The Impact of Work Stress on the Psychological Well-being of Public Elementary School Teachers

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Abstracts: This study aimed to explore the impact of work stress on the psychological well-being of the public elementary school teachers. The sample consists of 60 out of 75 teachers from the three public elementary schools located in the municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur. The study utilized a correlation and regression research design. Results revealed that teachers find their job relatively relaxed due to their students' behavior and can maintain a positive attitude and focus on their teaching goals. Moreover, positive working relationships between teachers and administrators can help reduce teacher stress levels. Results further revealed that there is a strong positive correlation between the work stress and the psychological well-being of the public elementary school teachers, and this correlation is statistically significant. However, regression analysis revealed that the work stress of these teachers did not have a significant impact on their psychological well-being. Consequently, the above results implied that work stress did not predict the psychological well-being of public elementary school teachers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sociological and ecological factors have contributed to the rapid escalation of burnout syndrome in the 21st century. Job burnout is a crucial organizational predicament curtailing job satisfaction and occupational productivity (Gold & Roth, 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Maslach & Leiter, 2017). Teachers have higher psychological stress and burnout levels than other occupations (Ouellette et al., 2018; Fathi et al., 2021). Moreover, Capone & Petrillo (2018) posited that job burnout also adversely affects students' academic achievement and social behavior, not only on teachers' teaching quality but physical and mental health (Klusmann et al., 2016; Madigan & Kim, 2020). Thus, exploring the generation mechanism and influencing factors of job burnout can improve teachers' mental health problems and indirectly promote students' mental health and academic progress.

Workplace stress and the stressor-strain relationship have been prevalent subjects of inquiry since the 1970s (Bowling & Hartman, 2014). Workplace stress has been associated with illness, absenteeism (Duxbury, et.al., 2014), negative worker attitudes, and poor job commitment. Teacher stress is defined by Kyriacou et al. (2019) as the experience by a teacher of undesirable, adverse sentiments, such as anger, pressure, tension, frustration, or unhappiness, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher. Social support, personality, and self-efficacy can impact and reduce stress reactivity and strains. Concerning social support, the extant literature affirms a connection between teacher stress and social support. Richards (2012) stated that the most common method of Chui, Chiang, and Lee (2009) found that teachers with high-stress management levels also reported higher coping resources, including social supports, than their peers with lower stress management levels.

The conservation of resources theory expresses that individuals with ample resources can acquire more resources and are less vulnerable to resource loss. In daily work, Zhao et al. (2020), primary school teachers undertake a heavy teaching and student management workload and thus must instill many internal and external resources. Some researchers like Kosir et al. (2015) & Bottiani et al. (2019) state that when teachers face strain from numerous factors, such as workload, test pressure, and student administration, it is likely to result in powerlessness and even frustration due to limited resources, their studies have indicated positive relationships between occupational stress and teacher burnout.

Results from educational reform change over time Li et al., (2021), and the bases of job stress among primary teachers are also adjusting; foremost, changing their previous teaching content and working methods according to

national policies' requirements undoubtedly increases their workload. Second, teachers encounter the stress of school assessment of their instruction quality and evaluation. In addition, primary school teachers meet self-development stress, such as low salaries and limited development prospects. Face with many factors, coupled with the concern that their professional effort is undeserved, the reward received results in more severe job stress among primary school teachers (Qi et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2020). Thus, this research investigated the mentioned gaps to ascertain the current situation of public elementary teacher work stress and the possible influence of such intense work stress on teacher burnout.

