



TEACHER-RELATED BURNOUT EXPERIENCES AMONG PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore teacher-related burnout experiences among public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City, focusing on the stressors that contributed to burnout, the coping mechanisms employed by the teachers, and the insights drawn from teachers' resilience in sustaining their passion and commitment to teaching despite burnout. A qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach was used to capture the lived experiences of the nine purposively selected Kindergarten to Grade three teachers with at least ten years of experience. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and analyzed using Colaizzi's method. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly observed. Findings revealed that teacher burnout was mainly caused by workload demands, emotional exhaustion, administrative responsibilities, and classroom challenges. Despite these, teachers demonstrated resilience through coping mechanisms such as collegial support, self-regulation strategies, positive thinking, time management, and strong professional commitment. Key insights showed that sustaining passion in teaching was linked to emotional regulation, supportive relationships, self-care, and professional growth. The study concluded that teacher burnout is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by both individual and organizational factors, while resilience is sustained through personal and social support systems. It was recommended that school leaders strengthen workload management, enhance teacher support programs, and promote wellness initiatives. Teachers were encouraged to maintain effective coping strategies, while families and communities were urged to provide emotional support. Future researchers were encouraged to conduct similar studies in other contexts and use mixed-method approaches to deepen understanding of teacher burnout and resilience.

KEYWORDS: *Burnout; elementary; experiences; public; schools; teacher-related*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are widely regarded as the central force in delivering quality education; however, their daily work often extends far beyond classroom instruction. In practice, many teachers are confronted with a range of demands that gradually accumulate and may lead to burnout. This condition is commonly experienced as emotional exhaustion, reduced enthusiasm for teaching, and feeling overwhelmed by ongoing responsibilities. Based on common accounts and observed experiences in the teaching field, these difficulties are often linked to heavy workloads, multiple administrative tasks, large class sizes, and the emotional effort required in handling diverse learners with different needs and behaviors.

Globally, teacher burnout remains a major concern as educators face increasing workloads, administrative pressures, and emotional demands across education systems. In countries such as Japan and the United States, teachers report high levels of stress related to lesson preparation, classroom management, and excessive paperwork. Research indicates that these job demands contribute significantly to emotional exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction among teachers (Jerrim & Sims, 2021). These findings suggest that teacher stress is a widespread issue across countries, driven largely by workload intensification and limited institutional support, which ultimately affects teacher well-being and retention (Klassen & Kim, 2020)

Moreover, country-specific evidence shows that in the United States, teachers frequently report burnout associated with stress, low pay, and classroom behavioral challenges, while in Japan, educators continue to experience significant pressure from lesson preparation and administrative responsibilities despite generally strong classroom discipline systems. These patterns indicate that teacher workload and emotional strain remain persistent issues across different educational contexts. Recent reports further emphasize that burnout is a widespread global concern that negatively affects teacher retention and the overall quality of education systems (Jerrim & Sims, 2021; OECD, 2021).

In the Philippines, teacher burnout is commonly associated with heavy workloads, extensive administrative tasks, and multiple non-teaching responsibilities that extend beyond classroom instruction. Public school teachers often report managing large class sizes while simultaneously preparing lessons, completing reports, and complying with various school requirements within limited time and resources. Llamas (2021) noted that these increasing job demands place considerable strain on teachers, contributing to emotional exhaustion and reduced work-life balance. In addition, Bernardo (2023)



emphasized that sustained administrative pressures and classroom demands significantly challenge teachers' ability to maintain instructional effectiveness. As a result, many teachers experience difficulty sustaining performance while coping with continuous workplace pressures.

In addition, the demands of the Philippine basic education system are further intensified by structural and organizational challenges that affect teacher well-being. Cruz (2022) emphasizes that high administrative burden and insufficient support systems are key contributors to stress and burnout among teachers in public schools. In the same context, Delos Reyes (2021) highlights that limited instructional resources and increasing non-teaching assignments further strain teachers' capacity to deliver quality instruction. Likewise, Bautista (2023) notes that these conditions continue to impact teacher performance and long-term retention in the profession. These conditions highlight how non-teaching responsibilities and resource limitations continue to affect teacher performance and retention. Overall, these realities suggest that addressing teacher burnout in the Philippines requires both workload management and stronger institutional support mechanisms.

In the context of public elementary schools in Tagum City Division, teacher burnout is increasingly associated with heavy workloads, extensive administrative responsibilities, and multiple non-teaching tasks that reduce time for instruction and personal recovery. Many teachers are required to accomplish various reports and compliance-related duties alongside classroom instruction, which contributes to emotional exhaustion and work pressure. Similarly, Orines et al. (2023) found that excessive job demands among public school teachers are strongly linked to burnout and reduced well-being. In addition, classroom-related challenges such as large class sizes and limited instructional resources further intensify stress among teachers in local school settings. Gamalo and Abellana (2025) emphasize that workload imbalance and classroom management demands significantly contribute to professional burnout, highlighting the need for stronger institutional support and workload management in Tagum City Division public elementary schools.

