

Burnout among secondary teachers amid the new normal: Case in Ormoc City, Philippines

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Abstract

The new normal has shifted high school teachers' jobs from face-to-face to modular distance learning which requires more paperwork. This research article investigated job burnout among secondary teachers in Ormoc City Division, Leyte, Philippines, and elucidated the statistically significant factors affecting it. Primary data were gathered from a simple random sample of 132 high school teachers in the City of Ormoc. To summarise the acquired survey results, typical descriptive metrics such as frequency tables, percentages, mean average, and standard deviation were used to summarize the gathered survey data. The Chi-square test of independence was employed to capture the different factors influencing job burnout. The findings revealed that, on average, secondary teachers are “highly burnout” in modular and distance learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic setup. The Chi-square test showed that marital status and department/school assignment are the factors influencing teachers’ burnout levels. In particular, the cross-tabulation of marital status and burnout category revealed that married teachers are mostly highly burnout. Finally, responsibilities and duties in their household contribute to the teachers’ working stress and tiredness. Furthermore, different schools have varying job assignments, with some schools assigning heavier loads, resulting in severe teacher burnout. According to the report, school leaders should prioritize teachers’ well-being by reducing their responsibilities and implementing leisure school activities to alleviate stressful circumstances.

Keywords: Causal factors, high school, job burnout, Ormoc City

Introduction

The world health crisis has triggered education to shift from face-to-face learning to online and modular learning (Casinillo et al., 2022). Most of the high school level is done only with the modular type of learning with minimal supervision of teachers (Bustillo & Aguilos, 2022). Modular learning is quite a new type of education that most teachers have no experience in implementing for their students. At the same time, students are struggling to understand the given modules since teachers cannot guide them and explain rigorously the lessons. Hence, teachers are more likely unsatisfied with their job because of an ineffective teaching-learning process during the pandemic (Sokal et al., 2020). Most teachers can feel the stressful nature of work due to the challenge and undesired results of their plans and objectives as an educator. In that case, working too much without an accurate outcome for their students make them feel weary and burnout. Note that burnout is a kind of mental and physical exhaustion that causes severe stress and prolonged uneasiness (Gómez-Domínguez et al., 2022). In reality, burnout is substantially higher during pandemics than it is on typical days (Pressley, 2021). In that case, investigating the nature of job burnout in the new normal might provide the remedy to increase the teacher's well-being despite the challenges.

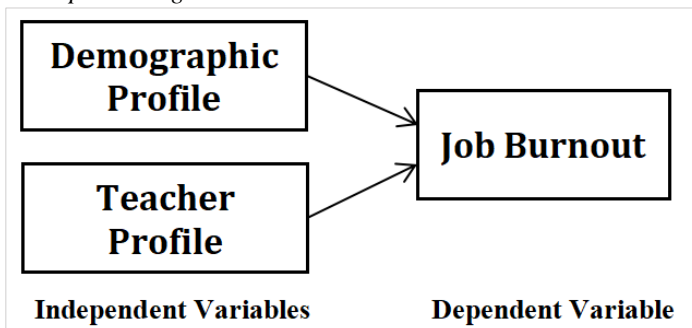
Constant job burnout is a peril for teachers' work retention and satisfaction. Moreover, teachers' burnout may cause them mental and emotional disorder that adversely affects the teaching performance (Vargas-Rubilar & Oros, 2021). Likewise, Chen et al. (2020) depicted that most of the teachers amid the new normal have felt tiresome and unsatisfied with their jobs and ended burnout. In fact, because of the heavy task assigned to them, most of the teachers during the pandemic felt unproductive because they could not monitor their students' progress. Teachers are just constructing modules or learning materials and giving them to their students. Students are alone and responsible for reading the given learning materials. In that case, students learning is not properly enhanced and guided by the teachers which makes them unsatisfied with their work. Plus, an individual visit to each of the students' places makes them exhausted because of remote areas. Overall, even though the teaching-learning process during the pandemic is not efficient and effective, however, it is the least effective solution to ensure the continuity of education activity. The study by Sánchez-Pujalte et al. (2021), showed that the burnout level of teachers is rising due to stressful work and boredom because of lack of interaction. So, it is vital to study the features of job burnout in teaching, so that one can form an argument that might improve the well-being of educators as well as increase job satisfaction.

