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What is the Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout?

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Abstract

Burnout is a syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DPZ) (Yong & Yue, 2007). Teachers who fall victim to burnout are likely to be less sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, be less apt to prepare adequately for class, and feel less committed and dedicated to their work (Betoret, 2006; Byrne, 1991; Fisher, 2011). The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the burnout experiences among secondary teachers and the ways they cope with the adverse conditions. The participants were eight school high teachers from a large metropolitan area school district. Using in-depth interviews, the researcher was able to understand the personal meanings, expressed opinions, feelings, points of view, and other detailed descriptions of the participants. Administration issues, administrative workload, negative teacher/student relationships, and lack of student effort were themes associated with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization effecting teaching performance. In contrast, mental efficiencies, interpersonal relationships, and outside resources were themes associated with the coping activities/strategies of teachers. Preventing negative outcomes and minimizing unproductive behaviors and performance due to adverse effects of emotional exhaustion and detached attitudes towards students (i.e., depersonalization) may help teachers become more effective in the classroom (Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Maslach, 2003; Zonlnierczyk-Zreda, 2005).

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Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

There may be enough evidence suggesting that there is a distinct relationship between the cultural and social progression of a nation and the quality of its educational priorities. There could be an anticipation of lawlessness, moral corruption, and a general breakdown of established order if quality education, teacher proficiency, and mandated schooling were not available in all communities (Cohen & Schemer, 1997; Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Segall & Wilson, 2004). The United States emerged as a nation from the period of history between 1775 and 1789 (Stewart, 2005) and education progressed to become that important component that would help qualify the institutions, people, and cultures that took shape. Commitment to quality education and great teaching are endorsements toward human development that can help create productive citizenship.

Quality education and the skillful art of teaching played major roles that helped forge the identity and freedom of this nation. In addition, some governmental initiatives and vocational fields of education served as catalysts that contributed towards America's progression and established order. Some notable contributions involved, but were not limited to, developing a democratic process for civic and/or social stability; establishing governmental guidelines and policies for public educational services; and employing the humanitarian skills and caring efforts of classroom teachers. Moreover, the evolution of religious expressions, expanding educational practices, and strategic methods of classroom teaching would help develop the framework of how people would interact among themselves for the common good and form the well-being of a society (Boers, 2007). The meaningful and sometimes successful exploits that teachers orchestrate with children and adult learners alike in classrooms can become so significant in the

learning process. In short, the well-being and skillfulness of teachers can provide many quality educational services that benefit the clients (i.e., students) they serve. The art of teaching and idea of life-long learning are still important aspects within our society.

As valuable service providers, teachers serve or accommodate clients such as their colleagues, parents, community leaders, administrators, and various local and state officials. In addition, teachers faithfully serve school systems that have student populations which many of the students may require special needs or unique educational services from teachers. Though there are multiple professional services and other important duties teachers tend to fulfill, it is essential that teachers maintain a quality degree of self-motivation, determination, resiliency, empathy, and passion about the interactive learning process of students (Bowman, 2007). Teachers emotionally, physically, and mentally provide the required and sometimes unique services intended to manage, educate, train, help, motivate, and develop their students. In other words, quality teaching is a challenging job and it demands so much from teachers.

The overwhelming job responsibilities of teachers, increasing academic demands regarding all students, and the accountability factors facing teachers have caused new pressures upon those in the teaching vocation (Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002). Additional pressures from federal and state mandates along with societal expectations have resulted in levels of emotional/physical breakdowns and indifferences within teachers. Moreover, extreme mental exhaustion has caused many sincere-hearted teachers to perform poorly and/or display negative attitudes (Betoret, 2006; Black, 2003). For teachers to adapt, adjust, cope, and progress while dealing with mental or emotional exhaustion may require meaningful transformations. Such transformations may help teachers preserve good qualities of teaching. The job of teaching may require teachers to learn or self-educate themselves in how to preserve the quality of their well-

being and, subsequently, services to students.

The United States is one of the most influential and recognized nations striving to stay progressive and relevant while still competing with other global markets around the world. To accomplish additional achievements in education and increase priorities for social advancements, the significance of schooling, public education, evolving educational standards, and effective classroom teaching must take place. State and federal mandates concerning quality education have not diminished and societal expectations of teachers seem to be increasing. The following background information will briefly provide an overview of the field of teaching, the teacher/student relationship, teaching demands, and its affect on teachers, coping, and transformational learning.

Background

In 2006, the largest industry in the United States was the teaching profession (The Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). The Bureau also suggested that there would be record levels of elementary and secondary student enrollment through at least 2015. This potential increase in student population could affect the number of new teachers needed within the field of teaching in the future. In addition, educational reforms, funding, state, and federal educational requirements, and fluctuations of achievement levels of students have increasingly come to the forefront in education (Goe & Croft, 2009; Mitzel, 2005; U. S. Department of Education, 2004). Nevertheless, with all the educational legislations, increasing student population, and increasing academic standards in place to increase student productivity, effective teaching practices from good teachers matter more than anything else (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003). As a result, many teachers have become the victims of burnout (Hargreaves, 2003). Learning how to cope with burnout is a prevailing issue occasionally encountered while handling job-related

relationships and daily demands of the teaching field.

One of the most rewarding elements within the field of teaching involves the teacher/student relationship. The special inner qualities of teachers put them in position to establish healthy student relationships conducive for classroom learning. The teacher/student relationship becomes critical for student learning (Hargreaves, 2003; Maslach, 2003). It is highly important that teachers learn how to care for all learners and consider the power of nurturing the kinds of positive relationships that will help support the learning process of their students. We could be living in a defining moment concerning public education, student achievement, teacher/student relationship, and teacher accountability.

Learning successful techniques or strategies for coping with the stages of burnout (i.e., emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) could have favorable results for teachers who work at all grade levels. Kyriacou (2001) suggested that the ability of individuals to cope with burnout might be determined by learning one or both types of strategies known as: direct action techniques and palliative techniques. One applied technique deals with eliminating the source that produces the stress experience while the other technique deals with lessening the feelings of stress those individuals encounter. Despite the technique that deems successful, all teachers are required to be effective in their classroom duties while cultivating healthy relationships with their students.

Teachers that become emotionally exhausted with the job lose a sense of their professional effectiveness. In addition, when teachers become callous or insensitive (i.e., depersonalization) students tend to suffer. Teacher development, whether psychologically and/or professionally, is an important process for continued classroom effectiveness. Evers et al. (2002) found that teachers could feel unable to promote and/or establish an on-going quality learning

process with their students while carrying on with other challenging duties and tasks of the job. Evers et al. also asserted that when teachers have a sense of being in control of the learning process needed for students the professional self-worth and self-efficacy of teachers become strong. From my personal perspective, there is a relationship between a classroom teacher's effectiveness in establishing a positive learning process and the self-perceptions of one's professional worth as a teacher. Some working conditions and job challenges may require teachers to undergo some psychological development to remain positive, strong, and effective.

Demanding jobs and various stressful working conditions are components of life. They may also trigger a variety of personal observations and reflections (Mezirow, 1990). Subsequently, the observations and reflections may cause some to arrive at perceived truths about the present matter or even themselves. Critically reflecting involves reevaluating assumptions individuals might have made about their jobs, themselves, and their world-view. The beginning process of this kind of psychological development happens when people initially tend to "realize something is not consistent with what they once held to be true" (Taylor, 1998, p. 9). Some studies report that this form of psychological development happens when individuals have experienced a personal crisis (Dirkx, 1998; Kincheloe & Horn, 2008; Mezirow, 1991). When teachers have experienced a personal crisis regarding their job, they tend to discover the importance of receiving additional help as professionals and/or learning the skills to adjust and adapt (Kincheloe & Horn). Many times the psychological development and transformational learning needs of teachers or other adults in general, often grow out of experiencing "a disorienting dilemma" or personal crisis (Mezirow, 1991, p. 61).

School districts can offer strategic interventions and/or professional services to assist teachers in their psychological development. Such interventions and/or professional services

may be useful and important for teachers to maintain measures of quality classroom performances. These interventions and services would be efforts to help address the issues affecting the classroom performances of teachers. Many school districts help teachers by using professional enrichment opportunities, staff development workshops, and mentorship programs. Along with having access to additional resources, school districts and other teacher-development organizations would seek to help teachers transform their thinking and possibly gain new perspectives about themselves and their job tasks (Murshidi, Konting, & Elias, 2006; Sparks, 2002; Wangberg, 1982).

The field of teaching requires teachers to be equipped mentally, professionally, and socially to face the responsibilities and needs of the vocation. As service providers, teachers should be mentally strong, professionally skilled, and socially able to adjust to the challenges of teaching students and upholding various other professional responsibilities. Classroom management, nurturing positive teacher/student relationships, carrying heavy workloads coupled with the lack of effective strategies for coping can lead to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (i.e., callousness) (Evers et al., 2002; Maslach, 2003; Mee, 2009). When teachers are unable or fail to manage the daily tasks and responsibilities of their profession, the results could be costly to their happiness and/or personal fulfillment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and cause burnout (Maslach, 2003; Sheard & Golby, 2007; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). Teachers, like many other working adults, can psychologically develop and learn to enhance and/or preserve their resiliency while maintaining favorable attitudes by learning and employing strategies for coping (Garrosa, Moreno-Jimenze, Liang, & Gonzalez, 2008; Sheard & Golby, 2007). School districts that professionally provide additional resources can have a vital role in assisting teachers to become proficient, equipped,

and caring professionals. The next sections will briefly discuss the selected research problem, purpose of the study, and significance to policy-makers and practitioners.

Problem Statement

Considerable research has been devoted to studying teacher stress and burnout at all levels of teaching. Burnout is a known phenomenon within human-service occupations such as teaching, social work, health care, law enforcement, and mental health services (Lumpkin, 2007; Maslach, 1981, 2003). Burnout continues to be a pressing issue among teachers (Dworkin, 1987; Maslach, 2003; Mee, 2009; Pedersen, 1998; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). Although some coping strategies have been suggested (Fisher, 2011; Kyriacou, 2001), it is still unclear to some how best to help teachers prevent burnout (Lambert & McCarthy, 2006). According to Black (2003), when burnout conditions negatively affect the mental and emotional state of teachers, the teacher/student relationship becomes toxic having negative results. Maslach (2003) declares that teachers' inherent need to derive a sense of an existing significance from their work coupled with prolonged exposure to stressful conditions and a lack of affirming feedback that their work is meaningful provides a recipe for burnout.

Unfortunately, high levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and attrition are characteristic of the teaching profession (Chang, 2009; Fisher, 2011). Teachers who fall victim to burnout are likely to be less sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, be less apt to prepare adequately for class, and feel less committed and dedicated to their work (Betoret, 2006; Byrne, 1991; Fisher, 2011). Burnout has, and will continue to be a job performance issue due to the emotional strain and the increased workload in the occupational field of teaching (Hughes, 2001; Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 1993).

The vast literature on teacher burnout suggests that there are a number of problematic

factors affecting psychological outcomes and teaching performance. These factors include social support, locus of control, negative affectivity, professional efficacy, and coping behaviors. These factors may affect outcomes independently of, or in interaction with, work stressors (Schonfeld, 2001). Nevertheless, due to the emotional and mental nature of their work teachers have become prone to work-related issues such as anxiety, depression, stress, exhaustion, callousness, and anger (Chang, 2009). Emotional exhaustion of teachers, their dissipating lack of care and concern for students, and the lack of adequate measures for coping can become problems for effective teaching and student development (Chaplin, 2008). The problems and impact of burnout has affected the performance abilities, or the lack thereof in many teachers along with other employees and administrators in the field of human-service occupations (Gold, 1993; O'Reilley, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

As the preceding discussion outlined along with being a retired teacher experiencing stress and burnout, I believe that even the best-skilled teachers can feel overwhelmed, highly pressured by the job, professionally frustrated, and emotionally stressed. Previous research suggests that teaching is not the only vocation that is highly stressful, mentally demanding, and at times emotionally exhausting (Lumpkin, 2007). Nevertheless, the escalating conditions and unique tasks in the field of teaching can cause teachers to become prone to anxiety, depression, anger, indifference, intolerability, unproductiveness, and exhaustion. The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who have experienced burnout and their transformational learning experiences because of burnout.

The following questions will be examined: (a) What are the factors that can lead to teacher stress and burnout?; (b) How do teachers cope with handling their professional duties

while dealing with burnout?; (c) What coping strategies do teachers use to address the effects of emotional exhaustion and/or feelings of callousness?; and (d) What are the transformational learning experiences of teachers who experienced burnout?

Significance of Study

Teachers have experienced a significant decline in their quality of professional care and educational performance for students when experiencing burnout and lacked strategies or measures for coping (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2000; Browers & Tomic, 2000; Folkman & Lazarus, 1988; Lumpkin, 2007; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). The important issues of teacher burnout are prevalent throughout the education research (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Zolnierczyk-Zreda, 2005). Secondary school teachers are the focus of this study because they are highly susceptible to burnout which puts them at risk for specific consequences such as decreased quality of instruction and classroom management, emotional overload, lack of care in the teacher/student relationship, decreased efficacy, and decreasing job satisfaction (Chang, 2009; Chaplin, 2008; Maslach, 2003; Schonfeld, 2001).

Learned methods and strategies may alleviate the effects of teacher burnout and preserve the quality performance teachers need for the classroom and other job-related tasks. Preventing negative outcomes and minimizing unproductive behaviors and performance due to adverse effects of emotional exhaustion and detached attitudes towards students (i.e., depersonalization) can help teachers become more effective in the classroom and thus promote more responses that are positive from students (Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Maslach, 2003; Zonlnierczyk-Zreda, 2005). The benefits of relieving teacher burnout by learning and employing strategies for coping, before negative consequences or poor job performance start, would be of immense value to all student-teacher programs, novice teachers in the field, tenured teachers, school

administrators and district officials, educational policy-makers, educational specialists, and all educational institutions that serve students (Yavuz, 2009). This study may also add to the field of adult education research in an effort to understand further the transformational learning process of adults; and the social or environmental context that shapes or influences the learning that adults encounter.

Operational Definitions

This section provides the following terms used in this study.

Burnout is a condition resulting from a diminished or depleted motivation to pursue further achievement or efforts; it is when one's dedication to a objective fails to produce the desired personal results; "it is the chronic condition, something a person has been working toward over a period of weeks, months, even years"; a condition that can lead to exhaustion, frustration, and detachment (Freudenberger & Richelson, 1980, p. 13).

Depersonalization (DPZ) is the negative and uncaring attitudes that individuals developed toward their job responsibilities, colleagues, and those they serve (Maslach & Jackson, 1991).

Emotional Exhaustion (EE) is the on-going feelings of emotional fatigue, or a depletion of enthusiasm, and lack of commitment that have developed (Maslach & Jackson, 1991).

Secondary Teachers are certified teachers at the high school level teaching grades ranging from 9-12.

Stress is the physical and psychological result of internal and external pressure caused by a task or multiple tasks (The Psychology Dictionary, 2003).

Teacher Stress is the experiences of unpleasant or negative emotions of teachers, such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger and depression, resulting from aspects of work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 1987).

Transformation is a process that results in a permanent change in an individual's world-view or mental viewpoint (Mezirow, 2000).

Transformational Learning (TL) is the psychological transformation of one's known and accepted mental frames of reference (i.e., habits of mind, mind-sets, personal perspectives), to make individuals more emotionally capable of change so that they may generate beliefs and/or opinions that will prove more true to guide behaviors or actions; it is a permanent change in one's mental view (Mezirow, 1991).

Summary

This chapter briefly outlined some of the responsibilities and job tasks of the teaching field along with the issues and concerns related to teacher stress and burnout. Despite the numerous studies, there is a gap in the education literature regarding the importance of preserving quality classroom instruction along with the effectiveness of employing coping strategies or protective measures for handling teacher burnout. Gaining a new perspective and learning effective strategies for coping with burnout and stress can result in transformational learning experiences for teachers. Secondly, Chapter I provided research questions that define the parameters of the study, the purpose of the study, and its importance to the field of teacher education and adult education. Chapter II will provide the theoretical framework for the study, while, Chapter III outlines the proposed methodology, the sample; identify the instrument selected, procedures for data collecting, the proposed analyses, and limitations.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The state of public education and teacher quality have been under review and analyzed for a number of years (U. S. Department of Education, 2004). This chapter will discuss issues, reports, conditions, and concerns regarding the work of teachers. The sections in this chapter will provide an overview regarding the field of teaching and other job-related components such as teacher/student relationships, teaching demands, and expectations. This chapter provides discussions about the complexities of burnout, present the known causes, and identified stages. In subsequent sections, brief discussions will present an overview of stress and teacher stress. Though the aim of this research involves high school teachers, there are brief discussions regarding the work-related factors and stressors of teachers at other grades levels (i.e., elementary and middle school)**.** Furthermore, remaining sections will discuss previous studies on techniques for coping, addressing burnout, teacher efficacy, and transformational learning. It will conclude with a chapter summary.

Field of Teaching

The field of teaching has provided students, and adult learners alike, with quality educational experiences while also preparing them for the challenges, responsibilities, transitions, and career opportunities ahead. The field of teaching has made its mark throughout our history. The vocational field of teaching and its affects upon human development have accomplished great benefits (Awa et al., 2010; Delors, 1996). Additionally, the literature suggests that the demands for qualified teachers have not diminished. A continued increase of teachers is expected (Murnane & Steele, 2007; U. S. Agency for International Development [USAID], 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Despite the noble considerations about the field of teaching, the complexities involving academic achievement and the idea of

establishing healthy social relationships can be challenging. Though the field of teaching is enjoyable, it is not without its daily challenges. Similarly, there are challenges for educational policy-makers and school officials. There should be ongoing efforts to improve curricula and the academic productivity of students, redesign graduation protocols for low-achieving and at-risk students, prepare better caring teachers while promoting and supporting teacher effectiveness (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The field of teaching can effectively serve all citizens willing to learn, but learning the skills and aptitudes to perform as a quality teacher is not for all citizens.