Despite the growing body of literature on teacher burnout, several gaps remain evident in the existing studies. Substantively, most research has focused on identifying levels and causes of burnout, with limited attention to how teachers meaningfully sustain resilience and commitment in the face of persistent stressors. Contextually, there is a lack of in-depth studies situated in specific local settings, such as public elementary schools in the Tagum City Division, where workload demands and school conditions may differ from those in other regions. Methodologically, many existing studies rely on quantitative approaches, which may not fully capture the lived experiences and personal meanings of teachers' coping and resilience; thus, a qualitative phenomenological approach is needed to provide richer, context-bound insights.

Given the persistent challenges of teacher burnout, there is an urgent need to understand how public elementary school teachers sustain their well-being and commitment amid increasing workload demands and emotional stress. This study is timely as it provides context-specific insights that can guide school leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders in developing responsive interventions that promote teacher well-being and retention, particularly in public elementary schools in the Tagum City Division. To ensure that the findings are maximized, the results will be disseminated through research presentations, school Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and coordination with school administrators and the Schools Division Office, allowing the insights to directly inform policy development, teacher support programs, and institutional practices aimed at reducing burnout and strengthening teacher resilience.

THE STUDY'S OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Tagum City Division in relation to burnout, coping mechanisms, and insights drawn from these coping mechanisms in sustaining resilience. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify the stressors that contribute to the experiences of burnout among teachers in public elementary schools.
2. To describe the coping mechanisms of teachers in dealing with and overcoming burnout.
3. To determine the insights drawn from teachers' coping mechanisms in sustaining their passion and commitment to teaching despite burnout.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study, which explores the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers as they navigate burnout and sustain resilience in their professional practice. It discusses the philosophical and qualitative assumptions, research design, participants, research instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical considerations, and the study's trustworthiness. This section provides a clear explanation of how the data were gathered, analyzed, and interpreted to ensure the credibility and rigor of the research findings.

Philosophical Assumptions

The philosophical assumptions of this study are grounded in the qualitative research paradigm, particularly constructivism and interpretivism, which are appropriate in exploring the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in managing burnout and sustaining resilience in the Public Elementary Schools of Tagum City Division. These assumptions recognize that teachers' realities are complex, experience-based, and socially constructed within their work environment.



Ontology concerns the nature of reality and what exists within the study's context (Blakely, 2023). In this research, reality is viewed as multiple and subjective, meaning that teacher burnout is not experienced in a single uniform way. Instead, public elementary school teachers in the Tagum City Division may experience burnout differently depending on the distribution of workloads, the school environment, leadership support, and personal coping capacity. Some teachers may perceive burnout as emotional exhaustion, while others may associate it with workload pressure or lack of motivation. Likewise, resilience is also understood as a varied experience shaped by individual strengths and contextual support systems. Thus, this study acknowledges that there is no single reality of burnout, but rather multiple lived realities expressed through teachers' narratives.

Epistemology explains how knowledge is created and the relationship between the researcher and participants (Sol & Heng, 2022). In this study, knowledge was co-constructed through the interaction between the researcher and public elementary school teachers during in-depth interviews. Understanding of burnout, coping mechanisms, and resilience did not come solely from measurement but from the meaning teachers assigned to their lived experiences. Through their narratives, teachers provided contextual insights into how they manage emotional exhaustion, workload pressure, and professional demands. The researcher served as an instrument for interpreting these meanings, ensuring that the knowledge was grounded in participants' real-life experiences within the school context.

Axiology refers to focuses on values, ethics, and the researcher's role in shaping the inquiry (Deane, 2018). In this study, the researcher recognizes that personal values, particularly empathy toward teachers' working conditions, may influence interpretation. However, strict ethical considerations and reflexivity were maintained to ensure fairness and respect for participants' voices. The emotional experiences of teachers in Tagum City Division were valued as meaningful data rather than subjective bias. Their narratives of stress, coping, and resilience were treated as important, as they reflect authentic professional realities that contribute to understanding teacher well-being.

Methodological Assumption. The methodological assumption of this study aligns with qualitative phenomenology, which focuses on understanding lived experiences through participants' perspectives (Moroi, 2020). In this study, phenomenology was used to explore in depth how public elementary school teachers experience burnout in their daily teaching roles and how they respond through various coping mechanisms that foster resilience. Instead of measuring burnout statistically, the study sought to capture how teachers describe emotional exhaustion, workload struggles, and their strategies for sustaining commitment. This approach allowed patterns and themes to emerge from teachers' actual experiences in classrooms and school environments within the Tagum City Division.

Rhetorical Assumption. refers to how findings are presented through language and narrative style (Damamisau et al., 2020). In this study, the presentation of results uses a descriptive and thematic narrative style, supported by direct quotations from teachers to reflect their authentic voices. This approach ensures that the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers are not reduced to numerical summaries but are expressed in ways that capture their emotional and professional realities. The use of narrative writing allows readers to understand better how burnout is experienced and how resilience is developed in real school contexts.

Qualitative Assumption. Qualitative research in this study is used to explore in depth the complex realities of teacher burnout and resilience among public elementary school teachers in the Tagum City Division. Rather than focusing on numerical measurement, this approach prioritizes understanding how teachers experience stressors, how they respond through coping mechanisms, and how these experiences generate insights into sustaining commitment in teaching. The emphasis is placed on meaning-making, which allows teachers to explain how burnout affects their emotional well-being, classroom performance, and professional motivation.