Even though the job burnout for teachers during the new normal is well-researched, nonetheless, the factors of job burnout of high school teachers in rural areas in the Philippines have never been investigated. In that case, this article is inspired to bridge the said research gap. Hence, the main purpose of this research is to explain the burnout level of high school teachers and depict the governing factors amid the modular type of learning process. In specific, the article sought out the following goals: (i) to characterize the profile of high school teachers; (ii) to measure the level of job burnout of high school teachers; and (iii) to determine the causal factors that affect job burnout. The study aimed to give insights into the teachers' work experience during the modular type of learning. Plus, the results of this article are hoped to provide useful information that will enhance existing policy that favors the teacher's well-being and job satisfaction. Moreover, the study may be used by other educators and practitioners as the benchmark for further research studies and may contribute to the involved bodies regarding teachers' psychological well-being in school.

Conceptual framework

Job burnout is described as exhaustion in work wherein their well-being is getting lower and lower due to perceived stress (Kumawat, 2020). Burnout is a kind of emotional exhaustion that diminishes interest in the job and changes their attitudes into negative thinking (Sokal et al., 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, high school teachers were experiencing an unprecedented task which is modular distance learning (Niken Purnamasari et al., 2020). Modular learning is a kind of instruction that lets the students learn individually at their home, that is, self-learning. The teacher's duty is to print the modules and give them to every student at their respective places (Talimodao & Madrigal, 2021). After the students have answered and completed the learning task teachers are going to collect them for checking their answers. And this work is a routine for the new normal and it is exhausting for the side of teachers. In fact, the new setup in country Philippines in the aspect of education is defined by remote learning wherein the responsibility in learning relies on the students and their families (Agaton & Cueto, 2021). On the face of it, there are so many challenges and obstacles that teachers and students are experiencing during the pandemic wherein they have a low level of self-efficacy (Bustillo & Aguilos, 2022; Casinillo, 2023). Most of the teachers are feeling tired and unsatisfied which causes them to high burnout level. According to Pressley (2021), burnout level is somehow governed by their profile, experiences, location, and work assignment. Hence, the conceptual framework of this study intends to explain the factors of burnout level of high school teachers amid the new normal as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Conceptual Diagram



Methodology

Research design

This paper utilized the descriptive-correlational research design in which it summarizes and describes the variables of interest and captures the bi-variate relationship among them. Standard descriptive analysis was used to depict the characteristics of the burnout level of teachers and statistical inference was employed to make some predictions in determining its governing factors.

Respondents of the study

The study took place in the City of Ormoc, Leyte, Philippines. The researchers considered the top three high schools in Ormoc City Division which has the highest teacher turnover rate. Hence, the following schools were the subject of interest: (1) Linao National High School, (2) Valencia National High School, and (3) Margen National High School.

The population of interest is all the secondary teachers of the stated high schools. In determining the sample size, Slovin's formula was used as follows (Casinillo, 2019):

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where n pertains to the sample size (desired participants) of the survey, N refers to the population size (total number of teachers) and e refers to the margin of error. In this study, the researchers set the margin of error to be $e=5\%$ so that the sample can represent the population and can increase the confidence interval of the desired parameters. Hence, the computed sample size from a population of 199 teachers was a total of 132 teachers. The sample size was proportionate to each school and simple random sampling was employed using random numbers in a scientific calculator. Table 1 shows the distribution of participants in each chosen school.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents per School

High school of Ormoc Division	Population	Sample
Margen National High School	53	36
Linao National High School	66	44
Valencia National High School	80	52
Total	199	132

