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## **Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction Among Teachers in the New Normal of Education**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Teaching is usually seen as a difficult job, characterized by high levels of stress and a variety of problems. This study investigates the complex nature of teacher stress and its impact on their well-being and job satisfaction. Teachers face physical, mental, and emotional challenges, which contribute to stressors such as bad working relationships, severe workloads, and an imbalance between home and professional life.

The research investigates the educational sector's foundation, highlighting the vital function of instructors in encouraging student growth. Despite the unique ties developed between teachers and children, excessive workload frequently leads to burnout, lowering job satisfaction and instructional quality. The stress response is investigated using Selye's General Adaptation Theory, stressing the biophysiological genesis of stress.

Furthermore, the study looks at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers, highlighting the additional obstacles given by social isolation, global school closures, and the need to adjust to new educational standards. The study emphasizes the psychological effects of the pandemic, emphasizing the importance of teachers' mental health and the probable scarcity of resources for adapting to changing teaching methods.

This study intends to give useful insights into the issues faced by educators by evaluating the levels of job satisfaction and occupational stress among secondary teachers in the Aparri East District. The findings could help policymakers advocate for measures to minimize stressors and improve teachers' overall well-being, ultimately creating a favorable climate for good teaching and learning.

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Most individuals believe that teaching is a challenging profession with several challenges. According to reports, teachers are more likely than other professionals to experience stress. It's a task that calls for energy expenditure on a variety of levels. Work can be physically taxing and stressful, which can lead to numerous aches and pains. Teachers must be mentally sharp while creating excellent lesson plans and answering crucial queries from students.

They have an emotional impact when they understand and support their students' needs not just intellectually but also psychologically and emotionally, as well as from the toll of working in a setting with a lot of stressors. Lack of materials, a bad setting, and even organizational change are frequent characteristics of the teaching environment, which add to the energy required.

The foundation of the educational sector is the teacher. Even though instructors form tighter bonds with students than any other customer and are essential to the efficient operation of the classroom, the overwhelming amount of work they must complete leads to stress, which is a major source of worry for many teachers at work. Stress among teachers has increased along with the demand for and advancement in the teaching profession. When expectations placed on us overwhelm our resources, stress results. General Adaptation of Selye. According to theory, the response to stress is biophysiological in origin. When a stressor is present, the person will experience a particular syndrome of physical responses. In a holistic perspective of the individual, the concept of stress can also be seen as being present.

The stress response is typically a combination of these aspects and can be either physical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual in character. Similar to how stress can come from one or more dimensions, it can also be internal or external.

Numerous stressors have been linked to teaching stress, including poor working relationships with coworkers and students, demanding relationships with parents and superiors, ancillary work, a heavy workload, a lack of support from superiors, role conflict, and an imbalance between home and schoolwork. Stress has a cost in terms of well-being and job unhappiness for individuals as well as for organizations in terms of tardiness and absenteeism, which in turn may affect the quality of teaching roles. Perhaps the best buddy of the students is the teacher. Even though they are paid for the work, the care and concern the teachers show for their students is unmatched and frequently goes above and beyond any monetary compensation. There are times when teachers are under a lot of stress, which causes bad working conditions and saps their enthusiasm for their jobs. As a result, dissatisfied teachers may

eventually experience burnout, which has been linked to stress and is one of the potential risks for those who perform "people work." Teachers occasionally experience "Burnout" circumstances, which are characterized by emotional tiredness, detachment, and a loss of motivation and excitement for their work. Teachers have been proven to be the professionals most prone to burnout.

Additionally, studies have shown that teacher burnout negatively affects both job satisfaction and the quality of instruction. It is true that burnout and a lack of job satisfaction make teachers less effective and less devoted to the duties of their positions as teachers.