The emphasis of schooling and need for quality education has made the teaching field an important vocation in any society or thriving industrialized nation. Although the teaching field has been very rewarding to many teachers, the professional and meaningful responsibilities of teachers can be very engaging and taxing. College students that have entered the field of teaching have found school regulations, curriculum writing, administrative responsibilities, teacher/student relationships, and parent expectations much more demanding than going to class, writing papers, and studying for exams (Segall & Wilson, 2004). The instructional strategies of the classroom, the emotional interactions with learners, quality classroom management, and other job-related responsibilities make the field of teaching a unique profession (Saphier & Gower, 1997; Segall & Wilson, 2004). Teachers can help cultivate academic excellence in classrooms by creating a climate that allows students to feel valued (Doll, Zucker, & Brehm, 2004; Schmuck & Schmuck, 1997).

The professional job descriptions and service deeds of teachers have continued throughout the years. Along with engaging themselves to the art of classroom teaching, many other work-related aspects included teachers acting as role models, hall monitors, counselors,

mentors, advocates, researchers, surrogate parents, peacekeepers, and record keepers. Apparently, the field of teaching is not without the constant personal and social demands along with other pressing job-related tasks (Chang, 2009). Students are in need of the best that teachers and the field of education have to offer. The relationship between teacher and student is one of those important components that comprise the field of teaching. Positive teacher/student relationships that teachers try to build and sustain are important for healthy classroom climates for learning.

Teacher/Student Relationships

Positive relationships with students offer teachers internal rewards and can provide significance or meaning to their work as educators. Teachers can experience wonderful rewards resulting from student achievement and productive teacher/student relationships (Saphier & Gower, 1997; Segall & Wilson, 2004). Teachers who feel associated with the success of their students have a sense of fulfillment and success. A positive relationship constructed and managed by both teacher and student tends to be an important component that allows the learning process to become rewarding for both teacher and student. Hargreaves (1998) and O'Connor (2008) found that positive teacher/student relationships are one of the core reasons for teachers staying in the profession for any length of time. There is also empirical evidence to support this widely assumed association between teacher/student relationships and teacher well-being. For example, conducting in-depth interviews with 60 teachers, Hargreaves (2000) found that good relationships with students were the most important source of enjoyment and motivation.

The task of fostering positive relationships with students can come with great difficulty

when the emotional make up of teachers is extremely challenged or negative. According to Rimm-Kaufman (2011), teachers can create classroom environments more conducive to learning while meeting student's developmental, emotional, and academic needs if they are able to foster positive relationships with their students. Furthermore, studies have shown that teachers who experience a great deal of job stress and burnout may have difficulty establishing rapport and maintaining positive relationships with their students (Hargreaves, 1998; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Lambert & McCarthy, 2006). Endangering a developing positive teacher/student relationship exists when teachers perceive their fluctuating job challenges and ongoing demands as becoming overwhelming and stressful (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Oftentimes, the teacher/student relationships can deteriorate due to the daily challenges teachers face such as, safeguarding the proper environment for learning in all their classes, meeting daily deadlines and requirements from administration, managing large class sizes, fulfilling other duties outside the classroom, and enforcing disciplinary measures upon disruptive students (Institute for Educational Leaderships [IEL], 2001). Rimm-Kaufman also found that if students feel personal connections to teachers, experience frequent positive communication with teachers, and receive more guidance, support, and praise rather than criticisms from teachers, then they are likely to become more trustful of teachers and open to develop positive relationships.

The job demands and emotional deposits of teaching can become a stressful vocation where teachers experience high levels of anxiety, frustration, pressure, weighty expectations, dread, indifference, and burnout, which in-turn can affect the teacher/student relationship. The mental and emotional strains of teaching are not isolated to veteran teachers who have served in the vocation for an extended period beyond five years. There appears to be some major concerns regarding early career burnout for beginning teachers, i.e., teachers with one to five years of

teaching (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). These major concerns are due to the emotional challenges of beginning teachers striving to cope with developing teacher/student relationships while dealing with the demands of their job and stress of teaching (Anderson & Iwanicki, 1981; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Schonfeld, 2001). The increasing numbers of beginning teachers, from all grades levels, associated with an early exit from the teaching profession seem to be due to unhealthy teacher/student relationships. Some of the job-related frustrations of teachers are due to the negative or unhealthy teacher/student relationships they deal with daily (Benner, 2000; Black, 2003; Brewster & Railsback, 2001; Macdonald, 1991). Teachers are important adults in children's scholastic lives. Sometimes the influences from teacher/student relationships can be just as strong or influential as the relationships from the parents of students. According to Malmberg and Hagger (2009), there is evidence that teacher/student relationships and teacher well-being have significant effects on children's socio-emotional adjustment and academic performance.

In short, teachers that professionally accept the responsibilities for educating, guiding, motivating, training, and molding students must be caring adults with strong minds. Positive teacher/student relationships carry significant internal rewards for teachers and students. A positive relationship between teachers and students contribute towards academic success and a positive learning environment in the classroom (Doll et al., 2004; Hamer & Pianta, 2001). Positive teacher/student relationships can cultivate the needed awareness for students to feel able to academically advance. Additionally, creating and sustaining positive teacher/student relationships afford students the freedom to communicate their educational needs and deficiencies to their teachers without shame, insult, or ridicule. Moreover, positive relationships with students will afford teachers the freedom to communicate the needed responsibilities and

tasks from their students. Though the needs for positive teacher/student relationships are essential for effective learning, it requires the ongoing personal involvement and energies of teachers and students to participate in the building process. Jeopardizing the dynamics in creating the teacher/student relationships can become easy, when teachers emotionally deal with the daily requirements, expectations, and perceived demands of the job. The teaching field has important responsibilities, required relationships, and demanding tasks. Nevertheless, managing healthy teacher/student relationships and handling various job demands remain as foundational components within the school environment.

Teaching Demands

The demands, stress, and responsibilities of today's teachers exceed the expectations and demands of educational pioneers and teachers of yesterday (Hammond & Prince, 2007; Hargreaves, 2003). It is evident that the job demands within the teaching profession are not just limited to the traditional classroom teaching activities that promote learning. Some of the other duties that teachers perform include, motivating unmotivated students, increasing achievement levels of students taking standardized tests, and minimizing the achievement gaps among students. Furthermore, teachers must prepare engaging lesson plans that are authentic, measurable, and relevant; manage student behavior and maintain communications with parents; and adhere to district and academic policies (Awa et al., 2010; Baker, 2005; Berry, Smylie, & Fuller, 2008; Haberman, 2004; Sardiwalla, VandenBerg, & Esterhuyse, 2007). Thus, there are both emotional and physical demands of teaching.

Emotional Demands

The emotional demands of teaching and the stressfulness of teachers have become a widely recognized phenomenon (Chang, 2009; Tuettemann, 1991). The OECD's (2005) analysis into global trends and developments in the teaching workforce across 25 countries identified retention of quality teachers as one of the main concerns for policy makers worldwide. Strategically redesigning educational objectives and creating a safe environment for students and faculty within our nation's school systems may not be an option anymore. The strategies undertaken to lessen the emotional strain of teachers and improve the process of learning within American classrooms will be a daunting, demanding, and costly task for all invested stakeholders. Grappling with the ideas and potential problems of achieving a large-scale educational reform, increasing student achievement, and protecting the well-being and safety of teachers have become a great challenge for America and its teachers (Fullan, 2001).

Teachers often feel drained intellectually and emotionally when they deal with students' misbehaviors (Chang & Davis, 2009) while also striving to provide quality instructional time and guidance for other students that are in the classrooms. The emotional demands within the field of teaching are evident. Frequent interactions with adults and students can be a tiring experience each day. Along with being required to provide the energies necessary to carry out daily workloads, teachers find themselves regulating personal expressions, managing their actions, and controlling their emotions (Chang, 2009; Hargreaves, 2003; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). It is safe to suggest that striving to serve, help, and satisfy the needs of others are emotional requirements. Thus, in order to create and sustain an engaging lesson, teachers need to invest a great deal of emotional labor each day (Hargreaves, 2000; Shyman, 2010; Yong & Yue, 2007). For the many teachers in K-12 schools, teaching is a narrow focus on day-to-day events, a sense

of separation from other adults in the building, and limited opportunities for reflection (Fullan, 2001). Fullan also suggests that due to the isolated culture of the vocation, teachers depleted of energy may become frustrated and bored as they privately struggle with their anxieties.

Quality teaching that produces increased learning and student achievement is a demanding job that requires emotional stability and a balanced mental state of mind. Teaching is not like many other professions because it places continuous demands upon the very fibers of the human soul. Teaching is an emotional cost upon caring teachers and teachers are always prone to fall short emotionally (Maslach, 2003). There is a relationship between the affective work of classroom teaching and the emotional well-being of teachers. The emotional needs required to reach, teach, and serve all students are not the only objectives of teaching. There are also the demands for teachers to perform physically with endurance, skill, and ability.

Physical Demands

A portion of student achievement will be the results of the never-ending sacrifices and physical demands teachers face. According to Hargreaves (2003), challenging the stamina of a teacher can be every day on the job. In today's school systems, the physical demands upon teachers are constantly on the front line. Maintaining the instructional posture of standing, carrying teaching equipment/text books, various trips to different locations within the facility, moving classroom furniture, chaperoning field trips, and actively managing numbers of students each day can be physically costly upon any teacher. Consequently, being physically tired can have adverse effects on classroom performance (Hargreaves, 1998; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010). Handling disorderly classes and disruptive students can be an expression of a physical nature. Personally providing classroom assistance for students, physically suffering

from inadequate times for eating throughout the day, multi-tasking, and the need for more physical breaks can have its affects on the body.

As noted earlier, the field of teaching has been an enjoyable and fulfilling vocation for many teachers. It has provided the means for developing and preparing students for their futures. Students are in need of the best that teachers have to offer. Teachers within the field of education create opportunities to cultivate academic excellence in classrooms along with helping students feel valued. Nevertheless, the field of teaching is not without its daily challenges and demands that can threaten the well-being of teachers. The emotional and physical involvement of classroom teachers can be complex, daunting, and at times demanding. However, good teacher/student relationships seem to be the most important source of enjoyment and motivation for many tenured teachers in the field. Yet, teachers who experience burnout may have difficulty establishing and maintaining positive relationships with their students. In order to teach well, teachers must constantly and patiently solicit or draw the attention of all students and encourage them to listen, and provide verbal encouragement that leads to learning. Some of the special needs that students require for learning along with their limited or untapped abilities will require teachers to be prepared emotionally and physically to accommodate each day.

The objectives of the teaching profession are to prepare, advance, develop, educate, and train students for the future (Danielson, 2007). These objectives will require teachers to invest their energy, mind, emotions, and body. Most teachers will leave the school emotionally and physically exhausted at the end of the day, with the expectations that their students will return requiring meaningful services from their teachers again. Though the framework of teaching and the intricacies of student learning may largely rest upon the emotional and physical demands of classroom teachers, burnout has become an apparent reality within the teaching field.

Burnout

The term burnout refers to the conditions of physical and emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 2003; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010; Yong & Yue, 2007). These conditions are associated with the negative attitudes stemming from depersonalization (i.e., callousness or detachment), resulting from intense interactions while working with and/or serving people. Both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are two primary conditions used to describe the burnout phenomenon (Maslach et al., 2001). The term burnout first emerged as a social problem, not as a scholarly construct (Freudenberger, 1974). The adverse conditions of burnout and the most discussion of it in the first five years of studies occurred in the fields of education, social services, health care, the criminal justice system, mental health, religion, and other people-oriented occupations (Maslach, 2003). Burnout is a complex phenomenon and at times perceived to have an unknown origin, for which years ago no universal accepted definition existed (Farber, 1991). Previous findings also suggested that burnout is the unceasing emotional exhaustion and frustration resulting from continued devotion/dedication or work towards a goal or principle that has failed to produce corresponding rewards (Freudenberger, 1974; Freudenberger & Richelson, 1980; Terry, 1997).

Similarly today, burnout is considered as the extermination of motivation/enthusiasm for encouragement, especially where one's devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Zolnierczyk-Zreda, 2005). It appears that much of the known research in the area of burnout is associated to Herbert Freudenberger, a psychologist practicing in New York during the 1960s and 1970s. Freudenberger (1974) used the term burnout to describe the effects of overworked, exhaustion, and frustration he experienced while operating a free clinic for drug users and impoverished persons. However, it seems the term

burnout originated during the 1960s as a description of the effects of drug abuse on an individual (Croom, 2003; Golembiewski, 1993).

Chronic exhaustion, negative attitudes, and frustration seem to be at the heart of much of the burnout syndrome. According to Maslach (2003), burnout is a pattern of emotional overload and subsequent emotional exhaustion. Maslach asserts a person gets overly involved emotionally, over-extends him or herself, and consequently feels overwhelmed and frustrated by the emotional demands imposed by the needs or services required by other people or clients. People tend to feel drained and/or used up due to this emotional overload and eventual emotional depletion. Individuals dealing with burnout lack enough energy to continue their services or face another demanding day. Some consider burnout to be a negative or inappropriate response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing extensively with others in need (Maslach, 1982a; Rimm-Kaufman, 2011). Yong and Yue (2007) suggest the compromising of quality education occurs when teachers have reached the stage of burnout and are no longer able to devote themselves adequately to the profession. The quality of their work tends to diminish greatly and the enthusiasm and care about their work tends to become lost.

A combination of various on-going stress factors or intense engagements in any work environment can possibly trigger the effects of burnout (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; Rimm-Kaufman, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The neglect to employ strategies for coping or other preventive measures or if such strategies and measures have become ineffectual, burnout may become a severe issue. Some of the apparent results of burnout are: (a) emotional-exhaustion, mental overload, depletion of physical and mental energies, (b) cognitive-reduced sense of personal fulfillment, and personal or professional accomplishment, and (c) a reduced feeling of competence (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2000; Friedman, 1996). The well-being of a

person's state of mind or world view can be placed at risk if there are no employed means of managing or coping with the pressures or on-going challenges associated with high stress work settings in which failure can be costly (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

According to Gavish and Friedman (2010), burnout is a long-term experience of emotionally damaging situations or conditions. These kinds of situations that can trigger burnout can exist within professional working relationships targeted at providing services for others (Perusek, 2011). Those that serve in vocational fields such as police officers, doctors, social workers, lawyers, and educators may become victims of emotionally damaging results or burnout (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; Schaufeli et al., 1993). Burnout tends to effect the social stability or well-being of the person; possibly causing varying degrees of dysfunctional or negative behaviors by distancing and/or insulating from individuals within the work environment. Cedoline (1982) found that burnout could manifest strong and negative feelings toward the self while causing poor morale and organizational inefficiency. Burnout happens gradually over time. The adverse effects of burnout tend to arise from constant responses required during demanding events or other perceived environmental conditions that are stressful or challenging. At the same time, there tends to be no immediate known resource for coping (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; Greenglass, Fiksenbaum, & Burke, 1994; Perusek, 2011).

The existence of the burnout phenomenon can be a concern among administrators, supervisors, researchers, and practitioners. When personal investments are still required within demanding and challenging vocations like the teaching profession, the social stability, job performance, and well-being of teachers is at risk. Opinions may vary as it relates to the financial cost of burnout or stress to businesses, other human-service occupations, and the field of teaching. However, annual expense has been between $150 and $300 billion because of

burnout in the workplace (Goldin, 2004). As it relates to teachers, burnout costs school districts billions of dollars annually as well (Durr, 2008; Haberman, 2004). Therefore, it appears that further research studies on the various causes of burnout within the workplace are important.

Causes of Burnout

A review of the literature makes it clear that teacher burnout is a consequence of the kinds of work responsibilities and demands within the teaching vocation (Carlyle & Woods, 2003; Cedoline, 1982; Faber, 1991). Attempts to establish some of the causes of burnout have identified personal and environmental (i.e., physical) factors as the primary causes (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Villa & Calvete, 2001). The perceived disproportion between the demands of the job and the resources (both material and emotional) that employees have available to them can trigger job burnout (Cedoline, 1982; Brock & Grady, 2000). When the demands of the job greatly outweigh an employee's available resources for coping, the psychological outcome may trigger the affects of burnout. Many possible causes of job burnout may factor into why teachers leave the field of education. When passionate, idealistic, and dedicated teachers feel unable to educate and inspire their students because of apathy, discipline problems, poor student attendance, overcrowded classrooms, shortage of available support staff and materials, excessive paperwork, and excessive testing; teachers are likely to burnout (Bloch, 1976; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

The research from Lueken, Lyter, and Fox (2004) suggest that among the teachers who left the profession, the five most commonly reported sources of dissatisfaction were a lack of planning time needed for class preparation and other administrative work, too heavy a work load throughout each day, over-crowded classrooms, too low a salary, and constant problematic student behavior. Consequently, teacher stress and/or burnout can stem from various causes.

Other causes may arise from administrative neglect or lack of sensitivity from those occupying administrative roles in district or state offices. A recent study about the role of relationships between supervisors and subordinates suggest that the insensitivities from administration or administrators towards their subordinates had significant negative effects (i.e., frustration and stress) on employee's intention to remain in the job (Vatcharasirisook, 2011). Additionally, administrative mismanagement of student issues and even personal mistreatment from colleagues could have negative effects on teachers. Elected school officials at the district, state, and federal levels can carry a large responsibility in establishing structures, policies, and operational systems that can contribute towards or protect the well-being of its teachers (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

Historically, burnout studies have reported work-related stressors and job challenges that exist independent of teacher perceptions (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1997). Some of these perceptions include ambiguous role expectations, unreasonable time demands (Lorite, 1975; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010), large classes (Carlyle & Woods, 2003; Coates & Thoresen, 1976), poor staff relations with administrators (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008; Young, 1978), inadequate buildings and facilities (Fullan, 2001; Rudd & Wiseman, 1962), and the lack of school resources, equipment, a sense of isolation, and fear of violence (Brissie, 1988; Lueken et al., 2004). Haberman (2004) endorses the issue of having too many disruptive students in a classroom as being a work-related stressor as well.