Research instrument, data collection, and ethics

This article used a constructed survey questionnaire consisting of two parts adapted from the studies of Demerouti and Bakker (2008), and Vargas-Rubilar and Oros (2021). Part I of the survey instrument consists of the socio-demographic profile of the secondary teachers that includes: their name (optional), age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, job classification or rank, length of service (in years), employment status, and monthly salary (in Philippine Peso (PHP)). As for this socio-demographic profile, a closed-ended format was used. For the second part, a structured questionnaire was constructed and adapted from the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI). Part II of the survey was used to determine the level of job burnout among secondary teachers. It consists of sixteen (16) statements to which the teachers may respond based on their perception. This questionnaire has two kinds of questions for the teachers, namely, the level of burnout concerning disengagement and the level of job burnout in regard to exhaustion. A four (4)-point rating scale in the form of a Likert scale such as 1- Strongly Agree, 2 - Agree, 3 - Disagree, and 4 - Strongly Disagree. The mean average perception scores of each question were calculated, and the lower score indicates that a teacher has a higher level of burnout and the higher score indicates a lower level of burnout. As for the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, three (3) experts in social sciences have evaluated it and found that it captures the emotional well-being of teachers. Moreover, the reliability of the disengagement questions is from 0.73 to 0.85, and the exhaustion questions

range from 0.74 to 0.84 (Reis et al., 2015), which indicates that it is reliable to use. Table 2 shows the possible response of teachers and their verbal interpretation.

Table 2
Teachers' Possible Perception Score and Response

Mean score	Response	Verbal interpretation
1.00 - 1.75	Strongly agree	Extremely burnout
1.76 - 2.50	Agree	Highly burnout
2.51 - 3.25	Disagree	Moderately burnout
3.26 - 4.00	Strongly disagree	Low burnout

Prior to the conduct of the survey, the researchers obtained consent from the Superintendent of Ormoc City Schools Division. Due COVID-19 pandemic, the researchers adhered to the basic safety health protocols implemented in the City of Ormoc. The participation consent statement was also presented in the first part of the survey questionnaire to be acknowledged by the teachers. Specifically, the survey was self-administered in which the questionnaires were given personally to the teachers in their respective schools and were given ample time to respond. Lastly, the confidentiality of the gathered data was rest assured.

Data presentation and analysis

In analyzing and presenting the gathered data (socio-demographic and burnout level), descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were calculated and presented in a tabular form. In addition, the Chi-square test for independence (cross-tabulation between categories) was used in analyzing the association between the socio-demographic and burnout levels of high school teachers and tested at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels of significance.

Results and discussion

Profile of secondary teachers

The socio-demographic profile of high school teachers in Ormoc City is depicted in Table 3 and summarized using frequency distribution as well as its corresponding percentages (%). It is shown that there are 23.48% of these teachers are male and 76.52% are female. Most (44.7%) of these teachers are aged 20-30 years old, about 27.27% of them are between 31-40 years old, 21.21% of them are 41-50 years old and 6.82% of them are 51-65 years old. In that case, most of these teachers are relatively young faculty in their area of assignment. In addition, the majority (62.88%) of them are married teachers who have a big responsibility as opposed to non-married. About 34.09% of these teachers are single, 1.52% are widowers, 1.52% are separated for confidential reasons and no teacher has a divorced type of civil status. It is worth noting that most of these teachers are relatively young, hence, most of their highest educational attainment is a Bachelor's degree (70.45%) in education. Only 28.79% of them graduated master's degree which is an ideal educational attainment for secondary teachers and there is only 1 (0.76%) teacher who graduated doctorate in this group of teachers. As for teachers' work assignments, about 33.33% of the faculty are teaching at Linao National High School, 27.27% at Margen National High School, and 39.39% at Valencia National High School. Most (42.42%) of these teachers are within 1-5 years in service, 40.91% are within 6-10 years in service, 6.82% are within 11-15 years in service, 6.06% are within 16-20 years in

service, 2.27% are within 21-25 years in service, and 1.52% are within 26-30 years in service. Regarding job status, only 1 (0.76%) teacher is a substitute, about 4.55% of them are provisional teachers, and the dominant (94.70) are regular permanent teachers. Moreover, in the rank or job classification, the majority of these teachers are classified as Teacher I-III, about 6.06% are classified as Master Teacher I-II, and 1.52% of them are Master Teacher III-IV. Lastly, the majority (84.09%) of these teachers have a net monthly income of 21,000-30,000 PHP, 15.15% of them have 31,000-40,000 PHP, and only 1 (0.76%) teacher has a net income ranging from 10,000-20,000 PHP. It is worth noting that their income has already been deducted by taxes, some benefits, and credits.