In this study, qualitative inquiry is essential because teacher burnout cannot be fully understood through statistics alone. It requires an in-depth exploration of personal experiences, emotions, and contextual factors within schools. Through this approach, the researcher was able to capture how

teachers interpret their challenges, manage emotional exhaustion, and continue to function despite difficulties in the teaching environment. This aligns with the idea that qualitative research seeks to understand the "how" and "why" behind human experiences rather than simply measuring outcomes (Tenny et al., 2022).

Furthermore, phenomenology was specifically chosen to capture the essence of teachers' lived experiences. This approach allowed public elementary school teachers to share their real-life experiences of burnout, including workload pressures, emotional demands, and administrative responsibilities, as well as their coping strategies, such as seeking support, practicing self-care, and maintaining a positive mindset. Through these narratives, the study generated deeper insights into how resilience is formed and sustained in challenging teaching environments.

To highlight, the qualitative approach provided a meaningful framework for understanding teacher burnout not as an isolated event but as a lived and ongoing experience shaped by personal, professional, and institutional factors. It allowed the study to highlight both the struggles and strengths of teachers, contributing valuable insights into how resilience and commitment are sustained in public elementary schools in Tagum City Division.



Design and Procedure

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach, which is appropriate for exploring the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers regarding burnout and resilience. Among the qualitative inquiry traditions identified by Chang and Wang (2021), phenomenology was selected because it focuses on understanding how individuals experience phenomena and ascribe meaning to those experiences. In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is teacher burnout and the resilience demonstrated by teachers in sustaining their commitment to the teaching profession.

Phenomenology is concerned with lived human experience as it is perceived and interpreted by individuals in their natural context. It seeks to describe the stressors and challenges teachers face, and how they cope, adapt, and sustain resilience. As emphasized by Gordon (2024), phenomenological inquiry enables researchers to explore how experiences appear in consciousness and how individuals construct meaning from them. In this sense, the approach enables a deeper understanding of teachers' subjective realities rather than reducing their experiences to numerical data.

In this study, a phenomenological design was used to capture the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Tagum City Division as they experienced burnout in their professional work. The study specifically explored their stressors, coping mechanisms, and the insights they derived from these experiences. Through this approach, the researcher aimed to understand not only the challenges faced by teachers but also how these challenges shaped their emotional responses, professional identity, and resilience in the workplace.

In terms of procedure, the conduct of the study followed a systematic qualitative research process to ensure rigor, ethical compliance, and credibility of findings. First, permission and ethical clearance were secured from the appropriate authorities, including the schools division office and school principals of the selected public elementary schools in Tagum City Division. Upon approval, the researcher identified participants based on purposive sampling, selecting teachers who had experienced burnout-related challenges and were willing to share their lived experiences.

Second, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understood the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed throughout the research process. Third, data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, which allows participants to freely narrate their experiences related to burnout, coping strategies, and resilience. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable and private setting to encourage openness and honesty. With participants' permission, responses were audio-recorded and supplemented with field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual observations.

Fourth, the collected data were transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic analysis. This process involved repeated reading of transcripts, coding significant statements, clustering similar ideas, and identifying emerging themes that reflect the shared experiences of teachers. Through this systematic analysis, patterns related to stressors, coping mechanisms, and insights were generated. Finally, the findings were interpreted using the phenomenological lens to identify the essential structure of teachers' lived experiences. This allowed the researcher to present a rich and meaningful description of how public elementary school teachers experience burnout and demonstrate resilience in their professional practice. In sum, the design and procedure enabled a comprehensive exploration of teachers' lived realities, ensuring that their voices were authentically represented and that the findings provided meaningful insights into burnout and resilience in the teaching profession.

Research Participants

This phenomenological inquiry involved a total of nine (9) informants who participated in in-depth interviews (IDI). The participants were selected based on their direct lived experiences relevant to teacher burnout and resilience within public elementary schools in the Division of Tagum City. From the total participants, three informants were drawn from each identified school category, ensuring variation of experiences across different school contexts. The sample size was considered appropriate for phenomenological studies, as Östlund and Kidd (2023) noted that a range of three to fifteen participants is sufficient to achieve data saturation and to generate rich, in-depth descriptions of lived experiences.

The study utilized purposive sampling, a non-random technique that involves the deliberate selection of participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research focus. In this study, teachers were chosen because they possessed direct experience of burnout-related challenges and demonstrated resilience in their professional practice. As explained by Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024), purposive sampling is particularly appropriate in qualitative research since it allows the researcher to intentionally select individuals who can provide rich, meaningful, and information-dense accounts of the phenomenon under investigation.

To ensure the credibility and depth of data, the study established clear inclusion criteria. Participants must be Kindergarten to Grade 3 teachers in public elementary schools within the Division of Tagum City and must have served in the teaching profession for at least ten (10) years. This requirement ensured that participants had sufficient teaching experience to meaningfully reflect on long-term exposure to workplace stressors, coping mechanisms, and resilience-building experiences. Teachers who did not meet these criteria were not included in the study to maintain the relevance and depth of the data gathered.