However, teacher burnout is not an issue stemming from just one challenging responsibility within the teaching profession. There have been other important factors of burnout of teachers that involve constant change or revising of school policies regarding discipline and tardiness, lack of moral support from principals, and lack of social interaction with staff (Byrne, 1994; Cunningham, 1982, 1983; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977; Sardiwalla et al., 2007). Dan

Lortie (1975) described the work of teachers as being "fraught with uncertainties" (p. 135). According to Day (2000), the constant stream of change, especially in curriculum, pedagogy, and teacher evaluation methods, have irritated rather than alleviated the already relentless pace of a teacher's daily work. In his earlier work, Day (1999) discussed how radically schooling had changed along with the behavior of teachers, students, and parents. Some of the causes that have also contributed to teacher burnout are teachers' beliefs that parent participation has diminished within the learning process of their children (Colangelo, 2004; Day, 2000). So often, the causes of burnout may include giving a great deal personally and not getting back much in the way of appreciation, commitment, or other positive responses (Corey, 1996; Sardiwalla et al., 2007).

According to Maslach (2003), burnout is not simply a matter of certain types of individuals who cannot handle the job, nor is it simply the nature of the job irrespective of the people who perform it. Maslach suggests there is a complex interaction between individual, interpersonal, and institutional factors that create burnout. Taking an account of these factors is important when attempting to understand not only the nature of burnout, but also the various stages that have surfaced in the research. Burnout is a complex issue and being able to identify the stages and measure how it affects individuals has benefited many.

Maslach Burnout Inventory

Both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are terms globally recognized and accepted descriptors from a published survey instrument called the Maslach Burnout Inventory [MBI] (Maslach et al., 1996). Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed the MBI. This 22-item self-reporting inventory is the most widely used instrument of burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Maslach, 2003). Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are subscales of this instrument. Several researchers (Aguayo, Vargas, Fuente, & Lozano, 2011; Beckstead, 2002; Pierce &

Molly, 1990) have reported reliability of this instrument. Universally accepted, the MBI became the premium standard to assess professional burnout (Schutte et al., 2000). This instrument became a self-reporting assessment that instructs participants to mark the frequency with which they experience certain feelings or attitudes toward their job and work environment. The MBI reflects and characterizes the range of burnout with three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (negative or cynical attitudes towards patients) and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Ames et al., 2004; Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Understanding that the MBI instrument is widely used within the medical vocation and other social service occupations, revisions have been made to include an Educator's Survey version (Maslach et al.) consisting of the original three subscales. The three subscales consist of sample items such as "I feel emotionally drained from my work" (i.e., emotional exhaustion), "I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects" (i.e., depersonalization), and "I feel I am positively influencing other people's lives through my work" (i.e., personal accomplishment) (Maslach et al.). Other examples may consist of sample items such as "I feel frustrated by my job when..." or "I become overwhelmed and unable to function when..." Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are the descriptors used for this study, but participants will not take the MBI.

Stages of Burnout

Most empirical work in the area of burnout has embraced the three-component structure of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). The original research that Maslach and Jackson offered about the burnout stages have been widely cited (Farber, 1991; Gold et al., 1992; Schutte, Toppinen, Kalimo, & Schaufeli, 2000). In their earlier work, Perlman and Hartman (1982) also formulated a synthetic definition of burnout as being a response to chronic emotional stress with their

version of three measurable components involving (a) emotional and/or physical exhaustion, (b) followed by a lowered job productivity, and (c) depersonalization.

Teachers exhibit signs of emotional exhaustion when they feel that they can no longer give of themselves emotionally to students as they did earlier in their career (Haberman, 2004; Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982a). The depersonalization of teachers will cause them to develop negative, cynical, and sometimes callous attitudes toward students, parents, and/or colleagues. The components that seem to consistently surface within the burnout syndrome are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion. The first step in the stages of teacher burnout is in the area of the human emotions. Emotional exhaustion appears to be the core element of burnout and the most obvious manifestation of this complex syndrome (Maslach et al., 2001). Researchers (Maslach, 2003; McCarthy, Lambert, O'Donnell & Melendres, 2009; Tomic & Tomic, 2000) examining the stages of burnout found that a majority of teachers have experienced some type of symptoms of work-related exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion or becoming depleted emotionally usually happens after individuals have become overly involved emotionally and have overextended themselves in the job and are no longer able to handle the emotional demands needed for others and from others (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 2003). In other words, there is a depletion of the emotional resources of individuals (Noushad, 2008).

In a broad sense, emotional exhaustion involves a depletion of one's emotional resources and is perhaps the most obvious and central quality of the complex syndrome of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). According to McCarty et al. (2009), persons experiencing emotional exhaustion also report being exhausted and feeling less able to cope with external demands of the work environment. Maslach et al. believed that emotional exhaustion is a necessary, but

insufficient, criterion for burnout. Although emotional exhaustion encompasses the stress-produced emotions caused by work and social demands, it fails to capture other important, and potentially problematic, aspects of the worker and workplace relation.

Depersonalization. Depersonalization is the second stage of burnout. Individuals start to ignore and pull away from the people who are in need of their service (Gold et al., 1992; Maslach et al., 1996; Maslach et al., 2001). Thus, teachers may have a detached or disconnected attitude towards students. This detached attitude works as a defense mechanism, because teachers do not have the emotional resources to cope with situations at hand or the continued stress they face (Curtaz, 2009; Kokkinos, 2007). To minimize the feelings of exhaustion, teachers build up a mental wall to protect themselves from the stressful situations and the demands of the work environment (Noushad, 2008). Teachers become cynical, negative towards students, and detached from those with whom they work with and teach (Noushad).

The risk of teachers developing depersonalization can become a large threat due to particular challenging conditions within the working environment. Often times many job-related responsibilities, activities of classroom teaching, and the daily work life of teachers occur in isolation or separated from other classes and faculty. Interpersonal relationships with other teachers are not easily established or continued due to the daily demands and responsibilities of individual teachers with their classes. The physical layout of most schools, with teachers working in separate classrooms and scheduling constraints, make finding time to meet or socialize with peers or administrators difficult (Bennett & LeCompte, 1990; Wood & McCarthy, 2002). In addition, the combination of these factors can also cause teachers to feel disconnected, unproductive, and isolated. This attitude can carry over into the teachers' job performance.

Reduced personal accomplishment. This is the third and last stage of burnout. Having

a reduced sense of personal accomplishment is a condition that adversely affects one's efficacy and causes that person to devalue his or her work with others (Maslach et al., 1996). Whereas emotional exhaustion and depersonalization may in part emerge from factors such as work overload and social conflict, the decreased efficacy associated with reduced personal accomplishment seems to arise more clearly from insufficient personal resources (Maslach et al., 2001). Teachers, from their perspectives, become inadequate and do not believe in their abilities to do the job that is expected (Maslach, 1982; Van Dick & Wagner, 2001). A sense of reduced personal accomplishment causes teachers to perceive their self-efficacy and self-esteem have declined (Noushad, 2008). During this stage, there becomes a lack of confidence from teachers and then from others with whom they work (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). They no longer have faith that they are capable of doing their job and, in turn, stop trying. Therefore, the teachers' psychological well-being, the need for a positive school culture, and the importance of student learning are some of the important reasons for addressing teacher burnout. Addressing the issues of burnout may help reduce stress levels of teachers, ensure successful student development in classrooms, and enhance the learning environment for all students (Biglan, 2008; Farber, 1982; Kyriacou, 2001).

Addressing Burnout

When work stress results in teacher burnout, it can have serious consequences for the health and happiness of teachers, student achievement, other professionals, and families that teachers interact with on a daily basis. Effectively addressing burnout among educators may help preserve quality performance and positive interactions. Addressing teacher burnout by searching for affective interventions and support systems are concerns for policy makers, teachers in the field, and the educational community at-large (Zellmer, 2004). In an attempt to

address burnout issues, Greenberg (1999) found:

> Organizational practices and policies that prevent teacher burnout are generally those that allow teachers some control over their daily challenges. At the individual level, self-efficacy and the ability to maintain a perspective with regard to daily events have been described as anxiety-buffers. (p. 7)

Kyriacou (2001) explored the relationship between burnout prevention and the increased input of teachers within the work environment that affects student learning drawn from an Education Service Advisory Committee report (1998). The findings helped school district officials, policy makers, and administrators address the burnout syndrome effecting teachers. To help address some of the adverse effects of burnout, teachers should be directly involved with structuring the educational process and policymaking that affects their students. Kyriacou contends consulting teachers on "matters such as curriculum development or instructional planning" (p. 7) are important. Kyriacou further states that such matters as curriculum writing and instructional planning affect classroom teachers along with how their lesson plans and student activities are developed. Providing teachers with professional development activities such as mentoring and networking can serve as ways of building more self-confidence within teachers. These kinds of endeavors may give rise to teachers developing a greater sense of accomplishment, assurance, and self-worth. Continuing to develop a greater identity as a professional teacher is important for a strong and lasting well-being.

Addressing burnout should be a collaborative effort from both the teaching faculty and administration. Dennis (2008) suggests: "school systems can implement strategies to minimize teacher burnout; and administrators from district and school levels must recognize the existence of burnout and implement changes designed to improve teacher morale" (p. 17). Furthermore,

Owens, Mundy, and Harrison (1980) previously suggested principals should be sensitive about the school-related matters affecting teacher morale and the prevailing conditions within their buildings. Principals should also become more familiar with the issues and work-related conditions that can lead to burnout. Administrators can help assist with promoting the well-being of teachers by making sure teachers clearly understand their job duties and responsibilities. Owens et al. believed that administrators should always provide clear goals, open channels of communication and positive feedback to their teaching staff at all times. In addressing the working conditions and factors that can create burnout, administrators should also consider the strategies to reduce large class sizes and add more clerical assistance to reduce teacher paperwork. Teachers need to sense and observe the kinds of security measures and support systems they need for job satisfaction and quality performance. School administration and district officials can provide these measures.

Addressing burnout may involve reducing various stressors found within the workplace environment and organizational structures that affect teacher performance. Carefully addressing and/or restructuring the social environment of teachers can contribute toward reducing the risk of burnout within the workplace. In an effort to minimize burnout issues Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999) contend, "focusing on the redesign guidelines is clearly on the organizational level" and "it is clear that teachers need specific and individualized help" (p. 305). Vandenberghe and Huberman found that school systems at the organizational level might need to discover the importance of establishing the kinds of environments or social systems that can become teacher supportive and allow for greater collaborative work for teachers.

Addressing burnout involves implementing a productive social system for teachers, providing meaningful workshops focusing on interpersonal relationships, and creating

opportunities to work collectively as staff members (Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). These kinds of environmental settings and opportunities could minimize the risk of teacher burnout. Vandenberghe and Huberman also suggested that teacher-related initiatives from the organizational levels could be a way to "provide schools with a more general budget for a more flexible in-service facility, including the hiring of external consultants" (p. 308) to assist the teaching staff; while also providing "more tailor-made training and assistance with local problems when required" (p. 308).

The tendency of those who are unaware of the causes and consequences of burnout is to pass responsibility over to individual teachers or, even worse, to blame them for their personal issues. However, it is a necessity at the school and district-wide levels for educational administrators to realize that they, too, can reduce or increase the causes of burnout through their activities and policies. The matter of learning productive strategies for coping with burnout is not regulated [*sic*] to teachers as individuals, but it should be treated as an organizational matter as well (Kyriacou, 2001; Smith & Bourke, 1992).

A positive and non-threatening atmosphere becomes beneficial for the well-being of teachers that work in demanding or challenging environments. According to the previous research of Punch and Tuetteman (1996), a number of studies highlighted the importance of working in a school where a positive atmosphere of social support exists and teachers greatly benefit. Those that can contribute to its positive existence create a positive atmosphere within a demanding work environment. The literature seems to suggest the power of promoting and establishing positive interpersonal relationships among staff members. Protecting positive interpersonal relationships can help staff members from possible effects of work-related burnout (Cohen & McKay, 1984; Kyriacou, 2001; Wood & McCarthy, 2002). Providing social support

and encouragement to build positive interpersonal relationships within the workplace enables teachers to share personal school-related concerns and problems with each other. Social support and encouragement through interpersonal relationships could lead to helpful suggestions from colleagues that teachers can implement (Kyriacou, 2001). In addition, there could also be actions or advice by colleagues that could resolve the sources that could contribute to burnout. In an effort to address and help minimize burnout among staff members Kyriacou found, "simply sharing problems or engaging in some social activity with colleagues during break periods can effectively help dissipate the feelings of stress" (p. 31).

Administrators that affect the work environment of teachers can unknowingly create burnout factors. Some school districts are able to provide professional counseling services, retreats, and mentoring programs for staff members who are experiencing high levels of frustration and stress. An important innovation in the United Kingdom was to establish a telephone helpline for teachers who were dealing with the adverse effects of burnout. Teacher-Line was the telephone innovation used to help teachers deal with the effects of burnout (TBF, 2000). This service enabled teachers to receive free telephone counseling for stress-related problems. Therefore, both administration and policy makers can take active roles in prevention efforts as well by giving constant positive feedback, and utilizing parent and community involvement to assist in the prevention of burnout among the teaching staff (Terry, 1997; Wood & McCarthy, 2002). Organizational leaders in education and school administrators addressing the burnout issue can become important within the teaching field because burnout and stress can affect teacher performance and student learning.

Researchers have focused on the burnout phenomenon within the teaching field along with the contributing factors and conditions associated with the syndrome. The literature

suggests that burnout has considerable implications for teachers' professional performance relative to students and colleagues—not to speak of teachers' own well-being. Burnout is a problem with potentially serious consequences for both teachers and more importantly for the learning outcomes of students. The teacher/student relationship is potentially the most vulnerable component within the learning process, especially when viewed against the backdrop of an ever-changing society that compels teachers and students to learn how to adapt within society (Maslach, 2003; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). Though the burnout syndrome is an apparent issue within many vocational fields such as teaching, the existence of job stress and its effects upon people have contributed to the burnout phenomenon (Zellmer, 2004).

Stress

The concept or idea of stress on a job is as old as life itself. It is a phenomenon characteristic to the field of work. According to Brown and Uehara (1999), researchers acknowledge difficulty in pinpointing a single definition of the term stress. Previously, Selye (1974) provided a frequently cited definition for stress as, "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it" (p. 27). Nevertheless, as noted earlier, the operational definition for stress used in this study is the physical and psychological result of internal and external pressure caused by a task or multiple tasks (The Psychology Dictionary, 2003). Stress seems to be a psychological condition that brings adverse effects upon people working in various occupational fields of human services. So often, these adverse effects are the result of perceived job demands adults encounter while facing the social and environmental responsibilities of the occupation (Carr, Kelly, Keaton, & Albrecht, 2011; Crandall & Perewe', 1994).

In general, stress is any series of events or any single event that causes an extreme demand upon one's mind or body (Altenbaugh, Engel, & Martin, 1995; Betoret, 2006; Cedoline,

1982). Linking the aspects of a stressful job to negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, uncontrolled tension, and frustration or depression is documented (Carr et al., 2011). In the realm of teaching, Dennis (2008) states, "stress is a condition of twenty-first-century education that continues to increase as more accountability standards and new policy initiatives are introduced" (p. 12). The cause of stress, along with burnout, is most likely through environmental factors, which can have profound outcomes on the attitudes and capabilities of teachers; and their willingness to remain active in the helping professions in general and education in particular (Dennis).

The personalities and mental stabilities of professional teachers along with the various workloads they carry could play a role regarding the levels of stress that is experienced. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping assume that stress is a person-situation interaction. Their study suggested that the personal interactions within a particular environment could create a form of stress actually felt upon that individual. Nevertheless, Lazarus and Folkman asserted that stress should not be perceived as the personal property of the person, neither is it the property belonging to that environment. Their work suggested that the stress issue arises when there is a close association between a particular kind of person and that particular kind of environment; consequently, leading to a threat that becomes apparent upon the person's mental state. Lazarus and Folkman considered stress as a stimulus and found that "stress stimuli are most commonly thought of as events impinging on the person" (p. 12). Moreover, their findings suggested that there are different kinds of environmental events that can cause the stress stimuli: "The extent to which any event is stressful is determined by a confluence of person and situational factors in a specific transaction" (p. 83).

There are suggested effects that can stem from the person-situational relationship.

Zakowski, Hall, Klein, and Baum (2001) found that the aspects of stress stemming from a person-situation relationship is very dependent on the individual's reasoning ability and perceived judgment that arises from those interactions between the individual and that environment. According to Mitchell (2004), "no event or situation in itself is inherently stressful; instead, the stressor is defined by the subjective of the situation that is appraised as threatening, harmful, or taxing of available resources" (p. 10). Though stress is an apparent factor within the world of work, as a result, stress is prevalent among classroom teachers that work at all levels. As an operational definition for this study, teacher stress is a set of experiences involving unpleasant or negative emotions of teachers, such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger and depression, resulting from aspects of work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 1987). Teacher stress may surpass the average levels among people working in other human-service professions (Travers & Cooper, 1993; Waugh & Judd, 2003).

Teacher Stress

Issues of teacher effectiveness tend to arise when stress compromises the professional responsibilities and classroom effectiveness of teachers (Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995; Cockburn, 2005; DeRobbio & Iwanicki, 1996; Markham, 1999). Attending to their job responsibilities may require emotional and physical deposits from teachers. Their responsibilities and demands include curriculum planning/writing, student motivation, developing effective strategies for instruction, structuring on-going parent/teacher communication, and various kinds of management (Brewster & Railsback, 2001; Carlyle & Woods, 2003; Saphier & Gower, 1997).