Therefore, it is crucial to profoundly examine the impact of job stress on job burnout among public elementary teachers to provide more insights and knowledge on the challenges faced by teachers in their professions. This study selected primary school teachers, a group with severe job stress. It investigated the impact of primary school job stress on burnout, the mediating role of work-family conflict, and the moderating function of self-efficacy in the mediating path. This research could significantly provide policymakers with valuable information to develop effective strategies aimed at mitigating job stress and managing burnout among primary school teachers.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study relates to the following theories of prominent educators: Conservation of Resources Theory and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The Conservation of Resources Theory by Stevan E. Hobfoll in 1989 was a way to expand on the literature on stress. Hobfoll asserted that psychological stress emerged in three illustrations; Initially, there was a danger of a loss of resources, an actual net failure of resources, and a lack of accumulated resources following the spending of resources. Furthermore, some analyses have shown that the disagreement between career and family makes it challenging for someone to vend with the double roles of career and family, ultimately resulting in job burnout (Pu et al., 2017; Ji & Yue, 2020). Sufficient resources are vital to meeting continuous work needs and preventing burnout (Hobfoll & Freedy, 2018). Teachers, family, and work are essential individual resources. However, conflicts between work and family are an essential basis of stress that negatively influences the proportion between work and family (Lambert et al., 2002). This study utilized this theory since it discussed the psychological stress of teachers, such as pressures, an actual net loss of resources and the mediating role of work-family conflict, and the moderating function of self-efficacy.

Another theory utilized in this study was the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). An interpersonal-level theory developed by Albert Bandura emphasized the dynamic interaction between people (personal factors), their behavior, and their environments. It was developed into the SCT in 1986 and posited that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. This syndrome is triggered when workers doubt their effectiveness, or that of their group, in achieving professional goals (Manzano G & Ayala C, 2013). This study corroborated these approaches since it discussed the job burnout of teachers. This approach is characterized by giving a central role to individual variables such as self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-concept in the development and evolution of burnout.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the impact of work stress on the psychological well-being of public elementary teachers in Barobo, Surigao del Sur, Philippines. The research questionnaire consisted of three parts, assessing demographic information, teacher stress profiles, and psychological well-being. The data-gathering process ensured ethical considerations, and statistical tools such as the mean, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Regression Analysis were used to interpret the collected data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study considers teachers' work stress levels in public elementary schools. Hence, the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers According to Student Behavior.

Student Behavior	Mean	Description
1. Difficulty controlling my class	2.36	Rarely
2. Impatient/angry when my students.	2.46	Rarely
3. Lack of student motivation to learn	2.21	Rarely
4. Students make my job stressful	2.08	Rarely
Mean	2.28	Rarely

Table 1 presents the mean distribution of the level of work stress according to student behavior. Based on the provided results in Table 1, the mean distribution of teachers' work stress levels according to specific student behaviors indicated that, on average, teachers experienced low to moderate levels of work stress. The mean score of 2.28 suggests that teachers rarely experienced stress due to their student's behavior.

The highest mean had a mean score of 2.46, indicating that this behavior rarely happens in the workplace. This data suggests that teachers had effective strategies for motivating their students to follow instructions and complete their assignments. Consequently, students making the job stressful, had the lowest mean score of 2.08, which indicates that this rarely happens in the workplace. This data suggests that teachers found their job relatively relaxed due to their students' behavior and can maintain a positive attitude and focus on their teaching goals.

The implications of these results are substantial for the field of education, as it suggests that effective classroom management strategies can reduce teacher stress and improve the quality of education for students. Further, schools and districts need to provide teachers with training and resources to develop practical classroom management skills and support teachers in creating a positive and engaging learning environment. Schools can improve student and teacher outcomes by addressing teacher stress and promoting student success.

This outcome is consistent with the study of Reinke, Herman, and Stormont (2018) found that a positive and supportive school climate can reduce teacher stress and improve their ability to manage their classrooms effectively. The study suggested that schools can promote a positive school environment by fostering positive relationships among staff and students, providing resources and support for teachers, and implementing policies that prioritize the well-being of both students and teachers.

Moreover, aside from the work stress of public elementary teachers, the study also glimpses the Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers according to employee/administration relations, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers According to Employee/Administrator Relation.

Employee/Administrator Relations	Mean	Description
1. Difficulty in working with my administrator(s).	1.57	Rarely
2. Administrator makes demands of me.	1.74	Rarely
3. Cannot be myself when interacting with administrator.	1.54	Rarely
4. Administrator does not approve of the job I do.	1.67	Rarely
Mean	1.63	Rarely

Table 2 shows the mean distribution of teachers' work stress levels according to their employee/administrator relations. The results suggest that, on average, teachers rarely experience work stress related to their relationship with their administrators. The mean score of 1.63 indicates that these stressors are infrequent in the workplace. One possible interpretation of these results is that positive working relationships between teachers and administrators can help reduce teacher stress levels. This development can lead to a more positive work environment and better student outcomes. As Poulou and Norwich (2018) noted, "Positive relationships with school leaders are associated with job satisfaction, which in turn has been linked to teacher retention and performance" (p. 61).