Throughout the research process, ethical safeguards were strictly observed. All participants were assigned code names to protect their identities and ensure confidentiality. Their responses were treated with utmost sensitivity, particularly because discussions involved personal and professional challenges such as burnout and emotional strain. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw at any stage of the interview process without any negative consequences. This ensured that participation remained fully voluntary and that their comfort and well-being were prioritized at all times. To highlight, the selection of participants was carefully designed to ensure that the study captured rich, credible, and meaningful narratives that reflect the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in Tagum City Division.

Research Instrument

This study utilized a qualitative research instrument primarily consisting of in-depth interviews (IDI) to explore the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers regarding burnout and resilience in the Division of Tagum City. Various qualitative data-gathering methods exist, such as observation and document analysis; however, in-depth interviews were deemed most appropriate for this study as they allow participants to freely express their thoughts, emotions, and experiences in detail. As emphasized by Im et al. (2023), in-depth interviews are particularly effective in qualitative research because they provide rich, descriptive data that capture the complexity of human experiences in natural settings.

The in-depth interview serves as a central tool in qualitative inquiry because it enables the researcher to directly engage with participants and explore their perspectives, values, and lived realities. According to Osborne and Grant-Smith (2021), this method is goal-oriented and flexible, allowing researchers to probe deeper into responses, clarify meanings, and explore emerging ideas during the interview process. In this study, participants were treated as the experts of their own experiences, while the researcher assumed the role of an active listener and facilitator of meaning-making.

To guide the data collection process, a semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed narratives regarding teachers' experiences of burnout, coping mechanisms, and insights related to resilience. The complete set of interview questions is presented in Appendix A, while the validation sheet used for expert review of the instrument is found in Appendix B. This ensured that the instrument underwent proper content validation to establish clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives.

During the interview process, flexibility was observed to allow participants to fully express their experiences. The researcher adjusted the sequence of questions when necessary, asked follow-up questions, and requested clarification to ensure depth and accuracy of responses. This approach helped encourage natural storytelling and allowed themes to emerge organically from participants' narratives. At the same time, the researcher avoided leading questions or verbal cues that might influence participant responses, ensuring neutrality and authenticity of data.

Data collection was conducted in environments that were most convenient and comfortable for the participants, such as their respective schools or other agreed-upon settings. In some cases, virtual interviews were also utilized depending on participants' availability and situational considerations. A total of nine (9) in-depth interviews were conducted to gather sufficient and meaningful qualitative data.

Data Collection

The process of data collection in this study was carried out through a systematic and ethically guided procedure to ensure that the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City were accurately and respectfully captured. As emphasized by Chand (2025), qualitative data may be gathered through interviews and related techniques that allow participants to express their experiences in their natural context. In this study, in-depth interviews were used as the primary method because they were most appropriate for eliciting rich narratives about teachers' burnout experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights on sustaining resilience in actual school settings where workload demands, administrative tasks, and classroom pressures are present.

The first step involved securing ethical clearance from the Ethics Review Committee to ensure that the study adhered to research ethics and protected the welfare of teacher-participants. A detailed proposal outlining the focus on burnout experiences among public elementary school teachers in Tagum City Division was submitted for review. This ensured that sensitive issues such as emotional exhaustion, workload stress, and professional struggles were handled appropriately. The approval certificate is presented in Appendix C, and this clearance signified that the study could proceed without compromising participant rights or institutional standards.

After ethical approval, formal permissions were secured from educational authorities to conduct the study in selected public elementary schools within Tagum City Division. The researcher obtained endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School at Rizal Memorial Colleges (RMC) and approval from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the Division of Tagum City. These approvals ensured that the study was properly coordinated with school leadership and that interviews with teachers would not interfere with their instructional responsibilities. The endorsement from the Dean is attached in Appendix D, while the official approval from the division office is presented in Appendix E.



Following institutional approval, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide specifically tailored to the context of public elementary school teachers experiencing burnout. The questions were designed to explore real classroom and school-based experiences such as heavy lesson preparation, administrative workloads, emotional demands of handling young learners, and the strategies teachers use to cope with stress in their daily professional lives. The instrument was reviewed by experts to ensure that it was contextually appropriate, understandable, and sensitive to the realities of teachers in Tagum City Division.

Before data gathering, informed consent was obtained from all teacher-participants. Each participant was clearly informed that the study focused on their personal experiences of burnout and resilience in the teaching profession, and that their participation was voluntary. Given the sensitivity of discussing workplace stress in school environments, assurances were provided that participation or non-participation would not affect their employment status, relationship with school heads, or professional evaluations. Teachers were also given enough time to decide before signing the consent form.

Data collection was conducted through individual in-depth interviews with selected public elementary school teachers. Interviews were arranged at times and locations convenient for the participants, often within school premises after class hours or in private areas where teachers felt comfortable sharing their experiences. This was important because teachers in Tagum City Division often manage tight schedules and multiple responsibilities, making time and privacy essential for meaningful sharing. With consent, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accurate capture of their narratives, especially their descriptions of burnout experiences and coping practices.