There are several effects of work stress on instructors. Some people are tougher than others. This could be because of the various types of support that are accessible to them. Let's face it, in-service mental health instruction for new teachers is insufficient. To assist all instructors in coping with the signs of stress, something needs to be done. Teachers require assistance in recognizing the early warning signs of burnout as well as access to appropriate, qualified support so they can stay in the classroom. The interactions in TeacherPH show that educators of all ages are susceptible to stress, with both young and senior educators displaying symptoms of occupational stress. Most importantly, more must be done to lessen the reasons why teaching is stressful. Through its policies, DepEd Central Office might be able to accomplish this. It cannot be proper that there is no cap on the number of hours that teachers can work yet their responsibilities might be increased at any time. However, history demonstrates that teachers are also pursuing their own answers through individual or group efforts, which also contributes to their burnout. By increasing teacher pressure, we will not be able to raise standards in our schools.

Let's adopt a benchmark of a 40-hour work week, of which 30 hours are spent on real classroom instruction. The teacher has an average of 10 hours a week left over for planning lessons, preparing IMs, assessing student work, reporting to parents, connecting with them, attending necessary meetings, and overseeing students. It is inconceivable to think that any teacher could do these responsibilities in the allotted time considering the profession's nature and the ambiguity surrounding the current teaching criteria for K–12 programs. Most educators forego their own families to finish these chores on their own time.

Most of the time spent in schools is not spent teaching but rather copying handouts, tests, and curriculum materials, filling out paperwork, monitoring attendance, counseling kids, visiting their homes, organizing extracurricular activities, to name a few. Throughout the usual school day, teachers should be allowed enough time for reflection, personal planning, and teamwork with other teachers if they are to boost the learning of their pupils and develop professionally. Teachers also require time to reflect on their existing teaching approaches. When all of this is considered, teachers are left with invisible work—work that is completed beyond school hours. Since most instructors spend a large amount of time on this unnoticed work, it often "bleeds" into their personal life. I respect people who claim they can manage a variety of ancillary responsibilities while still providing daily, high-quality instruction to 200 to 300 kids. (2020 Gallas)

The COVID-19 public health disaster has had a major effect on the Philippines. The pandemic has a major impact on the labor market in addition to other areas (Bautista et al., 2020) brought about hitherto unheard-of difficulties in the educational system (Moralista & Oducado, 2020). Worldwide efforts were made to get ready for the health, economic, and educational difficulties that would arise from trying to contain the extremely contagious virus. The number of COVID-19 cases in the Philippines is still rising despite the government's strong efforts to halt the disease from spreading (Moralista & Oducado, 2020).

Teachers can endure severe distress due to social isolation and worldwide school closures (Talidong & Toquero, 2020). Teachers are going through a transitional period in both their personal and professional life (Allen et al., 2020). The psychological impacts of COVID-19, in addition to the apparent threats to one's physical health, also pose substantial risks to one's mental health and general wellness due to high levels of stress and worry that are made worse by the continual uncertainty of the situation. Along with the stress that can result from the threat that COVID-19 poses to them and their families, teachers must also adapt to the new standards in the educational landscape and pursue effective remedial instruction (Guillasper et al., 2020; Moralista & Oducado, 2020). It's possible that teachers don't always have the resources, knowledge, and abilities needed to engage in and benefit from this cutting-edge teaching approach.

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## OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the occupational stress level of the respondents?
2. To determine the stress management strategies of the respondents?
3. To identify the level of job satisfaction of the respondents?

### Research Design:

The research was descriptive-correlational in style. According to Mc Ewen (2017), a quantitative descriptive study is a method for identifying new meanings, summarizing what already existing, estimating the frequency with which something occurs, and classifying data. The type of study was used to gauge the degree of workplace impoliteness as perceived by the participants in terms of workplace interactions. There are occasions when someone is curious about a group of people. A descriptive research study aims to accurately represent the participants.

## TARGET POPULATION

The research was done in Aparri, specifically in the Aparri East District. Aparri East District is one of the districts of Aparri, Cagayan along with Aparri West and Aparri South. Aparri East District comprises of at least 170 secondary public teachers.