Another implication of these results is that schools should prioritize building solid relationships between teachers and administrators. Teachers can achieve strong relationships through regular communication, mutual

respect, and shared decision-making. Providing professional development and training opportunities can also help administrators and teachers work together more effectively and build positive working relationships. Similarly, Table 4 below summarizes the mean distribution of teachers' work stress levels according to teacher/teacher relations.

The results indicate that teachers who feel isolated in their job, unsupported by their colleagues, or perceive that their colleagues think they are not doing a good job may experience higher levels of work stress. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have linked poor social support, low collegiality, and negative interpersonal interactions among teachers to increased work-related stress (e.g., Hojat et al., 2018; Jiang et al., 2020).

Table 3. Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers According to Teacher / Teacher Relations.

Teacher/Teacher Relations	Mean	Description
1. Isolated in my job (and its problems).	1.61	Rarely
2. Teachers think I am not doing a good job.	1.61	Rarely
3. Disagreements with my fellow teachers	1.49	Rarely
4. Too little support from the teachers	1.90	Rarely
Mean	1.65	Rarely

The implications of these results are significant for schools and districts as they indicate the need to foster positive and supportive teacher/teacher relations to reduce work stress and enhance teacher well-being. School leaders can promote a collaborative and collegial school culture, provide opportunities for professional development and team-building activities, and establish mechanisms for resolving conflicts and addressing interpersonal issues among teachers. Such interventions may improve teacher job satisfaction and retention and lead to better student outcomes (Liu et al., 2019; Park et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the study also considers other factors that might affect teacher level of work stress. One was the Level of Work Stress of Teachers according to Parent / Teacher Relations. Thus, the result was summarized and presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers According to Parent / Teacher Relations.

Parent/Teacher Relations	Mean	Description
1. Parents are a source of concern for me.	2.18	Rarely
2. Disinterest in their child's performance concerns me.	2.38	Rarely
3. Parents think I am not doing a satisfactory job.	1.89	Rarely
4. Home environment of my students concerns me.	2.54	Sometimes
Mean	**2.25**	**Rarely**

The results in Table 4 show that parent/teacher relations moderately impact the level of work stress experienced by teachers. The highest mean score was "The home environment of my students concerns me," which sometimes happens in the workplace, indicating that this issue can cause teacher stress. This outcome is consistent with previous research, highlighting the importance of parental involvement in education, particularly in student achievement and behavior (Fan & Chen, 2019).

The findings also indicate that teachers may be concerned about parents' attitudes toward their teaching ability, with a mean score of 1.89 for "I feel my students' parents think I am not doing a satisfactory job of teaching their children." This data highlights the importance of effective communication between teachers and parents to build positive relationships and promote. Additionally, in Table 5, the data presents the Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers in terms of time management student success (Henderson & Mapp, 2018).

Table 5. Mean Distribution of the Level of Work Stress of Teachers.

Time Management	Mean	Description
1. Too much to do and not enough time to do it.	2.67	Sometimes
2. Take work home to complete it.	2.80	Sometimes
3. Unable to keep up with correcting papers and other schoolwork.	2.51	Sometimes
4. Difficulty organizing my time to complete tasks	2.20	Rarely
Mean	2.55	Sometimes

Table 5 indicates the mean distribution of teachers' work stress levels based on four aspects of time management. The data were collected from an unknown source, and the mean score for all the items combined was 2.55, indicating that work stress related to time management sometimes occurs in the workplace.

The highest mean had a mean score of 2.80, indicating that this stressor also sometimes occurs in the workplace. This finding is consistent with previous research that found teachers often work outside of regular school hours (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 2018) and may take work home to complete it. The third aspect, "I am unable to keep up with correcting papers and other schoolwork," had a mean score of 2.51, indicating that this stressor sometimes occurs in the workplace.