After the interviews, all recorded data were transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of teachers' accounts. Responses expressed in the local language were translated into English to ensure clarity during analysis while maintaining the original meaning of participants' statements. The data were then analyzed using phenomenological thematic analysis, focusing on identifying significant statements related to stressors, coping mechanisms, and insights on resilience. This allowed the researcher to capture common patterns across teachers while still honoring individual differences in their experiences within the Tagum City school context.

To strengthen the credibility of the findings, the interpreted data and thematic outputs were submitted to a qualified data analyst for review. This step ensured that the interpretations accurately reflected the participants' lived experiences and were consistent with qualitative research standards. Revisions were incorporated where necessary to improve clarity and strengthen the alignment between the data and the emerging themes.

Throughout the entire process, strict confidentiality and privacy measures were observed, recognizing that teachers' accounts of burnout may involve sensitive reflections about workload, leadership practices, and emotional struggles in their schools. All recordings and transcripts were securely stored in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher. Identifying details such as names of teachers and schools were replaced with codes to ensure anonymity. All data were used solely for academic purposes and were properly disposed of after the completion of the study, in accordance with ethical guidelines.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study followed Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological method, which is designed to rigorously examine and interpret the lived experiences of participants. This approach was deemed appropriate for the study because it allowed the researcher to systematically explore the experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City regarding burnout, coping mechanisms, and insights on resilience. Through this method, the essence of teachers' lived experiences was carefully extracted while maintaining the authenticity of their narratives within their actual school context, where workload demands, emotional labor, and administrative responsibilities are part of their daily professional realities.

The first step involved *familiarization with the data*, where all interview transcripts were read repeatedly to gain a deep understanding of teachers' lived experiences of burnout. In this study context, this meant immersing in narratives that described classroom pressures, large class sizes, administrative tasks, and emotional exhaustion experienced in public elementary schools in Tagum City Division. This step allowed the researcher to develop a holistic sense of each participant's experience before moving into formal analysis.

The second step was the *extraction of significant statements*, where all relevant expressions directly related to teacher burnout, coping mechanisms, and resilience were identified from the transcripts. In this study, these included statements such as heavy workload, emotional exhaustion after teaching, lack of rest, peer support, and motivation from learners. These significant statements ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the actual voices and experiences of teachers. The third step involved *formulating meanings from significant statements*. In this phase, the researcher interpreted the extracted statements to determine their underlying meanings in relation to burnout experiences in the teaching profession. For example, expressions of "overloaded paperwork" were interpreted as workload pressure, while "support from colleagues" was understood as collegial support contributing to resilience. This step ensured that the meanings reflected the lived realities of teachers in a meaningful and systematic way.



The fourth step was *organizing formulated meanings into clusters of themes*. In this study, similar meanings were grouped together to form broader thematic categories such as workload-related stressors, emotional exhaustion, social support systems, and coping strategies. This clustering helped reveal patterns in how teachers experience burnout and how they respond to it within their school environment in Tagum City Division.

The fifth step involved *developing an exhaustive description of the phenomenon*. At this stage, all clustered themes were integrated into a full and rich description of teachers' experiences. The findings reflected how burnout manifests emotionally, physically, and professionally among public elementary school teachers, while also highlighting how they sustain resilience through coping strategies such as peer support, self-regulation, and commitment to learners.

The sixth step focused on *identifying the fundamental structure of the phenomenon*. In this study, this involved reducing the exhaustive description into its essential meaning. The core structure revealed that teacher burnout is primarily driven by workload demands, emotional labor, and limited recovery time, while resilience is sustained through collegial relationships, personal coping strategies, and strong professional commitment. This captured the essence of teachers' lived experiences in Tagum City Division.

The final step was *validation of the findings (member checking)*, where Colaizzi (1978) originally suggests that results be returned to participants to confirm whether the interpretations accurately reflect their lived experiences. However, in this study, the researcher did not conduct full participant return of findings due to practical constraints and the consideration that, as noted in qualitative research flexibility discussions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), credibility may also be strengthened through alternative validation strategies such as expert review and audit of themes. Instead, expert validation was employed to ensure accuracy, consistency, and methodological rigor. This process strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings and ensured that the final themes genuinely represented the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City.

Ethical Consideration

This study on the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in managing burnout and demonstrating resilience in the Public Elementary Schools of Tagum City Division placed strong emphasis on ethical responsibility throughout the entire research process. Given that teachers shared personal and emotionally sensitive accounts of workplace stress, coping, and professional struggles, ethical safeguards were essential to protect their dignity, well-being, and professional standing. The study adhered strictly to the ethical protocols prescribed by the Rizal Memorial Colleges Ethics Review Committee, which ensures that all procedures involving human participants were conducted with integrity, respect, and accountability. *Social Value*. The social value of this study lies in its contribution to understanding the real conditions faced by public elementary school teachers in Tagum City Division, particularly in relation to burnout and resilience. By documenting teachers' lived experiences, the study provides meaningful insights that can inform school-based interventions, policy formulation, and teacher support programs. The findings are intended to benefit not only teachers but also school heads, learners, and education stakeholders by promoting a more supportive and responsive school environment. In this way, the study contributes to strengthening teacher well-being, which is directly linked to instructional quality and learner outcomes in public elementary schools.