Teachers have always considered themselves academic leaders and educational motivators while also possessing a humanitarian objective for the students they teach and serve

(Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008; Eisner, 1994; Van Dick & Wagner, 2001). Long-term work stress may lead to burnout, which gravely affects teachers' physical and mental health, lowers the quality of their work, and in turn, decreases their students' physical and/or mental health and development. When teacher stress is prevalent, the risk of sound development of educating others and the educational performances of teachers are hindered (Carlyle & Woods, 2003; Yong & Yue, 2007). Studies by Kokkinos (2007) and Kyriacou (2001) suggest that teachers who experience a great deal of occupational stress may have difficulty establishing rapport and maintaining meaningful relationships with their students.

Teacher stress is associated with some of the physical and mental complications that affect the well-being of professional teachers and their tenure in the profession. Cosgrove's (2000) collaborative efforts with other scholars and experienced teachers in England and Wales found that in 1993, 5,500 teachers retired early on health grounds with teachers' unions blaming illness, breakdown, and demoralization brought by stress. Between 1988 and 1999 half the teachers in England and Wales quit their posts. By the late 1990s, more than 6,000 teachers a year were retiring early on the grounds of stress and ill health. Cosgrove suggested that perceived levels of stress and/or frustration from teachers become apparent when they sacrifice unplanned time to deal with disruptive classroom behaviors of students, and other unforeseen required tasks that interfered with classroom teaching. Nevertheless, there are expectations of teachers to manage the emotional demands and physical behaviors that students can demonstrate.

The relationship between provider and recipients are central to the job within interpersonally orientated occupations. Considering the field of teaching, Maslach et al. (1996) suggested that teachers represent the providers and students represent the recipients. The research efforts of Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999) documented another international

perspective regarding teacher stress and burnout. They recognized and reaffirmed the phenomenon of burnout being as an important stress-related problem for people who work in interpersonally orientated professions like the field of teaching. The nature of this kind of work involving a provider and recipients (be it service, treatment, or education) can be highly emotional, stressful, and demanding. This may be the case for teachers at various levels of teaching.

Elementary and middle/secondary school teachers and burnout/stress. Burnout and stress can be occupational hazards throughout the teaching ranks. Loonstra, Brouwers, and Tomic (2009) recognized burnout as a problem that affects teachers at all levels. Comparing the stress levels found among secondary teachers and those working in other human-service occupations, reportedly, the levels of stress are higher among teachers (Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Salmela-Aro, 2011; Travis & Cooper, 1993). There is a similarity between workload, stress, and burnout symptoms among all grade level teachers (Rhodes et al., 2004; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Employed teachers in the teaching profession are adults facing great demands due to the emotional investments made to care, manage, and motivate their clients (i.e., students). The job demands and daily responsibilities at all levels of education can have adverse consequences upon many teachers (Jenkins & Calhoun, 1991; Kokkinos, 2007; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999).

A brief review of the educational literature will provide some research regarding the kind of stress and various job challenges teachers face at different grade levels. In addition to the stressful challenges and problems, which exist in schools at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels, other demographic characteristics such as teachers' age and level of education can contribute to the stress/burnout issue as well. Years married may have significant results affecting burnout as well (Black, 2001; Salami, 2011). Investigations for this study will not

cover such demographic characteristics. Moreover, Black (2001) found female teachers tend to be more satisfied with their jobs than males, while elementary teachers report less stress than secondary teachers; and younger, less experienced teachers report feelings of greater alienation, powerlessness, and greater stress on all levels. Even though focus for this study is secondary teachers, the following brief sections provides discussions about the burnout/stress phenomenon at the elementary and middle school levels.

Elementary School Teachers

There has been research examining teacher burnout and its relation to classroom demands and school size, which tend to vary distinctly among various grade levels. It seems that burnout and stress can be more prevalent in larger elementary school systems than in smaller ones (Green-Reece, Johnson, & Campbell, 1991; Haberman, 2004; Kikkinos, 2007). Maslach and Leiter (1997) also reported burnout in terms of how elementary teachers' make up fit the job demands and responsibilities required at that grade level. Potential burnout among elementary teachers may be an issue if there seems to a poor relationship between properly handling the daily classroom demands and teachers' emotional resource for coping. To understand burnout symptoms of elementary teachers, McCarthy, Lambert, O'Donnell and Melendres (2009) considered teachers' perceptions of the job's demands and their personal make up to provide resources.

According to their study, McCarthy et al. (2009) suggested students remaining in one classroom and generally with the same teacher all day are a unique classroom set up that could contribute to burnout. The elementary classroom set up requires the teacher to have all day student contact with classroom instruction, teaching different core subjects, managing various learning activities, and controlling classroom behavior. Though the elementary classroom

structure may afford educational benefits and extended opportunities to develop healthy teacher/student relationships, the classroom teachers may also face more challenges. McCarthy et al. findings suggested that the coping resources of teachers were somewhat stable throughout their workday, after making personal evaluations about their classroom demands, perceived stressors, and daily responsibilities.

The all day classroom set up with the same students and the same teacher could become emotionally/mentally taxing. On the other hand, the elementary classroom set up is different from the middle school or high school structure. Middle and high school teachers tend to work with different students throughout the day, while dealing with different sets of classroom circumstances, challenges, benefits, opportunities, and issues. Nevertheless, elementary teachers spend a great deal of time with the same students and these interactions may add to their daily stress. According to Leithwood and Beatty (2008), unlike elementary teachers, both middle school and secondary teachers experienced considerable stress from student discipline, negative attitudes, and classroom behavior issues.

Middle School Teachers

Managing, motivating, educating, and disciplining middle school students could be a significant source leading to burnout for many teachers. Additionally, declining academic performance and the growing apathy of students in middle schools may indicate the value of education not being highly recognized by middle school students (Evers, Tomic, & Brouwers, 2004). However, prior research (Biddle, Good, & Goodson, 1997; Wang, Lan, Li, & Wang, 2002) suggested that burnout is not just associated with grade level and organizational size. The relationships between grade level, school size, and burnout are too complex to consider one definite solution (Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2010). Prior research of Anderson and Iwanicki (1984)

noted a relationship between grade level and burnout, with middle or junior high school teachers displaying more burnout than did elementary and secondary school teachers.

Studies in different countries show high levels of burnout and mental distress among teachers at different levels (Wang, Lan, Li, & Wang, 2002). According to Wu, Li, Wang, Wang, and Li (2006), the biggest distinction among the various grade levels are the ages of students and their varying measures of development. Oi Ling (1995) and Froeschle and Crews (2010) suggest that research associating teacher stress with age of students is still inconclusive. Nevertheless, research also reports that middle school teachers experience burnout frequently (Dunn-Wisner, 2004; Simons-Morton, 2005; Zhongying, 2008), wherein a certain age factor is considered.

The factors that may contribute to stress and burnout among middle school teachers may differ. Simons-Morton (2005) and Froeschle and Crews (2010) suggest that middle school teachers cope with identity development of students and their need for autonomy exhibited so often in early teens. Kokkinos (2007) and Saito (1999) indentified student behaviors in the classrooms as the most consistent and stressful job factor within the middle school systems along with the other stressors found within classrooms.

Secondary School Teachers

High schools are academically structured and systemically designed to help students meet graduation requirements and prepare them for post-secondary education. As in other grade levels, high school teachers possess the educational responsibilities and care to help develop and motivate students for the process of learning and succeeding. Considering high schools requiring rigorous academic coursework from students and teachers providing relevant and meaningful learning opportunities, therefore, the teacher/student relationships seem to be more meaningful at the secondary level (Hargreaves, 2000). However, students' lack of discipline, class attendance,

and motivation were the primary sources of teacher stress and the most significant predictors of burnout (Gonzalez, 1997; Johannsen, 2011).

International research suggests that high school teachers exhibit higher levels of stress when compared to other white-collar workers (Bransgrove, 1994; Dorman, 2003). From a study among secondary teachers, Hargreaves (2000) suggested the most important source of enjoyment and motivation for teachers were their relationships with their students. Furthermore, Hargreaves suggested that this result was also common among elementary teachers as well. From his findings, secondary teachers described personal relationships with students more in terms of acknowledgment and respect.

The organizational structure of secondary education can make it somewhat more difficult for secondary teachers to feel personally connected with the students (Dorman, 2003). The enforcement of school rules and policies regarding student behavior and attendance can have different effects upon students and teachers. Not all which may have positive results. Consequently, secondary teachers experienced less closeness and more personal separation from students (Hargreaves, 2000). This causes teachers to feel more unknown and become stereotyped by their students in which teachers mentioned as sources of negative emotions and feelings. Betoret's (2006) study examined the importance of self-efficacy and coping resources reported by secondary teachers when perceiving potential job stressors and burnout. Without protective measure of coping, increasing negative emotions could give way to mounting forms of mental stress. According to Hargreaves, alienated or estranged relationships exert a threat to not only teachers' professional behaviors and attitudes but also their personal well-being. Teacher quality at all grade levels is important for effective performance (Chang, 2009).

Burnout and stress can severely interrupt the quality of personalized teaching at all grade

levels along with damaging productive learning processes required between classroom teachers and students (Johannsen, 2011). It is evident that teachers and their negative feelings about their job and unfavorable attitudes about their students can affect their relationships with them (Hargreaves, 1998; Maslach, 2003). Because of the everyday demands and requirements teachers face, many discover themselves dealing with the increasing levels of stress and becoming burned out (Maslach). So often, needed self-employed measures will help protect the well-being of teachers through effective strategies for coping.

Coping

When teachers have a sense of well-being and care towards others, it generates a sense of agreement between the emotional make-up (i.e., mind) and body. This perceived harmony tends to convey the idea of having a balance and peace with the numerous aspects of the stressful work life of teaching. Teachers may reach a sense of balance and harmony through employed measures of coping (Holmes, 2005; Van Dierendonck, Garssen, & Visser, 2005). They can learn to eventually feel a sense of well-being, self-control, peace, and not suffer under the burden of excessive strain, relationship demands, and work pressures (Holmes). The art of coping potentially enables a person to preserve the needed qualities and attributes for appropriate work performances and personal sustainability. "Becoming a competent, caring, and committed teacher doesn't just happen—it evolves from a myriad of human interactions, learning coping sources, conversations, and experiences" (Podsen, 2002, p. xi).

The psychological development and quality performances of individuals are contingent upon their abilities to form protective measures or strategies for coping. Some researchers suggest that with some strategic training, mental development, and advanced learning, most educators can still perform adequately while dealing with demanding, stressful, or explosive job

situations (Schamer & Jackson, 1996; Van Dierendonck et al., 2005).

Some of the most effective means of preventing the effects of occupational stress and burnout among teachers has been the employment of coping strategies (Hargreaves, 2005; Schaufeli et al., 1993; Wagner, 2010). The concept or idea of employing mechanisms for coping with stressful or demanding situations are widely noted in the field of research (Betoret, 2006; Haberman, 2004; Poulin et al., 2008; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010). Coping seems to be the mental and/or physical ability of individuals to adapt, adjust, manage, or develop an emotional balance while facing challenging periods of life, challenging conditions, and/or high-stress environments. According to Cedoline (1982), coping (i.e., managing stressors) is primarily the learning process of converting the negative energy of an enemy or client into the positive energy of an ally. Cedoline considered this idea as taking a destructive or challenging stressor and formulating it into a creative motivator. There is an existing relationship between securing or preserving one's well-being and one's ability to employ healthy strategies for adapting, adjusting, or coping (Betoret).

According to Karekla and Panayiotou (2011), the idea of coping was introduced by Lazarus (1966) and it "referred to the way an organism approaches and responds to stressful situations" (Karekla & Panayioitou, p. 163). Karekla and Panayiotou contend, "Coping can be of critical importance to physical and psychological health and well-being" (p. 163). Mitchell (2004) found "That coping will be most effective if there is a match between the changeability of the stressor currently confronting the individual and the appropriate form of coping applied to the stressor" (p. 10).

The documented causes that can trigger burnout affect the work performances, social relationships, and mental stability of teachers as well as those in the service-providing

occupations (Hargreaves, 2003; Poulin et al., 2008; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010). Whether it is organizational and job-related factors, or individual issues, or stressing elements of job responsibilities, recognizing the causes of burnout and implementing healthy strategies can itself be a step in dealing with it (Biglan, 2008; Corey, 1996). However, coping is a learned behavior. Coping seems to be associated to the idea of developing behaviors, mental activities, or methods that help sustain one's resiliency and protect quality performance. Both Abaci (1995) and Biglan (2008) suggest that the personal expressions or any formulated activities for coping is considered a learned behavior. Unsuccessful strategies for coping or the absence of any such measures to adapt at all can affect the well-being of teachers and quality of teaching (i.e., success) in the classroom. Recognizing particular events or situations/conditions within the job setting that could act as a trigger that causes stress is paramount. Consequently, there is a need for teachers to learn how to reduce the number of trigger events (McCarthy, Lambert, & Brack, 1997; Poulin et al., 2008). Strategizing and implementing healthy methods to eliminate or minimize work-related stress and/or burnout is important for optimum performance.

Coping Strategies

For anyone experiencing stress or burnout, employing strategies of coping to help hold back adverse effects or psychologically developing positive attitudes from known stressors is crucial. Fortes-Ferreira, Peiro', Gonzalez-Morales, and Martin (2006) suggest that "coping strategies seem to play an important role in determining the results and/or consequences" (p. 239) of work-related stressors. There are many strategies for coping individuals have employed in an effort to reduce the burnout syndrome. Employing effective strategies for coping is a personal matter that can lead to personal development. Fisher (2011) suggests having, "a balanced diet, exercise, and adequate sleep"; coupled with, "being able to recognize work

overload and stress-resistant workplaces" (p. 9). Kyriacou (2001) and Fortes-Ferreira et al. (2006) found that many employed methods or strategies for coping have fallen into two main types: direct action techniques and palliative techniques. Learning to cope with job-related burnout is not something that comes naturally to teachers or adults in general.

Direct Actions Techniques

Learning to initially deal with known job-related stressors can have great rewards and prepare individuals for similar successes in the future. It is important to note that employing a successful strategy or designed technique to minimize or deal with a present stressor, followed up with the same direct action again in the future can be beneficial for individuals' well-being (Kyriacou, 2001). Strategic repetitions of such performed direct action techniques should be the important mental transition made when job-related stressors start to affect job performance or teachers' well-being. Additionally, personal evaluation is a suggested direct action technique that becomes beneficial for individuals. The use of this direct action technique is made to first identify what is causing the stress and why, and then deciding on a course of action that may deal successfully with that source of stress. Kyriacou suggested the following:

> Direct action techniques may involve simply managing or organizing oneself more effectively; it may involve developing new knowledge, skills, and working practices; it may involve negotiating with colleagues, so aspects of one's situation are changed or dealt with by others. (p. 30)

As an example, dealing with a disruptive student or a negative relationship between a colleague may require a new skillful, and yet meaningful, strategy. It would be the hope of employing the selected direct action technique that would alleviate that source of stress stemming from the student or the apparent friction between colleagues. Dealing with any source of stress may lead

to an immediate success or it could involve longer periods of actions employed by the individual being affected (Kyriacou, 1998).

According to Sharplin, O'Neill, and Chapman (2011), coping strategies classified as direct action techniques have "focused on stress source elimination" and employed "strategies such as advice seeking and positive comparison methods that mitigated job distress" (p. 139). Sharplin et al. suggested that the coping strategies demonstrated by the teachers under their study included "getting information, seeking assistance, connecting with others, reflecting, and reframing" (p. 140). School principals could take direct action as well by removing disruptive students from particular classes (Wilson, 2002). Wilson also found "the most direct action teachers can take to mitigate their occupational stress is to remove them from the situation which they think is causing their stress" (p. 32). In short, strategies or direct action techniques for coping can deliver a sense of well-being to teachers. However, employing direct action techniques for some sources of work-related stress will not always produce success or the needed remedy. Using palliative techniques may be required.

Palliative Techniques

Employing a palliative technique has been a proven alternative strategy for coping with work-related stressors. The palliative technique carries the idea of lessening the severity upon the person without removing or curing the stressor. Consequently, this kind of method or strategy involves directly changing how the stressful situation is evaluated or appraised. According to Fortes-Ferreira et al. (2006), "reducing the emotional discomfort" (p. 239) of the individual when the source of stress persists becomes a palliative technique. Kyriacou (2001) suggested that palliative techniques could be preformed mentally or physically. The mental aspect could involve techniques such as psychologically arranging issues in a better or more

positive perspective such as looking at things with a humorous point of view. Fortes-Ferreira et al. suggested that mentally focused individuals initially evaluating their emotional state of being, describes a palliative technique. The individual's emotions take center stage instead of the demanding stressor or stressful situation at hand. Whereas direct action techniques are the attempts to respond to demanding or threatening situations by removing them, palliative techniques would involve focusing on avoiding the emotional discomfort that arises within the individual. Palliative strategies also include "positive self-talk, accepting and using a goal focus, use of humor, and religious beliefs" (Sharplin et al., 2011, p. 140). Kyriacou found strategies that are palliative in nature such as learning self-control, making love, jogging, mediation, and writing poetry.

There are coping strategies that reflect both techniques. They include discussing apparent problems and expressing feelings to those involved; having a stress-less home life; learning to plan and create priorities; knowing your limitations; relaxing after a workday; and, keeping problems in a healthy perspective (Kyriacou, 2001). In their study, Howard and Johnson (2004) asserted that some teachers could not achieve the mental transformations needed to deal with job-related stress. Promoting helpful solutions had been largely palliative or therapeutic in nature, rather than direct action.

In short, teachers desire to perceive themselves successful in their efforts to serve students positively, though there are many challenges, demands, and stress issues within the teaching field. Teachers that employ proven strategies for coping can greatly benefit from increasing negativity and/or frustration with their job. Teachers desire to gain and maintain a sense of classroom effectiveness and self-worth through the interactive learning experiences of students (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Podsen (2002) suggests,

"Individuals strive for self-actualization and share a desire to acquire knowledge, be creative, and reach their full potential" (p. 8); this includes teachers (Department of Education &Training, 2005). Nevertheless, discovering and strategically employing coping mechanisms while facing high-stress conditions or challenging environments can become a new learning process for those seeking a need to reach their full potential. According to Santrock (2001), for teachers to produce the distinguishable qualities and attitudes that will make them more effective and productive as classroom teachers, they must continue their personal learning and development. This, in turn, may enhance their self-efficacy.