This finding is consistent with previous research that found grading and paperwork were sources of stress for teachers (Maslach et al., 2017). Lastly, the fourth aspect, "I have difficulty organizing my time to complete tasks," had a mean score of 2.20, indicating that this stressor rarely occurs in the workplace. This finding is surprising, as time management is often cited as a source of teacher stress (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). However, teachers may be generally adept at time management or have developed strategies to manage their time effectively.

The following section shows the teacher's level of psychological well-being. Several researchers discuss the importance of the psychological well-being of teachers. There is extensive literature on psychological well-being in the workplace, including among teachers. Research has found that teachers with a high level of psychological well-being are more likely to be effective in their teaching, have better relationships with students, and report greater job satisfaction (e.g., Dicke et al., 2018; Klassen et al., 2013). Conversely, teachers with a low level of psychological well-being are more likely to experience burnout, absenteeism, and turnover (e.g., Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

Hence, Table VI exemplified the   mean distribution of the level of the teachers in terms of psychological well-being. Presented in Table 6, the mean distribution of the level of psychological well-being among teachers. The responses are measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 6. Mean Distribution of the Level of the Teachers' Psychological Well-Being.

Psychological Well – being	Mean	Description
1. Afraid to voice my opinions…	3.75	Agree
2. Feel I am in charge of the situation	4.08	Agree
3. Not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.	1.82	Disagree
4. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	4.48	Agree
5. Live life one day at a time	2.11	Disagree
6. Looking at the story of my life I am pleased with how things turned	4.26	Agree
7. Decisions are not usually influenced by everyone else doing.	4.21	Agree
8. The demands of everyday life often get me down.	2.39	Neutral
9. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge	4.85	Strongly Agree
10. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult	2.31	Disagree
11. Have a sense of direction and purpose in life.	4.52	Strongly Agree
12. Feel confident and positive about myself.	4.67	Strongly Agree
13. Worry about what other people think of me.	2.98	Neutral
14. Do not fit very well with the people and the community	2.21	Disagree

15. Haven't improved much as a person over years.	2.36	Disagree
16. Feel lonely because I have few close friends	1.89	Disagree
17. Daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant	1.89	Disagree
18. Many of the people I know have gotten more out of life	2.66	Neutral
19. Influenced by people with strong opinions.	3.70	Agree
20. Quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	4.39	Agree
21. Developed a lot as a person over	4.52	Strongly Agree
22. Enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members .	4.57	Strongly Agree
23. Don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.	3.08	Neutral
24. Like most aspects of my personality.	4.10	Agree
25. Have confidence in my opinions.	3.80	Agree
26. Often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities	4.49	Agree
27. Do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change	3.57	Agree
28. People would describe me as a giving person	4.28	Agree
29. Enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	2.30	Disagree
30. Feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	3.28	Neutral
31. Difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.	2.70	Neutral
32. Difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.	4.49	Agree
33. Life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	2.69	Neutral
34. Not experienced warm and trusting relationships with others.	3.67	Agree
35. Some people wander through life, but I am not one of them	3.61	Agree
36. Attitude towards myself is probably not as positive as most people	3.51	Agree
37. Judge myself by what I think is important.	4.25	Agree
38. Been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself.	3.72	Agree
39. Gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life	4.39	Agree
40. I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	4.39	Agree
41. Sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	4.16	Agree
42. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances.	3.59	Agree
Mean	3.75	Agree

The mean score for all 42 items is 3.75, indicating that, on average, teachers have positive psychological well-being. Items 2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 35, 37, 38, 40, and 41 are above the mean score, indicating that teachers agree or strongly agree with these items, and thus have a positive psychological well-being.

Conversely, items 3, 5, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, and 42 are below the mean score, indicating that teachers disagree or strongly disagree with these items, and thus have a lower level of psychological well-being. The implications of the results suggest a need for supporting teachers' psychological well-being. Specifically, interventions should address the identified areas of concern, such as helping teachers maintain close relationships, increasing their sense of direction and purpose, and building confidence in their opinions. Doing so may help create a more positive and productive teaching environment, ultimately benefiting teachers and students.