Informed Consent. Informed consent was carefully implemented to ensure that all teacher participants fully understood the purpose, procedures, and nature of their involvement in the study. Prior to data collection, participants were provided with clear information regarding the focus on burnout experiences, coping mechanisms, and professional insights. They were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without any consequences to their professional standing. In the context of public elementary schools, where teachers may feel institutional pressure, extra care was taken to emphasize that participation would not affect employment, evaluation, or relationship with school authorities.

Vulnerability of Participants. The researcher recognized that public elementary school teachers may be considered a vulnerable group in research due to their professional relationship within the school system and possible concerns about confidentiality. Some participants might hesitate to fully disclose experiences related to burnout due to fear of misinterpretation or workplace implications. To address this, the study ensured a non-coercive environment where teachers were free to express their experiences without pressure. Interviews were conducted in a respectful and private setting, and participants were assured that their responses would not be shared with school administrators or used for evaluative purposes.

Benefits, Risks, and Safety. The study acknowledged that recalling experiences of burnout, emotional exhaustion, and workplace stress may cause mild emotional discomfort among participants. To minimize this risk, the researcher adopted a sensitive and empathetic interviewing approach, allowing participants to pause or decline answering questions if they felt uncomfortable. At the same time, the study offered meaningful benefits by giving teachers an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and express coping strategies that support resilience. The findings may also contribute to improved teacher support systems, wellness programs, and policy development within the division.



Privacy and Confidentiality of Information. Strict confidentiality measures were implemented to protect the identities of all participants in the Public Elementary Schools of Tagum City Division. Personal identifiers were removed from transcripts, and pseudonyms or codes were used in the presentation of findings. Data such as audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. Given the sensitivity of discussing burnout within a professional school environment, special care was taken to ensure that no information could be traced back to individual teachers or schools.

Justice. The principle of justice was observed by ensuring fair and unbiased selection of participants based on established inclusion criteria. Teachers were given equal opportunity to participate regardless of age, years of experience, or school assignment within Tagum City Division. The study also ensured that participants were not exploited, as their involvement was voluntary and limited to reasonable interview durations. Their contributions were accurately represented to avoid misinterpretation or misrepresentation of their lived experiences.

Transparency. Transparency was maintained by clearly explaining the objectives, methods, and expected outcomes of the study to all participants before data collection began. Teachers were informed about how their responses would be recorded, analyzed, and used in the research output. In the context of school-based research, transparency also helped build trust, especially since discussions involved sensitive topics such as burnout and emotional exhaustion. Participants were encouraged to ask questions at any point, ensuring openness throughout the research process.

Conflict of Interest. The researcher ensured that no personal, financial, or institutional conflicts of interest influenced the conduct of the study. Participant selection, data collection, and analysis were carried out objectively to maintain the integrity of the findings. In a school-based setting such as Tagum City Division, special attention was given to avoiding any perception of favoritism or bias, ensuring that the voices of teachers were represented honestly and independently.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher, a graduate student of Master of Arts in Educational Management, possesses the academic preparation and methodological training necessary to conduct qualitative research in educational settings. This academic background provided the researcher with a solid foundation in school leadership, teacher development, educational management, and qualitative inquiry, which are essential in understanding and analyzing teacher burnout and resilience. These competencies supported the researcher in conducting a systematic and ethical exploration of teachers' lived experiences in public elementary schools.

In addition to academic preparation, the researcher has relevant professional experience as a teacher, which provided firsthand exposure to the realities of classroom instruction, workload demands, and school-based responsibilities. This teaching experience enabled the researcher to gain a deeper and more empathetic understanding of the stressors and challenges faced by public elementary school teachers, particularly in relation to emotional exhaustion, administrative tasks, and classroom management.

Furthermore, the researcher has participated in various professional development trainings, seminars, and workshops related to teaching practice, classroom management, and educational leadership. These trainings enhanced the researcher's pedagogical skills, reflective practice, and understanding of teacher well-being and professional resilience. Such experiences also strengthened the researcher's ability to engage with participants meaningfully during data collection and to interpret their narratives with sensitivity and contextual awareness.

Adequacy of Facilities. The study was supported by adequate academic and technological resources necessary for conducting qualitative research. These included access to scholarly databases, recording devices for interviews, transcription tools, and secure storage systems for data protection. Interviews were conducted in safe and private locations within school settings to ensure participant comfort and confidentiality. Institutional support from school authorities and compliance with ethics review procedures further strengthened the reliability and integrity of the research process.

In terms of **trustworthiness of the study**, it is essential to ensure that the findings are not only systematically derived but also genuinely reflect the lived realities of the participants. Haq et al. (2023) emphasized that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study depends on how well the findings can be judged as credible, consistent, and grounded in real participant experiences. In this study, trustworthiness was ensured through the four criteria of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability, which were carefully applied in examining the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City regarding burnout, coping mechanisms, and resilience. These criteria were particularly important because the study involved sensitive accounts of workload pressures, emotional exhaustion, and professional challenges experienced within actual school environments.

