personal values and a deep sense of calling. One teacher shared:

"It's just a mindset. No matter how challenging the work is, I bear in mind that this is my job, this is my calling, and so I have to fulfill my duties as a teacher with all my heart." (P6)

These varying responses reflect the complex relationship between workload, emotional well-being, and job satisfaction. While intrinsic motivation, student success, and a sense of purpose can help teachers stay committed, the lack of institutional support, constant demands, and administrative overload may lead to burnout, disengagement, and thoughts of leaving the profession.

These findings are supported by the research of Sokal, Trudel, and Babb (2020), which examined the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canadian teachers. Their study found that many educators experienced declining passion for teaching, a lack of support from leadership, and growing emotional fatigue, with some even contemplating leaving the profession. The combination of constant workload, emotional strain, and high expectations significantly contributed to lowered motivation and job satisfaction.

In conclusion, the voices of the participants strongly validate Theme 3: Impact of Workload on Motivation and Job Satisfaction, as outlined in Table 1. Teachers' commitment to their work remains evident, but the need for greater support, balance, and recognition is critical to sustaining their well-being and professional satisfaction.

2: *What are the strategies to mitigate burnout?*

Table 2: Strategies to mitigate burnout

Themes	Underlying Factors	Frequency
Theme 1: Personal coping strategies for managing work-related stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time management and prioritization ● Physical self-care (exercise, sleep, diet) ● Emotional/mental wellness (journaling, meditation, hobbies) ● Seeking social support (family, peers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 ● 13 ● 8 ● 9
Theme 2: Institutional support and its role in burnout prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Availability of professional development or mental health programs ● Administrative support and understanding ● Workload adjustments (e.g., task delegation, flexible schedules) ● Perceived effectiveness or lack thereof 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 ● 9 ● 8 ● 5
Theme 3: Teacher recommended interventions for reducing burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce administrative burdens ● Improve teacher staffing and resource allocation ● Encourage open communication and feedback ● Establish wellness programs or support systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 ● 9 ● 8 ● 14

Source: *Baranggan, J. P. (2024)*

Theme 1: Personal coping strategies for managing work-related stress

This theme highlights the diverse and individualized ways teachers cope with stress resulting from workload and professional responsibilities. Despite the intensity of their roles, many educators have developed effective personal strategies to manage pressure and maintain their overall well-being.

A recurring coping mechanism among participants was **time management and task prioritization**, which played a central role in minimizing daily stress. One participant explained:

“I use time management, regular breaks, and exercise to manage workload stress.” (P1)

Another participant emphasized how organizing tasks in advance contributed to maintaining focus and reducing anxiety:

“To manage stress related to my workload, I set a to-do list at the end of each day to prepare and organize tasks for the following day. This helps me stay focused and avoid feeling overwhelmed. I also dedicate 30 minutes every afternoon to working out, which helps me release tension and maintain both my physical and mental well-being.” (P8)

In addition to time management, **physical self-care** emerged as a crucial element of stress management. Several participants reported that getting adequate sleep, eating healthy meals, and engaging in regular physical activity helped them stay grounded and energized:

“I try to make time for self-care, like getting enough sleep, spending time with my family, and doing activities that help me relax, such as reading and painting.” (P4)

“To manage stress, I try to manage my time well and prioritize tasks. I also take short breaks when I can, talk to co-teachers for support, and spend time with my family to relax. Sometimes, I listen to music or pray to calm my mind. These small things help me cope, even if the workload is still heavy.” (P9)

“To manage stress and cope with burnout, I make sure to do things I love such as sketching, listening to music, and exercising through walking or jogging to maintain my emotional and physical well-being.” (P13)

Participants also identified the value of **emotional and mental self-care**, often practiced through engaging in hobbies, journaling, meditating, or spiritual activities. These routines provided moments of calm and reflection, which were essential for sustaining mental health.

Additionally, **social support** stood out as a significant coping strategy. Whether through spending time with family, talking to colleagues, or reconnecting with friends, these interactions provided emotional reassurance and a sense of belonging. Teachers shared that such support systems reduced feelings of isolation and made challenging days more manageable.

The variety of coping mechanisms described demonstrates that while stress is a common experience among educators, the methods of managing it are deeply personal. Individual routines, personal preferences, and the presence of supportive relationships all contribute to building resilience in the profession.

These findings align with the work of **Baranggan (2024)**, who emphasized the importance of tailored coping strategies in preventing teacher burnout. The study identified key stress management techniques such as time management, physical wellness practices, and activities promoting emotional health (e.g., hobbies and journaling). Baranggan further highlighted the critical role of social support from peers and family in maintaining mental health and fostering long-term resilience among educators.

Theme 2: Institutional support and its role in burnout prevention

This theme explores the influence of institutional support on managing teacher stress and preventing burnout. While many educators acknowledge the importance of personal coping strategies, there is a shared understanding that systemic and administrative support is equally crucial in promoting sustainable well-being within the teaching profession.