Table 3
Frequency and its Percentages for the Profile of High School Teachers

Profile of High School Teachers	Frequency Count	Percentages (%)
Gender		
Male	31	23.48
Female	101	76.52
Age		
20-30 years old	59	44.70
31-40 years old	36	27.27
41-50 years old	28	21.21
51-65 years old	9	6.82
Marital Status		
Single	45	34.09
Married	83	62.88
Widowed	2	1.52
Divorced	0	0.00
Separated	2	1.52
Educational Attainment		
Bachelors Degree	93	70.45
Masters Degree	38	28.79
Doctorate Degree	1	0.76
School Assignment		
Linao National High School	44	33.33
Margen National High School	36	27.27
Valencia National High School	52	39.39
Years in Service as a Teacher		
1 - 5 years	56	42.42
6 - 10 years	54	40.91
11 - 15 years	9	6.82
16 - 20 years	8	6.06
21 - 25 years	3	2.27
26 - 30 years	2	1.52
Employment Status		

Substitute Teacher	1	0.76
Provisional Teacher	6	4.55
Regular Permanent Teacher	125	94.70
Job Classification (Rank)		
Teacher I-III	122	92.42
Master Teacher I-II	8	6.06
Master Teacher III-IV	2	1.52
Monthly Salary (Net)		
10,000-20,000 (Philippine Peso (PHP))	1	0.76
21,000-30,000 (Philippine Peso (PHP))	111	84.09
31,000-40,000 (Philippine Peso (PHP))	20	15.15

Job burnout of secondary teachers

Table 4 depicted that there are 6.06% of the secondary teachers in Ormoc City have chosen “*strongly agree*” that they have experienced extreme burnout in their workplace. This means that during the pandemic, they are facing exhausting and stressful job assignments, especially in dealing with their students and the teaching and learning process itself. According to Sokal et al. (2020), amidst the pandemic, educational institutions face challenges in terms of opportunities and resources, leading to difficulties in effectively sharing knowledge with students. In that case, teachers are always complaining about the scenarios during the health crisis which results in negative emotions, stress, and burnout. Gómez-Domínguez et al. (2022) stated that their work at school was changed to more demanding and emotionally exhausting, hence, they become stressed and depressed aside from the health issues around their environment. In fact, the majority of these teachers “*agree*” (86.36%) that they have experienced high burnout in their respective jobs (Table 4). Teachers have had difficulty in reaching their students and they lack collaboration with the student's parents due to a deficiency of networks, gadgets and devices, and poor internet connection. According to Cahapay et al. (2023), teachers cannot properly monitor their student's progress, parents cannot present the core and practical contents of their lessons, and students' does not support retention, which leads to low performance in learning. In that case, teachers feel ineffective in their workplace and dispirited because of the amount of effort they invested but does not guarantee the quality of learning. According to Castroverde and Acala (2021), it is mentioned that teachers are being challenged in producing lesson plans, printing and distributing modules on time, monitoring and evaluating students' outputs, and how to provide feedback amid the barriers of health protocols. There are only 7.58% of these teachers chose to “*disagree*” that they have experienced job burnout in their workplace during the new normal (Table 4). In that case, they perceived that their job was just moderately challenging, and they might have just faced a moderate level of burnout. These teachers have developed resiliency and have good self-efficacy to cope with stressful moments during remote teaching and learning. According to Lagat (2021), teachers have demonstrated resilience to continue their job as an educator as a profession and as a service during the health crisis. However, none of the teachers believed that everything was easy during the health crisis (Table 4). This means that every teacher has encountered some unprecedented situation in their teaching career and experienced a difficult task that makes them stressed and challenged during the pandemic (Hamzeh Mohammad Alrawashdeh et al., 2021; Baran & Dana AlZoubi, 2020; Bustillo & Aguilos, 2022; Suppan et al., 2020; Talimodao & Madrigal, 2021).