### Respondents and Sampling Procedure

NAME OF SCHOOL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Aparri School of Arts and Trades	27	59	86
Aparri East National High School	23	61	84
TOTAL			170

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

A letter asking for permission to conduct the study was written to the school's school heads and the district supervisor of the public schools prior to the study's conduct. Gathering of relevant data from teachers was done with the help of the grade level chair, who will distribute the questionnaires to the participants in their respective group. The questionnaire was administered on the third week of the month of November 2022. After the retrieval of the questionnaire from the grade level chair, the researcher tabulated and encoded the results.

Data for this study were gathered using standardized questionnaires that were extracted from literature reviews. It will be divided into four parts, Part I will cover the participants' demographic information, including their age, sex, civil status, position, highest level of education, type of appointment, major or specialty, length of service, attendance at pertinent seminars and trainings (on mental health), level of occupational stress, and level of job satisfaction.

Part II composed of a 32-item indicator to assess the seriousness of occupational stress experienced, and Part III is stress management strategies and Part IV is the Job satisfaction Index.

## FINDINGS:

*Table 1. Level of occupational stress of the teachers*

Level of Occupational Stress	Self-esteem Problems		Work Adjustments		Interpersonal Conflict		Health-Related	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Very high</b>	26	15.3	31	18.2	82	48.2	29	17.1
<b>High</b>	69	40.6	44	25.9	34	20.0	74	43.5
<b>Average</b>	56	32.9	88	51.8	34	20.0	54	31.8
<b>Low</b>	19	11.2	7	4.1	20	11.8	13	7.6

*n=170*

Table 1 describes the level of occupational stress of the teachers. It can be gleaned in this table that under the self-esteem, 69 or 40.6 percent is high, followed by 32.9 percent are average, then 15.3 percent, very high and 11.2 percent low. Work Adjustments marks 51.8 percent for average, then 25.9, high, followed by very high and low with 18.2 and 4.1 percent respectively. Under interpersonal conflicts, 48.2 percent marks on very high, then high and average come next with both 20.0 percent and 11.8 percent for low. In health related, 43.5 percent for high, 31.8 percent for average, then very high is 17.1 percent followed by 7.6 percent for low.

The results imply that teachers have a very high concern in terms of interpersonal conflict and a low concern on work adjustments. Occupation is one of the important parts of our daily lives which cause a great deal of stress. Due to the competitive nature of the job environment, most of the people in the world are spending their time on job related work purposes resulting in ignoring the work and life. Usually, people are more worried about the outcome of their work that can even affect the way they treat other people and how they communicate with their peers. In general, we can say

that people with a higher percentage of occupation stress may not be satisfied with their job and therefore they will not feel happy working in the organization. So, we can say that it is very important for teachers to realize the stress that causes all the negative effects. (Sachdeva, 2013)

**Table 2. Stress management of the teachers**

Statements	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
<b>Spiritual</b>		
1. I pray personally	2.84	Sometimes
2. I pray the novena	2.77	Sometimes
3. I go to mass	2.69	Sometimes
4. I meditate	2.65	Sometimes
5. I attend retreat	2.65	Sometimes
6. I confess	2.60	Sometimes
7. I talk to religious people	2.55	Sometimes
8. I attend recollection	2.54	Sometimes
9. I say the Rosary	2.36	Seldom
<b>Category Weighted Mean (Spiritual)</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
<b>Psychosocial</b>		
10. I travel with friends	3.11	Sometimes
11. I look for social support	2.95	Sometimes
12. I hug someone	2.84	Seldom
13. I organize	2.75	Sometimes
14. I communicate with people who are close to me	2.72	Seldom
15. I go shopping	2.65	Sometimes
16. I go to salon/spa	2.44	Sometimes
17. I go to party	2.42	Sometimes
<b>Category Weighted Mean (Psychosocial)</b>	<b>2.73</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
<b>Physical or physiological</b>		
18. I sleep or rest	3.22	Sometimes
19. I stroll	2.89	Sometimes
20. I exercise	2.80	Sometimes
21. I do gardening	2.74	Sometimes
22. I go for recreational activities	2.65	Sometimes
23. I swim	2.54	Sometimes
24. I do yoga	2.43	Seldom
<b>Category Weighted Mean (Physical)</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
<b>Legend:</b>		
3.25 – 4.00	>> Always	1.75 – 2.49 >> Seldom
2.50 – 3.24	>> Sometimes	1.00 – 1.74 >> Never