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Self-belief or self-efficacy is a personal perception that contributes to cognitive development, capability, effectiveness, and functioning (Pas, Bradshaw, & Hershfeldt, 2012). Nie, Lau, and Liau (2011) suggest that self-efficacy represents a belief in one's capability to do something well. Pas et al. defined self-efficacy as a person's general belief of one's own ability to perform a required job. The threat of job importance emerges when individuals do not perceive themselves as being capable of performing well in the job, especially for those who think that job performance is very important for them. The components or attributes of self-efficacy that adults display come from within (i.e., how adults feel and think), not from the perceptions of others (Curtaz, 2009; Hongying, 2007; Nie et al., 2011).

Self-efficacy of teachers is how they feel about the extent in their abilities to succeed in instructing and/or guiding children in the learning process (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). According to Bandura (1977, 1993) teachers that believe in their self-efficacy to motivate students and establish measureable learning will determine the kinds of environment they create in classrooms; and the academic progress their students achieve. The makeup of teachers' self-

efficacy comprises the overall reactions and attitudes about the many factors related to their job. The higher the perceived self-efficacy within teachers, the more they believe in their abilities to teach and serve the needs of students. Job burnout is associated to the lack of self-efficacy in individuals. Struggling adults who doubt their abilities or do not believe in themselves will encounter stress and/or burnout (Curtaz, 2009; Maslach, 1982).

A pervious study suggested that there is a relationship between the ability to make judgments about the capacity to achieve a certain level of performance and having a high degree of self-efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teachers who report feelings of high self-efficacy are able to overcome challenges more easily than those who report low self-efficacy (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). The lower the self-efficacy, the less capable a teacher feels in being able to teach children to learn and control student behavior. Low self-efficacy makes it harder for an individual to overcome the difficult obstacles and challenges faced on the job (Brock & Grady, 2000; Curtaz, 2009). A lowering of teachers' level of perceived self-efficacy occurs when they observe increasing disruptive behavior from students and classroom management decreasing (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Teacher stress can affect the levels of self-efficacy. Teachers who report higher levels of stress have low perceptions of self-efficacy (Betoret, 2006; Rhodes et al., 2004), and in turn have higher rates of burnout. Working together and believing in the abilities of colleagues and administration as a whole can give an individual a higher feeling of self-efficacy and the ability to do the job.

Researchers suggest that the academic success of students and their self-determination is strongly associated to the disposition, work-related behaviors, and attitudes of their teachers (Gourneau, 2005; Hong & Shull, 2009). The hard work and sense of self-efficacy of good teachers could be the difference in helping students learn, develop, and improve. According to

Holmes (2005), teachers in general want to resolve the problems of declining self-efficacy created by stress and burnout. Thus, teachers are becoming open to develop or redevelop and learn their own solutions for self-efficacy coupled with developing new perspectives about themselves and their work environment (Betoret, 2006). Seeking such solutions and initiating some mental developments to form new perspectives could possibly benefit the needs of professional teachers. This process or idea would require some aspects of transformation. Baumgartner (2001) suggested that, "transformation evokes the notion of profound physical or psychological change" (p. 15). Oftentimes, realizing the need for change happens through many daunting events, overwhelming work experiences, or powerful experiences of life. Transformational learning involving adults, and throughout adulthood, can bring about a new psychological perspective, which in turn helps establishes a lasting change of behavior.

Transformational Learning

The theories and ideas regarding the complexities of transformational learning have evolved over the years (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). There can be many different theoretical persuasions and other various understandings when considering how transformational learning takes place in adults. Transformational or transformative learning can have many ways of looking at particular concepts and principles throughout the process while still having unique results from powerful experiences throughout adulthood (Elsey & Henschke, 2011). Therefore, for the purpose of this study the researcher will focus on Mezirow's (1990, 1991, 1995) theory of transformational learning.

The learning requirements throughout the many aspects of adulthood are not limited to the periods of vocational training needed, or the desire to progress through an educational system for an academic goal. The prevailing challenges adults face within certain work environments or

conditions in life will require the kinds of personal learning that will transform the mental perspectives of adults (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009). Transformational learning may be an endeavor undertaken by adults to possibly build self-worth, redevelop personality, or develop one's belief system. Transformational learning involves acquiring a new perspective about an individual's worldview or personal viewpoint (Baumgartner, 2001; Clark, 1993). Jack Mezirow (1991, 1995) recognized transformational learning as a theory. Mezirow (1990) considered transformational learning as a component of adult education. Mezirow (1990) also considered the learning that takes place in the various transitional stages of adulthood as a transformative process. He defined learning as "the process of making new or revised interpretation of the meaning of experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation and action" (1990, p.1). Jarvis (1987b) suggested that learning is the transformation of personal experience into applied knowledge, useful skills, and attitudes. Potential learning experiences can be natural or artificially created. Jarvis considered the process of thought itself, a specific situation, or abstract idea rather meaningful or meaningless may stimulate transformational learning. Other meaningful occurrences and forms of self-evaluations can formulate the process of transformational learning. Adults that gain new perspectives about pressing matters, challenging environments, or from personal conditions encounter disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow, 1991). According to Adams (2003), work-related stress, high-stimulating job environments, or occupational burnout can be a disorienting dilemma or personal crisis due to the adverse effects it can have upon the mental well-being of individuals. Transformational learning suggests that adults can psychologically change their specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions due to a personal crisis or difficult event they encountered. Part of the process of this mental change or acquiring a new outlook involves adults engaging in some critical reflections of their present or

prior experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1995).

In short, transformational learning may occur because of a myriad of personal experiences, daunting work environments, or challenges that threaten the well-being of adults. This form of learning can lead to attitude change, personal growth, and ultimately succeed in adapting new skills and strategies that will allow teachers to remain as productive educators for the students they serve (Dana, 2007). A disorienting dilemma can be a large event or a series of smaller events that causes the need for change, usually experienced as an intense personal crisis or dilemma (Cranton, 2006). These externally imposed events can range from large ones like a death, a major health issue, or reading a book, or by one's efforts to understand a different culture that challenges one's presuppositions (Mezirow, 1991). According to Roberts (2006), disorienting dilemmas can cause stress, burnout, anxiety, and even sickness or disease. They can also evoke strong emotions including fear, anger, guilt, or shame (Mezirow, 2000). Gaining a new perspective is an important component in the transformational learning process. First, individuals would engage in making some critical reflections about their behaviors, attitudes, and their experiences. A process of reevaluating previous assumptions about their jobs or personal lives would follow. These evaluations and assumptions could possibly help them realize that something is not consistent with what they have once held to be true (Taylor, 1998). Such evaluations and assumptions stimulated by a disorienting dilemma or personal crisis are some of the fundamental components that support the theory of transformational learning. Acquiring a new perspective would be important for determining a new set of behaviors or lifestyle.

Gaining a New Perspective

One of the components of transformational learning involves creating a new perspective or a new worldview due to experiencing a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1995). Adults

acquiring/gaining new perspectives about their world may require a different set of learning experiences. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) suggested that adults are able to acquire new perspectives about their worldview, themselves, or their vocation through a learning process that involves a series of psychological developments. The process of acquiring a new perspective seems to stimulate the idea of learning a new behavior or forming a new disposition. This process may involve establishing strategies or planned methods that would help adults cope with the demands and stress of life or their jobs. Transformational or transformative learning involves a change in personal feelings, beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, and values because of adults making meaning perspectives (Ashe, Taylor, & Dubouloz, 2005). Mezirow (1991) also suggested that, "to make meaning means to make sense of an experience" (p.1). Mezirow (2000) suggested that there are important factors within the meaning-making process that occurs throughout the aspects of the transformational learning process. He found that various aspects of actual learning occurs "in the real world, in complex institutional, interpersonal, and historical settings and must be understood in the context of cultural orientations embodied in our frames of reference" (p. 24). His evaluations allowed him to realize that there are "asymmetrical power relationships" (p. 28) that influence the process of transformational learning.

There seems to be a cognitive-rational approach to transformational learning (Mezirow, 1992, 2000). Mezirow (2000) suggests child development is a formative process, adult development is a transformative one, a process consisting of "reframing new perspectives, and reengaging life with a greater degree of self-determination" (p. xii). Transformative learning involves a change in one's personal perspective (Mezirow, 2000). If true change of perspective is accomplished, an individual either remains unmoving or goes forward, but an individual usually does not return to the old way of thinking.

According to Baumgartner (2001), the transformational learning process that adults may undergo involves self-questioning, critical reflection, and the need to engage in rational discussions and communications with others to gain a sense of "consensual validation" (p. 17) for a new perspective or behavior or a different approach. The transformational learning process involves the engagement of one's emotions along with the required psychological development of the adult. The literature pertinent to the research of psychological development and adults learning new perspectives stresses the role of powerful events. Learning new perspectives because of powerful events plays a major role in developing a better quality of living (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As earlier suggested, individuals engaging in critical reflections, reevaluating their assumptions about themselves and their world, and engaging in reflective discourse, usually follow a personal crisis or disorienting dilemma.

Critical Reflection

In the process of reflecting critically on personal experiences or powerful events/situations, people are engaged in making meaning perspectives, i.e., "to make sense of an experience" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 19). Mezirow also contends that people tend to make meaning perspectives each time they test a conclusion, examine deep feelings, or explore other interested perspectives. Previous research reflected how individuals' meaning perspectives would impact health-related behaviors along with the process of change in meaning perspectives that may be "required to manage their chronic health related conditions" (Ashe et al., 2005, p. 281). Ashe et al. used "a grounded theory approach to evaluate the process of transformation in meaning perspectives leading to disease adaptation for several groups of clients in rehabilitation" (p. 281). They found that the "changes in meaning perspectives related to occupational performance issues with work, rest, and leisure" (p. 281).

Mezirow (1991) concentrated on the importance of rational thought and reflection in the transformational learning process. Baumgartner (2001) suggests Mezirow outlines several fundamental components that make up the reoccurring process for perspective transformation that starts with a personal crisis. These courses of action happen when "people begin to realize something is not consistent with what they hold to be true" (Taylor, 1998, p. 17). Reflections or meaning making efforts regarding their structure of assumptions, beliefs and values, or their habitual rules for interpreting their experiences can result in a perspective transformation or change in world view. Thus becomes the framework for establishing alternative behaviors, coping strategies, or new methods adults carry out, which could benefit them as they proceed in responsibilities and other tasks set before them. Such established behaviors, strategies, or new methods carried out by adults may proceed after or during emotional experiences or events that triggered the process of transformational learning.

Transformational Triggers

Personal health-related events or pressing situations in life may trigger the process of transformational learning. According to Mezirow (1995), transformational learning may also result from an accumulation of emotional reactions in life, specific beliefs, extreme dramatic events, work experiences, or attitude shifts over a period. Merriam and Clark (1991) and Klunk (1999) found that trigger events that may stimulate transformational learning come in the form of a personal crisis, critical incident, or significant events related to one's job or personal love life. Their research regarding the work/love interaction and the place of significant learning experiences suggested more learning events tend to occur in the work place than in the love area.

Finally, the stress-producing occupations and job-related demands of teaching, as experienced by many teachers at all levels, can present a disorienting dilemma. When their prior knowledge and previous problem-solving strategies will not resolve the conflicts confronted, teachers can refute the problem and postpone resolving the conflict. Accordingly, this can elevate levels of internal frustration and mental stress that leads to burnout. Teachers may even try to address the conflict, seek resolution, and pursue measures of personal learning. It is through analyzing the problem and by seeking resolutions that an opportunity for transformational learning occurs.

Summary

The availability of education for all and the skillful art of quality teaching are vital components in any promising society. Within the field of teaching, effective teachers produce measureable results from students that afford them the opportunity to develop their full potential and possibly find success as productive citizens (Segall & Wilson, 2004). Good teachers have the responsibilities of nurturing a professional care for their students while promoting quality engagement and learning in the classroom. Thus, teacher/student relationships play a major role, which is an intricate component for academic success for students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Though important as the teacher/student relationship is for quality academic learning, the developmental process of this component can be challenging when teachers find themselves overwhelmed with other job-related responsibilities and tasks.

Over the years the degree of concern about the growing problems of teacher stress shown by the educational community is associated to the levels of demands, requirements, and challenges found among teachers (Hargreaves, 2003; Schaufeli et al., 1993). Furthermore, student achievement has rapidly become a major component in assessing the productivity of

schools and its teachers (Fitzgerald, 2008). Teachers have major roles in helping students learn, which imply providing students with time to learn, rewarding students with positive and consistent feedback, and providing appropriate content to learn in ways that promote the cognitive development and success of all students (Doll et al., 2004; Maslach, 2003; Squires et al., 1981).

Many teachers consider their work to be a great service to the needs of students and to the development of our society. Nevertheless, Luekens et al. (2004) suggest that classroom teachers are still finding difficulty in developing a long tenure within the teaching profession**.** Teachers hold the unique position of occupying ever-changing, multifaceted roles that are notoriously demanding, underpaid, at times unappreciated, and highly scrutinized by the public. The job conditions of teachers have considerable influence on the extent to which teachers experience anxiety and stress; and the frequency with which they escalate into full-blown burnout (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). When there is job stress, work overload, increasing classroom demands, frustration due to administrative decisions, and difficult school conditions facing teachers, there may be problems with teachers' attitudes about their jobs, students, and job performances. Balancing the demands and never-ending responsibilities of the job while aiming to establish good relationships with students can be challenging. Teachers that are unsuccessful in managing their well-being may allow the demands and responsibilities to contribute to the various burnout stages. With the present-day issues of teen drug use, teen-on-teen violence, guns, gangs, poverty, dropout rates, absenteeism, state and federal initiatives, and the increasing disengagement of parental involvement, elementary, middle school, and secondary teachers may find themselves increasingly challenged, emotionally over-loaded, stressed, and burned out.

The subject of professional burnout has inevitably earned increasing keen interest from a multitude of organizational development groups, practitioners, and other demanding professional vocations tasked with quality and process improvement (Bui, Hodge, Shackelford, & Acsell, 2011). The literature describes the pragmatic and academic concerns of job-related stress and burnout facing schoolteachers at all levels (Baker, 2005; Browers & Tomic, 2000; Harrell, Leavell, Van Tassell, & McKee, 2004; Oliver & Reschly, 2007). Therefore, addressing the burnout phenomenon has been a priority among many school districts. When coping mechanisms fail to stem the demands and challenges facing teachers, then stress increases and threatens their mental and physical well-being; ultimately, leading to teachers quitting or burning out (Haberman, 2003).

Parkes (1991) previously suggested that self-efficacy among teachers might moderate the impact of teacher stressors on mental health outcomes. Previous research involving self-efficacy, burnout, and school coping resources predicted that teachers with high perceived coping abilities, both internal (e.g., self-efficacy) and external (e.g., school resources), will select fewer barriers and difficulties to achieving objectives. As a reward, there would be less affects of burnout and stress upon teachers (Blase, 1982). Stress or burnout can become a disorienting dilemma and coping with stress or burnout is a learning experience. While student development is a formative process, teacher development can be a transformative one. The idea of teachers discovering a new perspective and then learn a new behavior for their mental or social good is a component of transformational learning. Taylor, Marienau, and Fiddler (2000) suggested that transformational learning of adults exist everywhere—in the workplace, at home, and in their community.

The transformational learning needs of adults often grow out of their larger life issues (Taylor et al., 2000). Teachers can experience personal and professional development while they continue to execute their demanding duties within the job. Just as the poor response to distress is a learned behavior in the teaching field, so is learning or relearning skills for coping with stress. Teachers, like many adult learners, can develop and learn to protect themselves from the pressures of overload and the perceptions of failure. According to Eisner (1994), teaching is an art guided by educational values, personal needs, and by a variety of beliefs or generalizations that the teacher holds to be true. The idea of teachers entering the profession having core values, personal needs, and positive belief systems affects how they perform their craft in the classroom.

Academic preparations from college programs help develop teachers for the field. Nevertheless, their character development, mental stability, and emotional management as professionals could be the result of a transformational learning process. Employing skills for coping is beneficial in preserving quality performance and protecting the well-being of classroom teachers at all levels (Fortes-Ferreira et al., 2006; Holmes, 2005; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007).

Chapter III

Methodology

The overwhelming job responsibilities, the pressing accountability factors, workload, and burnout has been recognized as serious occupational issues within the field of teaching (Baker & Schaufeli, 2000; Berry et al., 2008; Bui et al., 2011; Maslach, 2003). Consequently, the issues and other adverse effects from burnout facing professional teachers may require them to reevaluate assumptions about their work and then learn or self-educate themselves in how to preserve the quality of their well-being and, subsequently, services to their students. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who experienced burnout. Additionally, the researcher also sought to understand the transformational learning experiences of these teachers because of burnout. This chapter will help the reader understand teacher burnout from the researcher's point of view and understand how these teachers dealt with the adverse conditions of EE and DPZ (i.e., components of burnout). The following questions were used to guide my study: (a) What were the factors that lead to teacher burnout?; (b) How did teachers cope with handling their professional duties while dealing with burnout?; (c) What coping strategies teachers used that addressed the effects of emotional exhaustion and attitudes of callousness?; and (d) What were the transformational learning experiences of those teachers who experienced burnout?

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the methodological approach used to conduct the study. To help satisfy the purpose of this study, the researcher employed one-on-one interviews that collected data regarding EE and DPZ of teachers and their strategies for coping. Previous research noted that adults employing different kinds of coping strategies and/or other forms of meaningful activities have mitigated the effects of burnout (Chaplin, 2008; Maslach et al., 2001).