Table 4
Level of Job Burnout Distribution for Secondary Teachers

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)	Verbal interpretation
Strongly agree	8	6.06	Extremely burnout
Agree	114	86.36	Highly burnout
Disagree	10	7.58	Moderately burnout
Strongly disagree	0	0.00	Low burnout
Mean (\pm SD)	2.17 (\pm 0.24)		Highly burnout ^a

Note. a - See Table 2 for details.

Factors influencing the secondary teachers' job burnout

As seen in Table 5, age ($X^2=5.19$, p -value=0.52) is not a factor of job burnout during the new normal. This implies that regardless of age, young or old teacher, they were equally challenged during distance learning and experienced the same emotional exhaustion in their respective workplace. In the same manner, the gender ($X^2=1.68$, p -value=0.43) of a teacher does not statistically influence the job burnout level. This goes to infer that male or female teacher has the same experience in regard to the challenges and barriers in distance education. Next, educational attainment ($X^2=3.44$, p -value=0.49) does not affect the level of burnout of teachers in doing their job amid the pandemic. This implies that bachelor's, master's, and doctorate holders might have the same experience as secondary educators amid the new normal setting. In addition, job classification ($X^2=1.71$, p -value=0.79) has no association with the teachers' burnout level in their work. In that case, teachers with lower and higher ranks both have the same experience in job burnout as they educate their students. Plus, current employment ($X^2=1.17$, p -value=0.88) or job status does not correlate with their burnout level. This depicts that both substitute, provisional, and regular permanent teachers are having the same challenge in terms of teaching during the pandemic. Likewise, length of service ($X^2=15.59$, p -value=0.21) has nothing to do with the burnout level of teachers that they are experiencing amid remote education. Thus, junior and senior teachers might have the same level of burnout during the health crisis. Moreover, the monthly net income of teachers does not affect their level of job burnout as well and it does not help to ease their work. This indicates that both teachers with high or low income are still facing the same struggles and work exhaustion executing the modular type of learning. In this regard, teachers during remote teaching have the same amount of perceived burnout and stress in their jobs (Kumawat, 2020; Sokal et al., 2020). According to Vargas-Rubilar and Oros (2021), teachers are having difficulty in dealing with effectiveness in teaching because they lack training, preparation for the unprecedented situation, lack of resources, and limitations brought by health protocols.

Table 5
Chi-square Test for the Factors Affecting the Job Burnout of Teachers

Causal factors	Chi-square test		
	χ^2	df	p-value
Age (in years)	5.19 ^{ns}	6	0.52
Gender	1.68 ^{ns}	2	0.43
Marital status	12.98*	6	0.04
Highest educational attainment	3.44 ^{ns}	4	0.49
Job classification	1.71 ^{ns}	4	0.79
Current employment	1.17 ^{ns}	4	0.88
Length of service (in years)	15.59 ^{ns}	10	0.21
Monthly income (net)	0.46 ^{ns}	4	0.98
Department/school assignment	17.54**	4	0.00

**p<0.01. *p<0.5; df - degrees of freedom.

It is revealed in Table 5 that the marital status ($X^2=12.98$, p-value=0.04) of a teacher is associated with the level of job burnout during distance learning and it is statistically significant at a 5% level. This goes to infer that the burnout level varies in the different marital statuses. Table 6 displays the cross-tabulation between various marital statuses and different job categories of secondary educators during the pandemic. It is shown that there are single and married teachers who perceive that teaching during the new normal is extremely burnout due to the obstacles and barriers they have faced in their workplace. Moreover, the majority of married teachers are highly burnout might be due to the other responsibilities in their household. Married teachers were distracted due to family concerns during the pandemic, which contributed to their burnout level in their workplace. According to Sarabia and Collantes (2020), aside from work-related burnout as a teacher, stress is tied to difficulties outside the workplace, that is, personal or family-related problems that negatively affect their well-being. In fact, Atef Abuhmaid (2022) depicted that married teachers are reported to have a high level of burnout due to the emotional draining towards family needs and school duties, wherein they are having obstacles to unending demands.