It can be gleaned in Table 2 the stress management of the teachers. The results indicated that the overall weighted mean of 2.70 with a descriptive value of sometimes. The statements were classified according to the following: spiritual marks a category weighted mean of 2.63 with a descriptive value of sometimes, followed by psychosocial, with a category weighted mean of 2.73, then physical or psychosocial category weighted mean of 2.70.

The results imply that the teachers were only using or applying stress management during stress on a minimal practice. It is observed in the results that teachers prefer to be alone or just by themselves in terms of their spiritual life while in their psychosocial, they prefer to spend their time with others whereas in the physical or psychological, they choose to perform activities by themselves also.

Teachers do not usually think about their own well-being-until it is too late, and they are sick. People who take on caring roles are often not good at looking after themselves. It is vital that we manage our own well-being, as we cannot manage pupils and learning if we cannot manage ourselves. Children come in every day to school and do the same thing, sometimes having slightly better or worse days. What makes the difference is the reaction of the adults around them. Taking time to manage your stress is essential to teach effectively and to help students with their stress around learning. Teachers' feelings are important Take a moment and think about all the feelings you had yesterday, from the time you got up in the morning, to the time you went to bed. (Mustafa, 2020)

**Table 3. Level of job satisfaction of the teachers**

Level of Job Satisfaction	Frequency (n=170)	Percentage
High (Very satisfied)	5	2.9
Average (Satisfied)	164	96.5
Low (not satisfied)	1	0.6

Table 3 represents the level of job satisfaction of the teacher-respondents. Majority or 96.5 percent of the teachers are satisfied with their job while 2.9 percent and 0.6 percent are very satisfied and not satisfied respectively.

Ascertaining character and aims to identify the job satisfaction level of a particular professional segment - education, continually subjected to multiple transformations. Educational activity, in addition to the complexity which characterizes it requires vocation and maximum responsibility about the final product that it intends – the individual, aware owner of key skills, with a harmonious free and independent personality, able to integrate and adapt in a society in transition.

The teaching profession requires, in addition to professional skills, more dedication and sensitivity, availability of the educator to train, educate, urges, manage, grows and organizes, corrects, improves and continually evaluates the formation and perfection of human qualities required of tomorrow.

## RECOMMENDATION:

- The researcher may work with the Division office and may implement possible interventions in counteracting stress management.
- Given the nature of the work of the teachers, the researcher may connect to proper agencies regarding the conduct of various seminars, trainings and workshops for teachers focusing on mental health.
- The researcher should share the results of this study to other teachers specifically in the primary level and as well as to private schools,
- A further study must be done to elementary public and private school teachers to address the same problems and apply possible interventions.

## CONCLUSION:

As teacher of the Department of education, majority of the teachers were not exempt from occupational stress in the workplace regardless of the position that they are holding. Though it may be true that teachers are under stress in the workplace they still manage to perform their job in a very satisfactory remark.

Majority of the teachers have been in the teaching profession for more than five years. They came to the Department of Education with their bachelor's degree and finished masters' while teaching. While it is important that teachers should finish graduate school, majority of them are still in Teacher II position. Results revealed that teachers do have still repertoire of strategies that they are using to counteract stress and end up with a very satisfactory remark in their IPCRF.

This study proves that occupational stress did exist in the workplace, but teachers have mitigating stress management such as praying the rosary, travelling with friends, and sleeping or resting.

With the set of stress management to counteract occupational stress in the workplace, the teachers proved that they can still perform well in the teaching-learning process but need to give focus on the effects of stress in their mental well-being.

It remains that teachers can cope to occupational stress in the workplace. They have used strategies to counteract and mitigate occupational stress.

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