Credibility. Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately represent the real experiences of the participants. In the context of this study, credibility was strengthened by ensuring that teachers' narratives about burnout reflected their actual day-to-day realities in public elementary schools in Tagum City Division, where they manage large class sizes, administrative tasks, and emotional demands of teaching young learners.

Persistent observation was applied by focusing on the most significant and recurring experiences shared by teachers, such as excessive paperwork, time constraints, emotional fatigue after class, and support from colleagues. Triangulation was achieved by gathering data from teachers in different public elementary schools within the division, allowing comparison



of experiences across varying school conditions such as leadership support, workload distribution, and available resources. Member checking was also conducted by allowing participants to verify their interview responses and interpretations, ensuring that their descriptions of burnout and resilience were accurately reflected and not misrepresented.

Dependability. Dependability refers to the consistency of the research process and whether the findings remain stable if the study is repeated in a similar context. In this study, dependability was ensured through a clear and systematic documentation of all procedures, including interviews conducted with teachers in different public elementary schools in Tagum City Division, transcription of responses, and thematic analysis.

Triangulation also supported dependability by including multiple participants from different school settings, ensuring that the findings reflected consistent patterns of teacher experiences rather than isolated cases. Peer examination was conducted through consultation with a data analyst and academic mentors who reviewed the coding process and emerging themes. During interviews, slight adjustments in questioning were made to accommodate teachers' limited time and workload schedules, especially since many participants had after-class duties and reporting responsibilities. These adjustments were documented to maintain transparency in the research process.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to similar contexts. In this study, transferability was ensured by providing detailed descriptions of the actual working conditions of public elementary school teachers in the Division of Tagum City, including their workload demands, classroom responsibilities, and emotional experiences related to burnout.

The study included rich descriptions of how teachers manage large class sizes, comply with administrative requirements, and cope with emotional exhaustion while maintaining instructional responsibilities. These contextual details allow readers to understand whether the findings may also apply to other public elementary schools in similar Philippine settings. Supporting documents such as interview transcripts and analysis summaries were carefully organized and stored to provide transparency and reference for future researchers studying teacher well-being and burnout.

Confirmability. Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are based on the participants' actual responses rather than the researcher's personal bias. In this study, confirmability was ensured through an audit trail that documented all stages of the research process, including data collection in selected public elementary schools in Tagum City Division, transcription of interviews, coding, and theme development.

All audio recordings, transcripts, and coding outputs were securely stored and could be traced back to the original statements of teachers describing their experiences of burnout, coping mechanisms, and resilience. This ensured that interpretations such as workload stress, emotional exhaustion, and collegial support were directly grounded in participants' narratives. In addition, expert review of the findings helped ensure that the interpretations remained objective and aligned with the actual data gathered from teachers in the field.

Results

The study explored public elementary school teachers' experiences of burnout, their coping strategies, and resilience in sustaining professional commitment. Analysis revealed **three main stressor themes**:

1. **Work-Related Stressors** – Teachers reported excessive workload, administrative tasks, lesson preparation, and work-life imbalance. These demands extend beyond classroom hours, contributing to emotional exhaustion and fatigue. Persistent role overload limits recovery time and reduces well-being, consistent with global studies on teacher burnout (OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2021).
2. **Learner-Related Stressors** – Classroom management challenges, disruptive student behavior, large class sizes, and diverse learner needs intensified teachers' cognitive and emotional load. Repeated exposure to non-cooperative behavior increased emotional exhaustion and reduced instructional engagement, aligning with prior research on the impact of student-related demands on teacher stress (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020; Aloe et al., 2021).
3. **Organizational and Environmental Stressors** – Limited resources, insufficient instructional materials, institutional pressures, rapid curriculum changes, and financial strain emerged as systemic contributors to burnout. Teachers often compensated using personal time and finances, highlighting structural and contextual challenges within schools (UNESCO, 2021; Bardach et al., 2023).

Teachers employed **multidimensional coping strategies** to manage burnout:

- **Social and Professional Support** – Peer collaboration, family and community support, and leadership guidance helped distribute workload, provide emotional relief, and maintain motivation. These external supports serve as buffers against stress and enhance resilience (Richards et al., 2021; OECD, 2021).
- **Personal Coping Strategies** – Time management, work-life boundaries, emotional regulation, positive mindset, and self-care practices enabled teachers to maintain psychological balance and prevent chronic stress (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2020).
- **Professional and Strategic Coping** – Adaptive classroom management, continuous professional learning, and spiritual meaning-making allowed teachers to refine instructional practices, respond flexibly to challenges, and sustain purpose-driven engagement (Bardach et al., 2023; Pargament et al., 2020).



The findings indicate that burnout arises from the **cumulative effects of instructional, learner-related, and organizational stressors**. Teachers' coping strategies combine interpersonal, intrapersonal, and professional resources, highlighting the importance of integrated support systems. Strengthening leadership support, institutional resources, and professional development opportunities can reduce burnout risk and sustain teacher well-being, effectiveness, and commitment.