Moreover, Holmes (2005) and Van Dierendonck et al. (2005) suggested that teachers could reach a sense of balance and harmony through employed measures of coping. In addition to understanding the selected methodology used for this study, this chapter also discussed the validity for the findings from the study. The organization of this chapter will include the research design, population and sampling, participants and the selection process, data collection and instrumentation, validity of study, data analysis, coding, triangulation, bracketing, limitations, and summary.

Research Design

A well thought out design approach that would satisfy or accommodate the purpose of a research should be a design most suitable for a particular study. For this study, the researcher took a qualitative approach to explore and understand the coping strategies of high school teachers who experienced EE and DPZ. This kind of research approach drew increasing interest and application in the fields of education and social sciences (Roberts, 2004). Though the purpose of a quantitative research involves the concept of explaining, the idea or purpose of a qualitative research is to generate understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Golafshani, 2003; Stenbacka, 2001). Using a qualitative approach the researcher will understand opinions, ideas, concepts, feelings, and perceptions of participants. Along with applying a qualitative approach for my study to gain understandings, I used a phenomenological methodology for my research design strategy.

By using a qualitative approach, the researcher focused on how teachers interpreted their burnout experiences, job-related demands, and the various meanings or worldview they attached to those experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This kind of approach could help researchers understand how people tend to form some sense regarding their

lives and experiences. A qualitative approach method would center on the "experience itself and how that experience is transformed into consciousness" (Merriam, p. 24). Thus, my active role as a qualitative researcher in this study, according to Patton (2002), was to position myself "on the inside of the phenomenon being observed" (p. 51). As an investigator, I would hear and understand how the burnout phenomenon affected my participants and their well-being.

Phenomenology is the study of phenomena or things as they appeared in our experience or the ways we may experience such things within our environment (Kleiman, 2004; Smith, 2011). According to Groenewald (2004) and Moustakas, (1994), the realities that appear in the real world of individuals are as pure phenomena (i.e., facts, occurrences, or circumstances observed) from their perspectives. A phenomenon appearing in the life of an individual or individuals would be the only absolute data from where research could begin. Burnout is a phenomenon that affects high school teachers (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). When individuals have experienced a phenomenon of some defining or meaningful significance, providing strategic questions (i.e., inquiries or in-depth interview) have been at the heart of collecting meaningful data from those individuals (Merriam, 2009). To help accomplish the goal of this study, the researcher presented strategic inquiries involving the phenomenon and the teachers. Open-end questions generated participants' elaborate stories about their experiences and the burnout phenomenon. It is important that I as a researcher experience the phenomenon as directly as possible through in-depth interviewing of those affected or influenced by that phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Therefore, phenomenology as a study inherent the idea or embraces the theory that people can be relatively certain about their real experiences or perceptions of how things appeared or presented themselves to their consciousness.

The origin of phenomenology is associated with the German philosopher Edmund

Husserl (Groenewald, 2004; Vandenberg, 1997). According to Behnke (2011) and Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2008), Husserl's employment of this research method of phenomenology afforded individuals to provide distinct descriptions in relation to their lived experiences (i.e., their conscience life) regarding various objects, situations, or conditions that existed within their environment.

Participants in this study provided comprehensive and complete descriptions of their burnout experiences and coping strategies through one-on-one interviews (Seidman, 2006). In other words, participants in this study became co-researchers or co-investigators (Patton, 2002) in this phenomenological methodology with the researcher. This is because my participants experienced the phenomenon or situation under investigation and they had a special interest in the subject or topic (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). To fulfill the aim of a phenomenological methodology, the researcher provided comprehensive descriptions of participants' experiences. In earlier phenomenological studies, Gaines' (2011) research that involved Middle School teachers, principal support, and teacher burnout was able identify the prevailing issues and job-related conditions that induced EE and DPZ and provided comprehensive descriptions of teachers' experiences. In another similar phenomenological design study, Grisby (2010) investigated the lived experiences of lesbian school administrators and collected descriptive data and narratives from one-on-one interviews and presented comprehensive descriptions of those administrators' experiences. After using one-on-one interviews, comprehensive descriptions provided some understanding of what my participants encountered as well as the coping strategies they employed to preserve their well-being.

Population and Sample

For this phenomenological study, it is important that the researcher selected a target population that was both eligible to participate as well as accessible to me as an investigator. The eligibility and accessibility of my target population help judged the feasibility for this phenomenological study (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Porter, 1999). The target population selected for this study is high school teachers employed in one local high school. Within this target population of high school teachers, the researcher had an accessible population that consisted of 88 certified high school teachers that had an average of 12 years of teaching experience, and served a student population of 928 students ranging from grades 9-12 (Elementary and Secondary Education [MODESE], 2011). Sixty percent of the target population had advanced degrees beyond the bachelor's degree and the student/teacher ratio was 13:1. The age bracket of the target population was 23 years of age to 62 years of age. The target population consisted of both African American (i.e., males and females) and White teachers (i.e., males and females).

For the purpose of this study, I used a purposeful sampling procedure (Creswell, 2013) to identify participants in order to conduct my phenomenological study (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Gall et al., 2007; Patton, 2002). Though an investigator or researcher cannot generalize with small samples or with single cases, a researcher can still learn a great deal often opening up further research (Merriam, 2009). For this phenomenological methodology, the researcher used one of the two types of sampling procedures used in qualitative research.

According to Merriam (2009) and Patton (2002), probability and nonprobability are the two types of sampling researchers can select to utilize in a qualitative research. However, purposeful sampling is the most common type of nonprobability sampling used by qualitative researchers. Purposeful sampling occurs when the researcher believes that the collected

information through in-depth interviews will have greater depth. The researcher used a small sample of teachers for collected descriptive data. Both Patton (2003) and Crouch and Mckenzie (2006) suggested that a qualitative approach within a research usually focuses in depth on small samples, as compared to a quantitative method that focuses on larger samples selected randomly. A purposeful sampling procedure will unveil "information-rich cases" (Patton, 2002, p.44) regarding participants' issues that are central to the study and can be evaluated in depth.

Additionally, Merriam (2009) and Patton (2002) concurred about the powerful emphasis of getting in-depth understanding through a purposeful sampling. The themes that have usually emerged from purposeful sampling interviews are usually understandable and are rich in description. Information from participants that is rich in content will illuminate the questions under study. In using a purposeful sampling, as the one used in this study, the researcher can determine specific selection criteria which to select a sample of participants. Creating a list or particular qualifiers of certain characteristics or attributes would be necessary in the sample as determined by the purpose of the study; and why such attributes are required (Merriam). More specifically, Merriam suggests that this kind of purposeful sampling describes a type of procedure called unique sampling. This type of procedure occurs when a purposeful sampling have displayed a unique characteristic.

The prerequisites and considerations for inclusion of teachers were as follows: (a) had perceived experiences of emotional exhaustion (i.e., become emotionally emptied, a depletion of enthusiasm, and no longer able to handle the emotional demands of others), (b) had perceived experiences of depersonalization (i.e., feelings that contributed to a lack of care for students and colleagues while ignored and pulled away from those who were in need of your service and help), and (c) had encountered a job-related disorienting dilemma or personal crisis that

influenced their decision in making changes in their perceptions/attitudes about teaching.

Participant Selection and Researcher's Subjectivity

For the selection criteria involving this study, there were parameters or boundaries that were required for teachers to participate. Teachers had to be full-time employees, have had 3-23 years of teaching as a high school educator, earned a minimal of a bachelors' degree, achieved state certification, and willing to share their burnout and coping experiences through the process of interviews. Moreover, as the investigator in the study, I had possessed my own subjectivity and biases regarding the burnout syndrome and the negative effects of EE and DPZ that had formally influenced my perceptions and feelings in the earlier years of teaching. Malterud (2001) pointed out that questioning the idea of subjectivity becomes important when ignoring the effect of the researcher. The researcher should not disregard the critical awareness of his or her preconceptions, which may aid the researcher throughout the methodological procedures of a study. Additionally, the researcher should identify his or her subjectivity throughout the course of the research. Subjectivity becomes an aspect of the researcher that remains within the mental framework of the researcher; and when certain aspects of the research have emerged, the researcher can at least disclose to readers where the researcher and subject matter become joined (Peshkin, 1988). The subjectivity that I possessed allowed me to have my own beliefs and views about the burnout syndrome and its effects upon teaching performance. Therefore, the selected methodology and the kind of inquiries shaped for my participants aroused strong and positive feelings within myself, which influenced the approach for this study (i.e., participant interaction, interpretations formed, insight gained). However, being able to bracket or separate myself from the research is important. While it is somewhat difficult to be an unbiased researcher within this study, I can be honest in making this study understandable, truthful, and helpful. Subjectivity

audit (Gall et al., 2007) occurs when researchers become aware or begin to take reflections/notes about situations and conditions connected to their research that arouses their strong feelings (positive or negative), perceptions, and ideas.

The school district's superintendent and head principal of the selected high school received a mailed correspondence and an email message (See Appendix E) regarding the proposed study. Both forms of contact described the research project and requested the superintendent's permission to conduct the research study. Required addresses for these contacts came from the school district's faculty directory obtained from the district's administrative personnel.

After obtaining permission from the superintendent, the researcher scheduled an informal discussion with the high school principal and discussed a date to explain the dissertation study and the recruiting process of the teaching staff. After determining a mutual date to present the dissertation study to the faculty, the recruiting process had began with delivery of a formal letter to all of the secondary teachers. Using the faculty mailboxes, teachers received the letter prior to the faculty meeting. The letter introduced the study and the researcher (See Appendix D). During the predetermined faculty meeting, the researcher: (a) presented an invitation to participate in the study and sought participants, (b) introduced the criterion for inclusion for the study, and (c) entertained inquiries from teaching staff. The researcher acknowledged and noted all qualified volunteer participants. Moreover, the researcher ask each volunteer to provide some background information including the number of years taught, age range, etc. (See Appendix C).

For the selection criteria involving this study, there were parameters or boundaries that were required for teachers to participate (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The researcher used the background forms for random selection. A few days after the scheduled faculty meeting, the

selection process began by placing all completed background information forms into a container. The researcher selected eight participants (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002).

The head principal and one other faculty member witnessed the selection process. This ensured that the selection process for each volunteer had an equal chance for inclusion in the study. Each selected participant determined the convenient time and place for a one-on-one interview. The researcher presented a consent form and discussed the confidentiality measures during the study. Seven interviews took place on the school's campus and one interview was at an alternate location. After the initial interviews, the researcher informed participants if there would be a need for more than one interview session. Moreover, for those other volunteers not selected, the researcher provided opportunities for them to share their personal stories and/or experiences as teachers as well. These opportunities came by way of brief interviews. Data analysis for this study did not include these brief interviews. Additionally, the researcher provided outside resources for volunteers seeking additional services or information about burnout and stress.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The search for meaningful units or noticeable themes of a phenomenon is probably the defining characteristic of a phenomenological research strategy (Gall et al., 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Individuals within a purposeful sampling become informants who can give researchers inside information regarding the study. Both Kvale (1996) and Seidman (2013) concurred that using in-depth interviews allows the researcher to solicit and understand the personal meanings, expressed opinions, feelings, points of view, and other detailed descriptions of participants' behaviors. Moreover, one-on-one interviews provide opportunities to get the

personal story behind participants' job-related experiences and understand their transformational learning experience (Creswell, 1998; Groenewald, 2004; Tewksbury, 2009).

As opposed to using focus groups to collect data, using one-on-one interviews allowed the participants to feel more comfortable throughout the interview. Moreover, there tends to be more flexibility in the questioning/interviewing format and the progressing ability to continue with immediate follow-up questioning for clarity in one-on-one interviews (Kvale, 1996). Personal interaction with each participant is easier and coding and data analysis is less difficult than with the focus group format (Kvale, 1996; Tewksbury, 2009).

Participants responded to a set of pre-determined and strategically designed questions. The researcher's goals were to solicit and collect comprehensive discussions (See Appendix B). The interview questions guided or instructed participants to share their thoughts, opinions, and job-related experiences as they dealt with emotional exhaustion. Follow-up questions solicited their feelings and attitudes as they experienced depersonalization (i.e., callousness, insensitivity). Strategically designing these interview questions were in conjunction with the kinds of sample questions used within the educator's version of the MBI and other examples found in the literature (Kokkinos, 2006; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2001). Additionally, after teachers employed a needed strategy or measure for coping due to the burnout phenomenon, teachers described their experiences fully.

The interview sessions were lengthy, but did not require an additional session for each participant. Because the researcher sought for authentic, candid, and rich descriptions from teachers' experiences, the use of the one-on-one interview questions and personal interactions helped participants focus and reflect on the job-related stressors, demanding classroom duties and stressful working conditions, and their strategies for coping. The researcher was able to get

the participants to think about their specific experiences, feelings, and emotions, as they dealt with burnout and their measures of coping that helped formulate their transformations. Thus, using an instrument as one-on-one interview was appropriate. Each participant interviewed until the topic was exhausted or saturated and no new perspectives on the topic was introduced (Groenewald, 2004).

Validity of Study

Validity and reliability were important factors regarding the analyzed results of this study. So often in qualitative research, validity and reliability are the factors that determine the quality of the research. Moreover, Lincoln & Guba (1985) used the term dependability as an associated term for reliability in their study involving the aspects of qualitative research. I endeavored to understand the burnout phenomenon affecting the participants in this study and their strategies for coping.

All researchers that are concerned about presenting a quality study are also concerned about producing valid and reliable findings. Though validity somewhat differs in both quantitative and qualitative research, validity still serves the purpose of checking on the quality of the collected data, the results, and the interpretation (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam, to promote validity and reliability in qualitative and/or narrative research involves the use of such strategies as triangulation (the interpretation of a report is given back to respondents to check clarity and authenticity), peer researcher, or adequate engagement in data collection. For this study, the researcher's use of triangulation became the strategy to secure deep or an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011; Martella, Nelson, Morgan, & Marchand-Martella, 2013). We come to know a thing or phenomenon only through its representations. In qualitative research, interviewing has

been the major source of the qualitative data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study. Therefore, the rigor derived from the researcher's interactive process throughout the interview session allows the researcher to produce believable and trustworthy findings (Creswell, 2013; Riessman, 1993). Additionally, when there is intent to convince the readers to accept a given study, the trustworthiness of the researcher may emerge when questioning the researcher's diligence or efforts throughout the research process. Riessman (1993) suggested that the trustworthiness of a researcher comes into the question that emerges about the researcher's efforts or diligence in convincing the readers to accept a study's findings speak of trustworthiness. The rigor of the researcher or investigator in this qualitative study help account for the validity and reliability needed in this study due to the interaction between researcher and each participant, audio recordings of interviews, triangulation of data, and rich, thick description of transcripts (Golafshani, 2003; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Regarding the investigator's skill and ability throughout the interview process, Patton (2002) also suggested that reliability becomes a consequence of the validity in the study. In short, according to Golafshani, (2003),"reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm" (p. 8).

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis usually involves a process of coding (i.e., labeling), establishing themes, and determining the essential meaning of the participants' experiences (Kleiman, 2004). First, the one-on-one interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Second, all interview transcripts were prepared for coding and designated themes. Coding consisted of assigned labels to segmented texts of collected data, then, established themes from the codes so that the researcher achieved broader perspectives (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011) for the data analysis.

Coding

Analyzing the collected data involved close line-by-line reading and detail examination of the claims and statements of participants' responses, and assigned codes and themes from those responses. First, the researcher divided the participants' responses from each interview question into smaller units or segments for detailed reading and code assignment. The assigned code reflected the participants' exact words or expressed feelings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), or reflected a short descriptive phrase composed by the researcher (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). In the left side margin of the transcript, the researcher made a notation of the assigned code or descriptive phrase from each segmented text. The researcher continued this coding process for all segmented data. Additionally, the researcher kept a master list of all noted codes or descriptive phrases. The researcher also made notations of possible patterns when previously used codes to new small units or segments of data emerged again. Second, according to the assigned code or phrase in the left side margin of the transcript, the researcher made a notation of an associated theme (i.e., dominate idea/subject) in the right side margin that represented that code or phrase in the left side margin. Codes and composed phrases in the left side margin consisted of the repetitive words, meaningful findings, or central beliefs about things from participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

In short, all responses from interview questions received assigned codes and/or composed phrases along with associating themes. As the analysis developed from all the segments, the codes subsequently exposed recurring patterns found among all the participants**.** The researcher's method of establishing associating themes from assigned codes gave way for the researcher to rely primarily on reflective analysis (Gall et al., 2007) which is largely a subjective or interpretative process. Consequently, the associating themes reflected the researcher's

"intuition and personal judgment" (Gall et al., p. 472). Finally, after completing the initial coding and designation of themes from the data, the researcher summarized and organized the data; and searched for relationships within the findings and among participants.

Triangulation

Data triangulation checked and established validity by analyzing the research question and the collected data from multiple perspectives (Guion et al., 2011; Martella et al., 2013). Within the framework of a quality research study, the measuring instrument or procedure (i.e., one-on-one interviews) should be not only reliable, but also valid (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). In a general sense, an instrument or procedure to measure some theory or concept is valid to the extent that it measures what it purports to measure (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). To establish quality findings for this study, focus was on the one-on-one interview responses of participants along with additional efforts employed to check validity. Checking for validity determined if the information obtained through the data collection process was accurate. Qualitative validation is one of the important components in establishing a good research (Polkinghorne, 2005).

First, the researcher took the transcribed interviews back to the participants' in the study and asked them whether the findings were accurate reflections of their interview (Merriam, 2009). This method was the researcher's effort to gain maximum authenticity, clarity, and accuracy of participants' narratives by having them examine or check the interpretations of their report. In addition, their comments served as a check on validity of the interpretation (Merriam, 2002). Oftentimes, along with narrative research, there have been criticisms targeting qualitative research for lack of validity. Nevertheless, Merriam (2002) pointed out that member check is one procedure employed to promote validity and reliability. For the analysis stage, any

additional feedback from participants would help clarify and establish accuracy of the recorded data. Subsequently, any additional information from participants also helped the researcher build evidence for the proper code and significant theme from the participants' responses. Participants presented no additional information. Second, the researcher asked another person (i.e., doctoral candidate) to examine the transcribed data of participants for clarity. The doctoral candidate was familiar with qualitative research as well as the content area and purpose of this specific study (Groenewald, 2004; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The doctoral candidate examined and considered the codes and themes assigned by the researcher that surfaced from the claims, opinions, and statements of participants. After data examination, the doctoral candidate provided feedback to the researcher until achieving a general agreement.