Some participants described positive experiences with institutional support, particularly when workloads were fairly distributed or when leadership demonstrated flexibility and understanding:

“Yes, I have received support from my school in dealing with workload-related stress. The tasks assigned to me are fair and well-distributed, which helps prevent burnout. This help has made it achievable for me to get my work done quickly while keeping a good atmosphere at work.” (P8)

Others highlighted occasional initiatives, such as wellness programs or learning sessions aimed at promoting mental health. However, these were often described as short-lived or superficial:

“Yes, one time during our LAC session, we were taught about yoga exercises to help relieve stress. But it was done once only; I haven’t practiced it in my day-to-day life.” (P6)

“Yes, we sometimes receive support like wellness seminars or reminders to practice self-care. Some school heads are also understanding when we ask for extensions. But honestly, the support is limited. The workload remains the same, and we still handle many tasks. So while the intention is good, it’s not always effective in reducing stress.” (P9)

For several respondents, institutional efforts were seen as inadequate or even contradictory. Teachers expressed frustration that while schools promote mental health in principle, actual working conditions often undermine those efforts:

“I do receive support from my colleagues in the form of emotional support, and from the institution in the form of seminars. I find seminars to be additional workload and stressful at times.” (P5)

“Nope, did not. Them promoting mental health to employees contradicts their system.” (P7)

These responses suggest that symbolic or one-off gestures—such as seminars or wellness activities—may lack the depth or continuity needed to address the persistent stressors teachers face. Moreover, without tangible changes in workload distribution, administrative expectations, or institutional culture, such initiatives may have little meaningful impact.

Overall, the findings reveal that while institutional support exists in some form across various settings, its effectiveness is mixed. Teachers appreciate efforts to acknowledge their well-being, but many view these as insufficient, inconsistent, or misaligned with the realities of their professional demands. For institutional support to be truly effective, it must be perceived as genuine, consistent, and responsive to the lived experiences of educators.

These insights echo the findings of Baranggan (2024), who emphasized that while access to professional development, mental health programs, and supportive leadership are critical in preventing teacher burnout, the perceived relevance and sustainability of such support determine their actual effectiveness.

Baranggan concluded that institutions must go beyond symbolic actions and work toward implementing practical, long-term solutions that align with educators' real needs and challenges.

Theme 3: Teacher-recommended interventions for reducing burnout

This theme captures the practical and experience-based recommendations shared by teachers for addressing and minimizing burnout in the profession. Educators emphasized that beyond coping mechanisms and occasional institutional support, long-term solutions must include systemic and policy-level changes driven by the actual needs of teachers.

A primary recommendation voiced by many respondents was to reduce administrative workload and allow teachers to focus more on instruction. This includes eliminating excessive paperwork, unproductive meetings, and redundant reporting tasks. One teacher stated:

“To reduce teacher burnout caused by workload, school administrators should first streamline and reduce unnecessary administrative tasks and meetings. Providing more support staff and adequate teaching resources can also significantly ease their burden. Finally, fostering a supportive school culture that prioritizes teacher well-being and work-life balance is crucial, perhaps by involving teachers in finding practical solutions.” (P3)

Others echoed similar sentiments, adding that fair task distribution and realistic deadlines are essential:

“I recommend that school administrators reduce unnecessary paperwork and give teachers more time to focus on teaching. It would also help if tasks are fairly distributed and deadlines are realistic. Providing regular support, open communication, and wellness programs can also make a big difference in preventing burnout.” (P9)

Teachers also stressed the need for adequate staffing and resource allocation. One respondent explained:

“Teacher burnout is often caused by heavy workloads and the pressure to meet multiple demands. To help address this, I recommend fair distribution of tasks, giving all teachers a manageable share of responsibilities... Support through open communication, recognition, and collaboration eases stress and builds a positive work culture.” (P8)

Common recommendations include reducing class sizes and non-teaching duties, providing a balanced workload, offering mental health support, and allowing time for rest and planning. Recognition, teamwork, and open communication:

“In general, it would be better to reduce non-teaching tasks, and reduce the class size as well.” (P4)

“I recommend that school administrators provide a more balanced workload, offer mental health support, and ensure proper time for rest and planning. Regular recognition, teamwork, and open communication can also help reduce teacher burnout” (P14)

The establishment of wellness initiatives and designated rest areas was also suggested to help teachers physically and emotionally recharge. Teachers proposed programs such as institution-sponsored mental health activities, gym memberships, and even simple infrastructure like lounges for resting:

“I do wish school admin would follow the correct teaching load directive and provide some institution-sponsored outdoor and mental health activities. Activities like sponsored gym memberships, outdoor hiking and more.” (P5)

“Designated room to relax during vacant or lunch time (teachers' lounge).” (P10)

Lastly, teachers advocated for open communication with school leadership and a culture of recognition and appreciation. Feeling heard and involved in decision-making processes was seen as a crucial component in building trust and preventing burnout.

These collective insights emphasize that addressing burnout requires structural reform, not just temporary interventions. Educators are calling for an environment that genuinely supports their well-being through reduced workload, fair policies, consistent support systems, and opportunities for rest and recovery.

These recommendations align closely with the findings of Baranggan (2024), who emphasized the critical importance of teacher-driven interventions in mitigating burnout. According to the study, burnout can be significantly reduced by decreasing administrative burdens, increasing staffing, providing wellness programs, encouraging communication between teachers and administrators, and fostering a supportive institutional culture. Baranggan also highlighted that sustainable change is only possible when teachers are given a voice in crafting and implementing solutions that directly affect their day-to-day experiences.

Conclusion

The study confirmed that teachers are deeply committed to their profession but face considerable challenges that lead to varying degrees of burnout. While many employ personal coping strategies—such as time management, exercise, and social support—these methods alone are insufficient without strong institutional backing. Effective workload management, supportive leadership, and mental health initiatives are crucial for sustaining motivation and teaching quality.

It is recommended that school leaders provide mentoring programs, promote collaborative environments, recognize achievements, and establish wellness initiatives to maintain morale. Teachers, in turn, must strive for a healthy work-life balance and self-care to preserve their well-being and effectiveness.

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