Implications

The findings of this study imply that teacher burnout in public elementary schools is a multidimensional phenomenon driven by the interaction of work-related stressors, learner-related challenges, and organizational constraints. This suggests that burnout is not merely an individual issue but a systemic concern rooted in workload demands, classroom realities, and institutional conditions. Accordingly, school leaders and education stakeholders should prioritize workload management, administrative streamlining, and provision of adequate teaching support to reduce unnecessary stressors that contribute to teacher exhaustion.

However, the results also imply that teachers actively employ a range of coping mechanisms to manage and mitigate burnout, particularly through social support systems, personal coping strategies, and professional coping approaches. This highlights that resilience among teachers is strongly shaped by interpersonal relationships and adaptive behaviors. Therefore, schools should strengthen peer support systems, mentoring programs, and professional learning communities to reinforce collaborative coping and emotional support among teachers.

Furthermore, the study implies that emotional and social support particularly from colleagues, family members, and school leaders serves as a critical protective factor against burnout. This suggests that a supportive school climate and strong home-work balance significantly enhance teachers' emotional endurance and psychological stability. Consequently, educational institutions should foster a culture of care, empathy, and supportive leadership practices that prioritize teacher well-being alongside instructional performance.

On the other hand, the coping strategies identified in this study imply that teachers' self-regulation skills such as time management, boundary setting, rest, self-care, and positive mindset are essential in sustaining their professional commitment. This indicates that teacher well-being is not only dependent on external support but also on personal agency and emotional regulation. Hence, teacher development programs should include wellness education, stress management training, and mental health awareness activities to strengthen internal coping capacities.

In addition, the findings imply that professional growth and continuous learning play a significant role in sustaining teacher resilience despite burnout experiences. Teachers' engagement in reflection, professional guidance, and instructional development suggests that competence-building enhances confidence and reduces emotional strain. This underscores the need for sustained professional development programs, mentoring systems, and reflective practice sessions to support teachers' instructional and emotional needs.

To highlight, the overall insights imply that sustaining teachers' passion and commitment despite burnout requires a holistic approach that integrates institutional support, collaborative relationships, and individual coping strategies. This suggests that addressing teacher burnout should involve coordinated efforts between schools, policymakers, and teachers themselves to ensure both well-being and instructional effectiveness.

Finally, the study implies that teacher resilience is not static but continuously developed through experiences, support systems, and adaptive practices. This highlights the importance of creating supportive educational environments that nurture resilience, reduce stressors, and empower teachers to sustain their commitment to the teaching profession.

Future Direction

Based on the findings of this study, it is essential that educational stakeholders carefully consider and extend the insights generated from the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in managing stressors, coping with burnout, and sustaining resilience. The narratives of the participants highlight the need for stronger institutional support systems, sustainable wellness programs, and context-sensitive interventions that address both the causes of burnout, and the strategies teachers use to overcome it. Moving forward, efforts should focus not only on reducing workload pressures but also on strengthening the emotional, professional, and organizational support structures that sustain teacher well-being.

For school heads and administrators, future directions include the development and implementation of targeted wellness and burnout-prevention programs within schools. This may include structured mentoring systems, regular psychological support initiatives, and strengthened collegial collaboration through Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions focused on stress management, workload balancing, and teacher well-being. School leaders are also encouraged to adopt supportive and empathetic leadership practices that recognize teacher struggles and provide timely interventions for workload concerns. In addition, administrators may review administrative demands and workload distribution to ensure fairness and reduce unnecessary stressors that contribute to burnout.

For teachers, future directions emphasize the importance of sustaining and strengthening personal coping strategies such as time management, boundary setting, self-care, and positive mindset development. Teachers are encouraged to continue



engaging in reflective practice and peer collaboration as a means of emotional and professional support. Participation in professional development activities, wellness programs, and stress management training is also recommended to further enhance resilience. Moreover, teachers may benefit from strengthening their ability to balance work and personal life to maintain long-term emotional stability and commitment to teaching.

For families and communities, future directions highlight the importance of continued emotional, moral, and practical support for teachers. Strengthening family understanding of teachers' workload demands can enhance emotional recovery and reduce stress. Community involvement in school activities may also help alleviate workload pressures and reinforce teachers' sense of belonging and appreciation. These external support systems play a crucial role in sustaining teachers' emotional endurance and overall well-being.

For future researchers, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted in other divisions, grade levels, or educational contexts to further explore variations in teacher burnout experiences and coping mechanisms. Quantitative or mixed-method studies may also be conducted to measure the extent of burnout and resilience factors among teachers. Future research may further examine the effectiveness of specific interventions such as mentoring programs, wellness initiatives, and leadership practices in reducing burnout and improving teacher well-being. Longitudinal studies are also encouraged to track how coping strategies and resilience evolve over time in response to changing educational demands.

In sum, the future of teacher well-being and resilience depends on a collaborative approach involving school leadership, teachers, families, communities, and researchers. By strengthening support systems and promoting sustainable coping strategies, educational institutions can create healthier work environments that enable teachers to maintain their passion, commitment, and effectiveness in the teaching profession.

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