Table 6
Cross Tabulation between Marital Status and Job Burnout Level

Marital Status	Job Burnout Category			Total
	Extremely	Highly	Moderately	
Single	4	40	1	45
Married	4	72	7	83
Widowed	0	1	1	2
Separated	0	1	1	2
Total	8	114	10	132

As depicted in Table 5, department or school assignment ($X^2=17.54$, p-value<0.01) affected the level of job burnout of secondary teachers during the health crisis and this is statistically significant at a 1% level. In that case, teachers' work exhaustion and work-related stress depend on the workplace and the task assignment produced. Based on the cross-tabulation (Table 7), there are faculties in Linao NHS who perceived that they are extremely

burnout. This might be due to the school has required more demand concerning work assignments that need to be accomplished. In that case, teachers might experience much tightened tasks and pressure in their job which contributes to their burnout level. In the study of Vargas-Rubilar and Oros (2021), it is perceived that teachers with higher workloads experience more stress and discomfort that trigger their job burnout level. Moreover, the majority of the teachers responded they have experienced high burnout levels working in Valencia NHS. This implies that Valencia NHS might have more tasks for the teachers and more goals to be accomplished during the new normal. The teachers might be working to their limit and there is a higher chance that they are feeling tired and dissatisfied with their job which causes high burnout (Chen et al., 2020). In other words, the burnout level of teachers is caused by excessive physical, emotional, and mental stress from the workplace. Aside from the demand for work in the respective school assignments, teachers' effectiveness in the quality of students' learning is part of the picture that makes them stressed and unhappy (Misbah Sadiq, 2020). Moreover, Sokal et al. (2020) depicted that teacher are also bothered by the effect of the pandemic wherein they are dealing with anxiety and uncertainty that negatively affects their job commitment.

Table 7

Cross Tabulation between Workplace and Job Burnout Level

School Assignment	Job Burnout Category			Total
	Extremely	Highly	Moderately	
Linao NHS	8	33	3	44
Margen NHS	0	34	2	36
Valencia NHS	0	47	5	52
Total	8	114	10	132

Note. NHS - National High School

Conclusion

The aim of this article is to look into the sufficient argument that explores the level of job burnout of secondary teachers and elucidate its significant factors. Results showed that, on average, secondary teachers are considered "highly burnout" in their workplace as they deal with modular and distance learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic setup. Based on the Chi-square test of independence, it is shown that the marital status of teachers and the department/school are the significant factors affecting the burnout level in their job. It is evident in the cross-tabulation of marital status and burnout category that married teachers are significantly highly burnout in their work. Their home responsibilities and the duties of their respective family members might contribute to the workplace stress and exhaustion of the secondary teachers. Moreover, various high schools have different work assignments in which some schools give more heavy loads which causes a high burnout level of teachers. Hence, some teachers are more highly burnout because of the heavy workloads and assignments in a particular school. In conclusion, the study strongly suggests that teachers' well-being must be the concern of school heads to at least reduce their workloads and task assignments to be prepared. In addition, it is recommended that school heads and policy-makers in education focus on increasing the well-being of teachers during the pandemic by giving incentives and vacations to ease their work stress. Moreover, the government should provide suitable resources (school gadgets and good internet connectivity) for distance learning and promote healthy organizational dimensions that do not exploit the teachers which leads to high job burnout. Furthermore, as a future study, a detailed investigation needs to be done to elucidate

the secondary teachers' happiness and job satisfaction and incorporate economic variables during the new normal.

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