Table 7 provides the correlation analysis between teachers' work stress and psychological well–Being. It also answers the third problem of this study, which asks about the significant relationship between the teachers' work stress and psychological well–being.

Table 7. Correlation Analysis between Teachers' Work Stress and Psychological Well–Being.

Variables	R-Value	P-Value	Interpretation	Decision
Teachers' Work Stress and Psychological Well – being	0.756	0.002	Significant	Reject Ho

Note: Level of significance at 0.05.

The correlation analysis in Table 7 shows a correlation coefficient of 0.756, indicating a strong positive correlation between teachers' work stress and psychological well-being. Additionally, the p-value of 0.002 suggests that this correlation is statistically significant. The finding of a significant positive correlation between teachers' work stress and psychological well-being is consistent with previous research in this area. Studies consistently show that

work-related stress can negatively impact an individual's psychological well-being, leading to increased anxiety, depression, and burnout (Chang, Edwards, & Pan, 2017; Roeser, Schonert-Reichl, Jha, Cullen, & Wallace, 2013).

The strong positive correlation in this study indicates that as work stress increases, psychological well-being decreases, and vice versa. The significant positive correlation between teachers' work stress and psychological well-being suggests that teachers who experience higher levels of work stress are likely to have lower levels of psychological well-being. This finding highlights the importance of addressing work-related stress in educational settings, as it can harm teachers' well-being and ultimately affect student outcomes.

Furthermore, this section finally presents the impacts of the independent variable on its dependent variable. These findings reinforce the study of Ilisko et al. (2020) that teachers with a high level of well-being see meaning in their work and life, make healthier choices, lead a healthy lifestyle, and keep an open and sustainable view of a child and on future.

This study also tries to predict how the teacher's work stress significantly impacts the teacher's psychological well–being utilizing regression analysis. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 9.

Table 8. Regression Analysis Predicting the Impact of Work Stress on the Teacher's Psychological Well–Being.

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p
(Constant)	3.310	0.253		13.080	0.000
Work Stress	0.134	0.120	0.144	1.118	0.268

Note: Dependent Variable: Psychological well–being.

Table IX indicates that teachers' work stress does not significantly impact the teachers' psychological well-being. These results further imply that stress does not predict the psychological well-being of public elementary teachers. These findings partially support hypotheses 1–2 regarding the direct effects of work stress. Still, they do not support the part of the hypotheses related to the relationship between work stress and psychological well-being.

The small sample size limits the findings, and our sample consisted of apparently healthy and medication-free teachers. Thus, this might affect the results of the study. Future research should examine whether these findings can be replicated in broader and more diverse samples. Moreover, each psychological stress-related consequence, with its associated predictors found in this study, represents an individual model that needs to be replicated.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Upon analyzing the study's findings, several key conclusions can be drawn: Firstly, it is crucial for schools to prioritize the development of positive parent/teacher relationships and provide support for teachers in managing issues related to students' home environment. By addressing these concerns, schools can enhance the quality of education for students and alleviate work stress experienced by teachers.

Secondly, the data obtained also indicates that work stress related to time management is prevalent in the teaching profession. Heavy workloads, time constraints, and paperwork emerged as significant stressors. These findings underscore the importance of schools and policymakers addressing these stressors and assisting teachers in managing their workload to maintain their well-being.

Thirdly, the tables presented in the study shed light on the level of psychological well-being among teachers. The findings suggest that targeted support in specific areas can enhance teachers' psychological well-being, subsequently fostering positive relationships between teachers and students in the workplace.

Moreover, the study examined the relationship between teachers' work stress and psychological well-being. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between work stress and psychological well-being. However, it should be noted that work stress did not significantly impact teachers' psychological well-being.

Lastly, the findings strongly advocate for the implementation of interventions to support teachers' psychological well-being. These interventions should address the identified areas of concern, such as nurturing close relationships, fostering a sense of direction and purpose, and building confidence in teachers' opinions. Encouraging training programs like Learning Action Cells (LAC), Teacher's Capacity Building, and Continuous Professional Growth for teachers is crucial in this regard.

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