Bracketing

Even though the researcher was a participating faculty member within the selected school district, this phenomenological investigation required that the researcher bracket or suspend his own preconceptions, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and explanations. According to Moustakas (1994) and Sadala and Adorno (2001), researchers should not allow their own theoretical concepts, meanings, and interpretations to enter the unique world of participants. There were considerations in having faculty members participate in sharing their personal feelings with a colleague instead of sharing with a total stranger. Due to the longevity of the researcher's tenure in the district, he knew some of the participating volunteers personally. This bracketing was the accepted and professional precondition that allowed the researcher to understand those experiences of the participants in the investigation.

Study Limitations

One major limitation of the study is the selection of only one high school faculty and interviewing only eight participants. In-depth interviews took place during the second semester of the school year. The recent change of the administrative leadership team at the high school, implementation of new discipline policies, and new teacher responsibilities may have influenced teacher moral and/or research participation. Having the interviews on site of the school campus did not cause problems in scheduling for the participants. The length of this study took place during the second semester of the academic school year only, having the understanding that conducting this investigation nearing the end of the school year could render different responses from the population.

Summary

Chapter III described the qualitative approach used in this study and provided support for the selected phenomenological research design. Along with providing a brief background of the district and school from which participants were draw; the researcher identified all other aspects of the research process, such as selecting the target population and sample, participant selection process, data collection and instrumentation, validity of study, analysis, triangulation, and limitations. Chapter IV presents participants demographics, interview guide for the study, and detail of themes that emerged from the descriptive data.

Chapter IV

Emotional exhaustion of teachers, their dissipating lack of care and concern for students, problems from administration, and the lack of adequate measures for coping can become problems for effective classroom teaching and student development. Gaining an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who were burnout victims and their transformational learning experiences because of burnout is the purpose of this study. This chapter focused on the various job-related factors and work conditions that contributed to teacher burnout and this was the first research question that guided my study (See Appendix B). As a result of using a phenomenological methodology for this study, this chapter reported the previous episodes, issues, and personal stories of eight high school teachers as they dealt with emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DPZ) (i.e., components of burnout).

Additionally, this chapter reported those teachers' strategies for coping with EE and DPZ and their transformational learning experiences. The data for this chapter derived from transcribed interviews and the common themes that emerged from the data analysis. Beginning with the participants' demographics, this chapter continues with a discussion of the four themes related the EE and DPZ.

Participants' Demographics

The Greater St. Louis, Missouri, metropolitan area is where this study took place. The city in which the district is located has a residential population between 35,000 and 36,000 and is centrally located in suburban St. Louis, Missouri. The selected district and school also served as the researcher's place of employment before retirement, which established the reason for this selection. The city is one of the oldest suburbs in the St. Louis area. The management of this

school district is separate from other school districts in the area. University City High School, the school under this study, is the only one existing in the selected school district that is serving its surrounding community. The student body had a large population of African Americans (89%), a White population of 9%, a Hispanic population of 0.8%, an Asian population of 0.5%, and fifty-five percent of the student population receiving Free/Reduced Lunch (MODESE, 2011).

The participants in this study had fictitious names and represented a wide range of academic courses from the school's curriculum. As indicated in Table 4.1 the majority of participants identified themselves as White females; two participants were African American males; and only one participant was an African American female. All participants declared their loyalty to the profession along with sincere commitment to serves students and school district. Six of the participants began their teaching career at this suburban high school. Both remaining participants reported previous employment in other locations (i.e., one teaching within a different school district and the other as an instructor within the United States Air Force). At the time of this study, all participants had taught at least 7 years at the secondary level having prior teaching experiences with all grade levels (i.e., 9-12). The teacher with the longest teaching experience had 23 years. To understand the scope of each participant's teaching experiences at this school, seven participants primarily taught courses that were graduation requirements for all students (i.e., Math, Language Arts, Science, Psychology History, Social Studies, Art). The remaining participant taught Aerospace Science and Leadership, an elective course not required for graduation. Five teachers had obtained a Master's degree. The age bracket of the teachers was between 38 to 57 years. Four of the participants were married and four were single.

Table 4.1

Participants' Demographics

Participants	Race/Ethnicity	Age	Highest Education	Years Experience	Marital Status
Tom	African American	45-51	Bachelors'	20	Married
Cora	White	52-58	Masters'	23	Single
Judy	White	38-44	Masters'	19	Married
Joann	White	45-51	Bachelors'	21	Single
Cathy	White	52-58	Doctorate	10	Married
Dave	African American	52-58	Bachelors'	18	Married
Shelia	African American	52-58	Masters'	10	Single
Ann	White	52-58	Masters'	7	Single

All participants reported having a general mixture of students in their classes that they perceived represented the student population within the school. Some of the participants indicated teaching classes academically structured for only high achievers (i.e., Advanced Placement courses, Honor's courses). Two participants taught a few classes specifically designed and only structured for students requiring special needs and services due to particular diagnosed learning and/or behavioral disabilities. Nevertheless, throughout their tenure all participants seem to have experienced a common diversity among students (i.e., low achievers, high achievers, and ethnicity) within their classes.

Interview Guide and Research Questions

Six one-on-one interview questions elicited discussions related to the categories of EE (i.e., emotionally overextended, depletion of enthusiasm) and DPZ (i.e., callousness towards others, uncaring attitudes toward job responsibilities). Three interview questions addressing EE of teachers explored their previous experiences of emotional overload, running out of energy,

work-related frustrations, and their job demands affecting their professional performances. Three interview questions addressing DPZ explored their previous attitudes of callousness, negative attitudes, and feelings of detachment towards students, faculty, and their job (See Appendix B). All six one-on-one interview questions (See Appendix C) addressed all four of the research questions in Chapter I.

Themes

Reoccurring and/or unresolved work-related issues, teacher expectations, marking deadlines (i.e., exams, reports, and school assignments), classroom duties, exasperating interpersonal relationships with students, and problematic issues with school administrators and their lack of support were factors that contributed towards adverse effects upon teachers' performance and their disposition. From the collection of data, four themes emerged that appeared common among all participants and seem to induce EE and DPZ.

The four themes in Table 4.2 are associated with the adverse effects of EE (i.e., emotionally overextended, depletion of enthusiasm) and DPZ (i.e., callousness towards others, uncaring attitudes toward job responsibilities). The three themes completing the list in Table 4.3 are associated with the strategies or activities teachers employed to cope with or mitigate EE and DPZ. The following sections discussed the seven themes.

Table 4.2

Common Themes and Descriptors

Themes	Descriptors of Burnout
Administration Issues (AI)	Insensitivity, lack of support, unprofessional treatment, and unresolved student issues ignored by principals, counselors, or other district personnel
Administrative Workload and Responsibilities (AWR)	High volume of paperwork for students (e.g., lesson plans, various reports), assigned monitoring duties, meetings, processing student discipline referrals
Negative Teacher/Student Relationship (NT/SR)	Constant student misbehaviors in classroom, unresolved negative attitudes from students, noncompliance of students, friction between teacher and student, disrespect towards adults
Lack of Student Effort (LSE)	Passivity of students, very poor classroom participation, poor attendance, constant tardiness

Administration Issues (AI)

The emergence of AI as a theme of EE and DPZ resulted from teachers' intolerable displeasures and unresolved efforts from principals, poor enforcement of school policies by administrators (tardiness of students, skipping class, disciplinary procedures, and dress code), personal frustrations from administrative paperwork, and principal neglect and/or lack of support of teachers. The participants discussed the lingering degrees of emotional frustration because of the weekly instances of unfair treatment, inefficiencies, negligence, and unprofessionalism from various grade level principals. From the teachers' point of view, the issues surrounding AI eventually generated a lack of respect, negative attitudes, and frustration. Associated with this theme was the frequent display of insensitivity from both grade level principals and/or school

counselors regarding the lack of attention given to teachers suffering from large numbers of students in their various classrooms. Over population of classrooms was an issue perceived by the researcher as an added frustration experienced by the participants.

In an effort to describe his personal experiences and previous mental frustration, regarding school policies and principal support, Dave, a teacher who had taught for 18 years said:

> I have found myself so constantly frustrated and irritated with principals in this building, because of the negligence and laziness to maintain the kind of policies and quality learning environment that these kids need. These administrators continue to allow low-priority distractions rob them of their job for these kids. It just frustrated me and many other teachers in this building. It made me think, if they do not care, why should I? My sole purpose for being here was for the young folks here. Sometimes, we do not get the support and efforts we need from these principals. However, they truly know how to put extra work on us. I deeply feel the young people here are short-changed. I had to pray to the Lord to help me get past those irritations that are beyond my control. I feel the leadership has been poor at times and it affects us teachers.

The teachers discussed many instances involving unresolved issues with assigned grade level administrators and the number of disruptive students in a classroom not properly reprimanded after filing the proper disciplinary forms. Four of the female teachers declared their nagging frustrations and emotional exhaustion because of what they perceived to be a lack of sympathy from particular grade level principals and certain school counselors. Additionally,

these teachers had perceived a lack of sympathy from two particular counselors who ignored the issues regarding large class sizes. The teachers had reported various instances of non-supportive actions by principals when teachers dealt with parents of disruptive students.

Cathy, Tom, and Ann mentioned their constant frustration, or at times their emotional overload, stemming from the lack of support from principals when they really needed their intervention or encouragement. All participants felt that various forms of encouragement or positive feedback from the school's administrative staff were important for teachers' well-being. Participants also mentioned the unfair pressures from principals in an effort to make teachers perform better or more efficient in their classrooms (e.g., properly managing or controlling student behavior, influence student classroom participation).

All participants expressed the on-going frustrations, mental fatigue, and their disapprovals regarding the results of grade level principals not having the administrative follow-thru when expected by teachers. For instance, after making the required calls to parents/guardians regarding student behavior or poor class performance/grades, teachers found it very irritating when assured that a certain administrative staff (principal or counselor) would make a follow-up call as well. Having principal support in matters involving parents was very important for participants. However, follow-thru by principals was so inconsistent and oftentimes teachers were uninformed. According to the participants, similar instances would involve providing follow-up when teachers requested principals to re-evaluate portions of the student dress code when students were in violation of such dress codes. Cora, a veteran teacher of 23 years said, "I don't intend to do my job and the responsibilities of some of these principals. They are letting this kids get away with many things". In like fashion, Tom, a teacher for 20 years stated, "Principals in this building expect so much from us, but they so often fail to do what

we expect from them". Issues regarding lack of support from administration and/or at times uncaring attitudes from principals appeared exasperating among these teachers especially when they sacrificed their time to complete required paperwork for disruptive behavior of students. Regarding the insensitivities and unfair treatment from administration, six teachers felt pressured that they had to perform well at all times.

The teachers cited the on-going lack of proper disciplinarian measures in reprimanding disruptive students in their classrooms or unruly behaviors of students in hallways. In expressing their inner frustration and times of callousness because of unfair treatment, Tom's comment was reflective of the sentiment of others. He stated, "So often, we are not treated like professionals. I have had unpleasant experiences with one of my administrators who had me under pressure! It was stressful!" Frustration mounted and disengagement from teachers were noted when certain principals were inconsistent with upholding school policies for all students.

The participants complained about various forms of favoritism towards other faculty while they felt overlooked and unappreciated by administrators. Cathy, a veteran teacher of 10 years, indicated there was too much "politics on the job" by principals in showing too much favoritism with other faculty. Shelia, a teacher with 10 years of teaching, provided an example of the job politics that she perceived:

> Counselors knew that there were teachers like me who had an overload of students with behavioral issues within the class schedules. These classes
>
> were called the large group of non-achievers. So some of these counselors and certain administrators would give me all the troubled kids

> that particular teachers did not want. I even had kids that were too old to be in this group.

Some of the participants also discussed their deep disappointments and mounting frustrations from unsupportive administrators when they dealt with the parents of disruptive or low achieving students. In addition to her administrative disapprovals, Shelia stated:

> You have administration that want to use their tactics to get you to just approve or pass unproductive kids to the next grade. These administrators would use the tactic, "if you don't pass this kid you are going to get him back the next year." Some of these kids are not reading well.

All participants discussed how the services/efforts of principals, or the lack thereof, played a major factor in teacher morale. The emotional overload, frustration, the sense of running out of energy, and degrees of callousness reported by some participants were due to how principals had allowed aspects of the school's quality learning environment and student discipline to fall apart. Joan, a 21-year veteran, perceived that administration (i.e., principals) had allowed student behavior to become more outrageous. For an example, Joan stated that, "Gang members would cut class and be found sitting outside the classroom on the steps without facing any consequences when reported by a teacher. I was appalled!" Additionally, Joan's comment regarding the lack of care from principals and at times their unresponsive behavior was the sentiment of others. She stated, "Their focus is always on us as teachers and it should also be on the kids too!" Cora, who has been teaching for over two decades, considered the unfair time limits placed upon teachers by administration to finish needed forms or reports. She considered the unfair time limits upon teachers very taxing. For an example, Cora stated,

> It was emotionally draining and frustrating for me when principals would provide directives on how we were to do this new thing and when to have it done, but then they would require other responsibilities and mandates while ignoring the time frame they previously gave us to complete those other new things.

All participants discussed the long agonizing battles (with counselors and principals) to reduce the class size where high number of students usually generated issues. Six teachers discussed their negative issues with previous unresolved efforts from administration to reduce the size of some of their classes. Additionally, not holding students accountable to the school rules were an on-going issue. Personal dealings with principals, lack of administrative commitment and follow-up, and too many required meetings seem to be on-going dilemmas among teachers.

Administrative Workload and Responsibilities (AWR)

AWR stems from teachers' administrative paperwork for administrators, other daily procedures and requirements (e.g., lesson plans, filing disciplinary referrals for students, keeping parent phone logs, electronically filing grades) and dealing with assigned duties of hallway supervision (other areas in facility). The participants in the study expressed their frustrations, negativity, and at times loss of enthusiasm handling all various kinds of record keeping aspects of the teaching vocation. Such constant attention given to administrative work, record keeping, and supervision appeared to be major distractions from providing the energy needed for classroom duties, which resulted in frustration. When asked about job-related factors that caused emotional overload and daily frustrations, teaches discussed their negativity such as, but not limited to, being required to control the traffic flow in hallways during passing time, monitoring

students for proper dress code, confronting negative behaviors, attend meetings throughout each week (e.g., faculty meetings, departmental meetings), insufficient resources for classrooms (technology), poorly equipped rooms for quality teaching (old furniture, heating/air conditioning issues) and dated textbooks.

Six teachers discussed their displeasures and at times felt offended when principals did not address unresolved disciplinary matters that needed immediate attention. To compound their frustrations and dissatisfactions, they sacrificed time given to fill out the proper forms and then track down the appropriate administrator to communicate the issue seemed to be of no avail at times. The researcher perceived the weekly task (sometimes daily) of completing administrative paperwork required by teachers was irritating and at times unimportant. Regarding the demands of handling administrative paperwork perceived by the participants and the issue of emotional exhaustion, Cora expressed sentiments that were somewhat similar to other teachers.

> Having a class full of low-achieving students with behavioral problems, I was
>
> overwhelmed, frustrated, and felt unqualified handling the responsibilities of writing so many individualized evaluation plans required by my evaluator and this system. I lacked training for this kind of paperwork. I had to learn so much on my own and I felt overworked with administrative stuff.

Some teachers also discussed their agony of learning how to multi-task while managing classes and motivating students. They felt they were doing too much paperwork (unimportant at times) not related to student learning. In addition, they were having too many faculty meetings that they perceived at times were unnecessary. Joan brought this to light.

> When the problems with gangs began to surface here at school, a few

> disciplinary procedures soon fell apart and required reports were mounting. I wasn't getting the reassurance I needed from the principal. I use to get in my classroom and I would hide because that kept me sane. The faculty meetings, those other useless meetings, and any dealings with administrative responsibilities made me crazy. All the other administrative stuff just came together and it was too hard for me to handle.

Some believed the time-consuming paperwork was unnecessary and so often irrelevant when compared to other things. Dealing with emotional over load, Tom said, "It's frustrating when you have to do all of these different types of documents and things and you don't have time to adequately prepare to teach." Some of the increasing paperwork stemmed from professional development workshops, referrals for students skipping class and tardiness, progress reports, and others forms of evaluations that appeared to be of no benefit. Cathy, a veteran teacher of 10 years said:

> Constantly wasting of our time doing administrative paperwork and them requiring us to make phone calls to reach parents, robs me of my energy needed for these kids. I became so frustrated and highly irritated. I would be beat at the end of the day. I began to care less about certain responsibilities and things in my class because it seems administration did not care about what we do daily.

When asked about the factors resulting in attitudes of indifferences and periods of emotional exhaustion, all the teachers shared negative comments about hall supervision, dealing with students not properly displaying their identification badges, confronting infractions regarding

cell phone policies, and the various paperwork that appeared to be so unrelated and useless (disciplinary procedures). All participants felt that too much paperwork of an administrative nature and monitoring were required when comparing the paperwork and grading tasks required for the demands of their classes.

Negative Teacher/Student Relationship (NT/SR)

All the participants felt that positive relationships constructed and managed by both teacher and student tends to be an extremely important component. NT/SR included relational matters that negatively fractured the framework of mutual respect needed between teacher and student (e.g., on-going disruptive behaviors of a student or students in a teacher's classroom; unresolved negative tension between teacher and students; and disrespectful verbal communication between teacher and student/students). The kinds of relationships teachers have with students throughout the course of the school day usually determine their well-being or happiness. The theme of NT/SR generated lengthy discussions from all participants. This was a recurrent theme among the participants.

All the participants identified their mounting struggles and daily contentions with efforts to establish on-going positive relationships with all their classroom students, despite the negative dispositions that teachers perceived many students displayed. Many negative and unexpected confrontations were with other unidentified students outside teachers' classroom. Several participants noted their emotionally draining efforts to positively communicate to disruptive, insensitive, and disrespectful students in an effort to relinquish, redirect, or minimize negative issues. So often, these teachers experienced their frustrations and at times attitudes of indifference. Cora stated, "I did not like the person I turned into or my behaviors toward these

kids. Eventually, I did a lot of apologizing". In apologizing to one student, Cora stated, "There was no excuse for me speaking to you in that manner." Many teachers discussed their inner frustration and mental exhaustion dealing with students. For an example, Cathy said,

> I worked hard in my classes to help my students. Some of my kids were nasty to me. They would do this, then that, and then this. I found myself not really liking them. When I wanted to harm them, I would start a contest for pizza as a means to minimize my frustrations and anger.

For Judy, a veteran teacher of 19 years, her emotional labor and mental exhaustion were associated with the tasks of "writing too many referrals and becoming hard-hearted towards kids." In addition, Judy said,

> I struggled a lot because I did not want to be punitive always. I do not get as much done as well as I could when I am managing and when I have those disruptors acting up in class. It definitely affects my attitude, energy, and teaching.

Despite the labor and challenge of teachers building positive teacher/student relationships in all their classes, it was important when student learning and classroom management were involved. It is interesting to note that the issues of NT/SR were not to the same degree as it were to the two male teachers in this study. Discussing the mental and emotional factors leading to EE and DPZ, Ann, who has taught for seven years, discussed the on-going issues with students in her classes.

> I came into teaching with a very idealistic mentality. I was shocked with students' behaviors. It was exhausting at times for me to build relationships with some of them. I had days where kids were throwing things at me. Cultivating positive relationships with all my bad kids were extremely hard and frustrating.

Shelia discussed that her students' behaviors were disconcerting as well. She said,

> Nobody told me how to properly deal with kids displaying behavioral problems and yet we have to establish a relationship that will help them learn. You cannot touch them! Out of control behavior, nobody prepared you for that. That is on-the-job training.

All the teachers indicated having order in their classrooms was a high priority for effective teaching and learning. It was unanimous among participants that constant student misbehavior in the classrooms, willfully ignoring school policies, and breaking classroom rules severely frustrates the teacher/student relationships. For examples, Joan said, "The classroom behaviors of my students have gone downhill. Their behavior is outrageous. It has been hard for me to teach". Similarly, Shelia said, "Before I started teaching, I never would have considered these kinds of behavior problems in the classroom". Teachers mentioned the energy, emotions, and inappropriate times given to deal with unacceptable behaviors and other forms of negativity from students. For examples, Dave, a teacher for 18 years stated, "Everyday, all day, I am confronting students about their awful profanity and disrespect towards adults". Tom, a veteran of 20 years, said, "I find myself getting frustrated dealing with correcting rude behaviors and negative attitudes of my kids because it disrupts my classroom environment". Ann said, "It

bothers me to see so much disrespect of kids towards other adults. I am not use to this". Both Judy and Cora discussed their growing animosities regarding their students always texting in the classroom. Cathy stated, "It seems each week I have to go into the hallway and deal with kids fighting or bullying or using their cell phones". The emotional frustrations of teachers reached levels whereby they pointed out the fact that there were students that they did not like. Nevertheless, Dave said, "When students see that you care, it makes a difference in how they will relate to you. But it's emotionally draining and frustrating getting kids to trust you instead of them not liking you."

Lack of Student Effort (LSE)

LSE stems from the constant lack of student participation and attitudes of carelessness regarding classroom work and academic responsibilities. So often, it is very challenging for teachers to provide students with the sincere motivation to progress, focus, and succeed. Teachers discussed their frustrations, exasperations, and exhaustive measures employed to help advance or motivate students in their required responsibilities. In their efforts to stimulate or increase student productivity within the classrooms, teachers were also frustrated due to the lack of supportive interventions from the parents of their unproductive students. When asked about some of the job-related issues that contributed towards callousness, and, at times, hindered their professional services, some of the teachers declared how negatively affected they were because of the negative attitudes of students regarding required class work and/or participation. Cora, who taught an advanced course of high achieving students said,

> I would get some kids in my classes and their lack of efforts everyday would negatively affect me! I would be working my rear end off for

> these kids and yet their behaviors and attitudes were telling me to shove it! That wears you down like nothing else.

Discussing her emotional issues and frustrations, Shelia said, "Students that don't participate in my class and refuse to do what is required means that I have to spend my time calling parents throughout the day. Their laziness affects me!" Tom also discussed his frustrations with his student efforts.

> It is frustrating and emotionally draining when you give your all and kids are not giving you 100%; they are not really trying as hard as they possibly can to do the best that they can in the classroom. Their focus is on other things socially outside of the classroom. I have to watch that my attitude does not get like their attitude.

Teachers discussed that students often appeared to be preoccupied with classroom behaviors that are non-related to academics (i.e., texting, daydreaming, sleeping, excessive attempts to talk to classmates). Efforts from students to become engaged in class activities were missing. When asked about her emotional challenges and periods of negativity towards students, Judy said,

> You have so much that you can give to help your students and you expect a change or a response or you know, and there is a minimum effort that you expect. However, some of these students are not trying, don't care, and you end up detaching yourself from the ones who are not trying.

Ann said, "There were days that I wanted to go home and not come back. It seems that I was wasting my time and energy." Teachers reported the importance of students' participating in the classroom along with them meeting the academic requirements of that class. Teachers agreed that the academic efforts of students or the lack thereof become a reflective image of

teachers' abilities to inspire or motivate students. Teachers dedicated to motivate those students that lack enthusiasm or effort within the classroom can be costly to the emotions as Cathy demonstrated.

> You have expectations for all your students and the biggest frustration is when you try everything you can, teach it this way or do it that way or explain it this way and they don't get it because their interest is not there or there are other things going on, whether socially or emotionally.
> Therefore, I would say that is what causes me to become emotionally overwhelmed.

Dave discussed what it was like reaching his limits with many of his students as well. He said, "So often I had come to my limits of frustration and became highly discouraged with many of my students. They were refusing to become responsible for their work and would not ask for help". He went on to say, "My greatest frustration was not with the parents not holding their kids responsible for their school work, but the laziness of these students that did not care".

In this study, the researcher examined four job-related themes that negatively affected the emotional state (i.e., exhaustion, depleted enthusiasm) and mental makeup (feelings of callousness, detachment) of secondary teachers. These adverse conditions corrupting the professional performances of teachers reflected the aspects of job burnout. Burnout is a job performance issue among teachers consequently causing them to develop negative attitudes, experience depleted enthusiasm, deal with long periods of frustration, and carelessness regarding their work**.** Poor support, or the lack thereof from principals, administrative workload, negative teacher/student relationships, and lack academic participation from students were factors

affecting the well-being, motivation, resiliency, empathy, and passion of teachers. Demanding responsibilities, limited resources, and unsupportive personnel in a work environment can jeopardize the well-being and emotional balance of teachers, possibly causing some teachers to develop ineffective confrontational methods while dealing with job-related stressors.

Chapter V

Coping Strategies Associated with EE and DPZ

Learning successful techniques or strategies for coping with EE and DPZ have had favorable results for teachers who work at all grade levels (Chang, 2009; Chaplin, 2008; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the burnout experiences of high school teachers and the coping strategies they employed along with their transformational learning experiences because of burnout. This chapter focused on the employed coping strategies that assisted teachers as they dealt with EE and DPZ and this were second and third research questions that guided my study (See Appendix B).

Though the levels of stress and the phenomenon of burnout in the field of teaching are apparent, all the teachers in this study discovered and established varies means to diminish, elevate, or cope with the effects of EE and DPZ**.** As you continue through this chapter, you will see the activities and methods teachers employed that minimized EE and DPZ. Additionally, such employed strategies for coping assisted teachers in maintaining their well-being as professionals. The findings in this chapter reported the themes associated with the coping strategies teachers used to alleviate or reduce the adverse effects of emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DPZ). The variations of coping mechanisms, activities, methods, and strategies varied among the participants according to the themes that emerged from the analyzed data.

As noted in Table 4.3 below, three themes emerged. Mental Efficiency (ME), Positive Interpersonal Relationships (PIR), and Outside Resources (OR) depicted various strategies teachers perceived to benefit them in achieving a sense of mental well-being and emotional

balance while dealing with the struggles, demands, and difficulties of their work. Though this study reveals the burnout phenomenon affecting these teachers were apparent, they benefited from meaningful relationships, satisfying hobbies, and pursued varies activities that alleviated, mitigated, or cope with the effects of EE and DPZ.

Table 4.3

Common Themes and Descriptors

Themes	**Descriptors for Coping**
Positive Interpersonal Relationships (PIR)	Mentorship from others, regular social network, collaborations with other staff, fellowship with friends, care from family and support
Mental Efficiency (ME)	Resilient, fortitude, mental relaxation techniques, a humorous point of view, optimistic
Outside Resources (OR)	religious/spiritual activities, hobbies, exercise, sports, involvement with pets

Positive Interpersonal Relationships (PIR)

PIR was perceived as stress-reducing activities/strategies such as exercise, meaningful social relationships (i.e., support from colleagues, stimulating adult relationships outside work, positive family influence), and various engaging hobbies. Such forms of coping strategies benefited the participants, as they were able to effectively deal with the job-related difficulties, classroom challenges, demanding tasks, and other on-going job-related stressors. Teachers found mental relief and emotional rewards through forms of mentoring from other staff members and designated small group meetings that provided encouragement and classroom support. When addressing the methods or strategies used for coping with job stress and emotional overload, all the teachers discussed the emotional and mental benefits received from positive

relationships stemming from colleagues. Ironically, Joan found relief from her mental exhaustion and frustration by frequently meeting with the head principal. Joan said, "I would go and sit down with the principal and he would assure me that I would be okay. He would always ask me if I needed his help. That was great for me." Joann, a veteran teacher of 21 years, continued,

> It is the people in this building, the adults! There is no way any of us can make it without these adults as a source for help and encouragement. You go to the people who are in the trenches with you and I have relied on the people in this building in so many ways. There is also a group I hang out with on Saturdays and mostly what we do is vent to one another. This is our mental therapy.

The importance of forming and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and other caring adults were common among the participants. All teachers discussed the importance of having other concerned adults in their lives. Joann expressed her deep commitments and convictions about establishing healthy interpersonal relationships. "You have got to find that person who will be with you when you are emotionally burned-out! You cannot make this job work by yourself." Additionally, some teachers found emotional relief and comforting rewards through collaborative group meetings among staff members and caring mentors.

Both Dave and Tom discussed how necessary it was for teachers to meet among themselves to share concerns, questions, management ideas, and similar problematic issues involving their students. Both men also benefited greatly from having mentors that understood the demands they encountered as teachers. Tom said,

> Even though I felt like I was placed in a tough situation with this kind of class schedule (i.e., diversity of low achieving students, limited educational resources and supplies) and was having a bad time trying to teach, fortunately for me I had support from several of my colleagues who were right there with me.

On the other hand, Dave found strength and felt revitalized through the interactions with other caring adults that attend the weekly Bible class at his church. "I look forward to going to meet with members of our Bible class. They refresh me. I feel rejuvenated being around people that care about me and my job. I get refueled!"

Variations of PIR were also evident between with Judy and Ann. Both deeply exclaimed the benefits of having female mentors and colleagues within the school building while also benefiting from a positive home life. When asked about dealing with the emotional load of teaching, Judy, who is married, said:

> It is important to communicate with other adults who can show empathy or sympathy for the situations you deal with. You need someone to hear what you are going through and to be compassionate with their listening. My husband has been there this whole time. Within this facility, you have to develop beneficial relationships. It has to start with a mentoring relationship where someone can just listen and say, yes, that happen to me, or I have been through that.

Ann, a single woman said, "I was in shock with student behavior when I started teaching! I had days when kids were throwing things at me. It was brutal. Administration was not a good

support. My emotional and mental support came from another teacher." In addition, to minimize the negativity or emotional overload that Ann experienced, she discussed the importance of her family (i.e., siblings, parents).

> I have a very strong family. I talk a lot to family even though I'm the only person in my family that lives in this region. We are in constant communication. Also my colleagues here, the teachers, they are needed support. Therefore, if I am having a bad day, I know I can go and see these particular teachers or that teacher.

Cathy, Cora, and Shelia expressed the unique benefits received from their interpersonal relationships colleagues. Some of these interpersonal relationships were in the forms of collaborative faculty meetings (working in small groups), workshops, and other interactions with students outside their classrooms. The interpersonal relationship with the social worker helped Cathy. "The social worker of the school did wonders for me. She assured me that I was strong enough to do the job, despite the challenges. She encouraged me to keeping doing the positive things." The personal relationships established with certain staff members were also important for Cora. "Having time with other staff members in our workshops, lunch time, district-wide professional development (small groups), and department meetings are important to me. Hearing their issues and receiving their encouragements helped me." Shelia's coping strategies included using the experiences of veteran teachers. Shelia declared, "I became a better teacher when I began getting into the heads of veteran teachers that have been in the game for a while. My help and support came from my colleagues."

Mental Efficiencies (ME)

ME represented another avenue teachers' dealt with EE and DPZ. Mental efficiencies were the psychological approaches and mental resiliencies participates relied upon that countered the feelings associated with effects of EE and DPZ. Practicing such cognitive abilities stimulated the kinds of stabilizing perceptions and dispositions participants used as coping strategies. To safeguard the professional efforts needed in the classroom while also protecting the enthusiasm required to be productive, teachers' ability to see the humorous side of things was an effective cognitive strategy in mentally adjusting towards a positive attitude. An additional characteristic of ME resulted from teachers' intentional determination to remain focused and resilient in their mission as a professional teacher. So often, the participants in this study discussed their fortitude and resiliency in initiating effective teaching strategies while also creating various classroom activities that reduced the negativity and disruptive behaviors of students. All the teachers expressed their unyielding position of being a professional called to teach, motivate, model professionalism, and help develop kids. The researcher considered ME as a vital component in teachers coping with the issues of their work and the emotional and mental challenges of the teaching profession.

The mental force required to be productive in the field of teaching seems to go beyond having adequate educational resources for teaching and favorable working conditions that established quality interpersonal relationships among students and staff. In varying degrees, all the teachers in this study discussed the mental efficiencies and cognitive skills they possessed enabling them to stay engaged. Tom said:

> No matter what or how I feel, or what has transpired negatively in my classes

> each day, it is extremely important for me to mentally strong. You must have a plan and become consistent with that plan and stick to it. If not, you know, then the experience of doing your job can be pretty tough.

Tom further stated, "It is my will to be successful. That is my main driving force. My biggest fear is failure." This attitude of having a mental drive was common among all the participants. Though the emotional overload in teaching and dealing with various conflicts with students were prevalent, Joann expressed her deep feelings and resolve regarding her profession by declaring, "I can do this, I can teach! That attitude kept me a little sane and somewhat balanced." As noted throughout the study, the frustrations that occur in teacher/student relationships, daily emotional challenges of teaching, and the various demanding responsibilities of the profession were common to all participants in this study. Nevertheless, fortitude was a common theme among teachers.

When asked about his strategies in coping with the demands of the job while handling his duties, Dave said, "My purpose for being here at this school is for these students! I had to fight through with prayer to remind myself of the things that I cannot change." Both Ann and Judy suggested that they were determined to make the mental investments and sacrificial efforts required to be a good teacher. Judy, the youngest participant said,

> I am determined to be that teacher that returns papers in a timely fashion and will never go without a lesson plan. Either you set those expectations for yourself or you do not. There is no salary different between the teacher who does and does not. I'm determined to be effective and productive for these kids.

In her emotional declaration and despite all the apparent challenges of classroom teaching, Ann indicated it was the achievements and positive interactions with the students that helped her create a strong mentality. "What's keeping me here are the students that need me!" In similar fashion, the discussions from Cathy, Cora, and Shelia were consistent with the other participants. Cora, the longest tenured teacher stated, "Though I got to the point where I hated some of my bad kids and hated that class when they were there, I made a determination not to fail as a productive teacher". In sharing her thoughts and feelings about the mental ability and stamina required to be an effective teacher, Shelia stated,

> Though my struggles and disappointments were many during my teaching tenure, I was willing to change my planning procedures for my classes. I was determined not to fail but start effectively planning my lessons that included all the students that they put in my class. I still do it today. It does not matter if a kid has behavior problems or whether he or she is a genius; whether that kid is bad, black or white, my lesson planning will accommodate every learning style.

Cathy indicated,

> After having a horrible year at this job, I would never take the next day off because it would be like getting back on the horse again. I was determined to believe that the next day in this place would be better. I had to mentally work to let them know I still care.

Teachers discussed a developed and unwavering dedication to their kids and a perceived loyalty to their profession, in the midst of the daily demands of keeping classroom order, maintaining

proper recordkeeping, complying with administrative procedures, supervising hallways, and providing classroom leadership.

Outside Resources (OR)

Outside resources were activities and hobbies that the participants engaged in as a coping strategy. Beneficial activities like exercise/gym, hobbies, pleasurable walking, church involvement, dog-walking, extra-curricular school activities (i.e., attending sporting events, involvement with school clubs/programs) were very common among all participants. For example, Cora stated, "I got involved with presenting the school musical. It was something that I did for years. That was my therapy. I also go to the gym after a hard day." Cathy's outside resource included her dog.

> Walking my dog after work helped me process a taxing day. At the end of the day, I have to take care of me! What I tell other teachers and parents is that, in an airplane when they lose oxygen they do not tell you to put the 'air thing' on your kid first, they tell you to put it on you first.

Both Shelia and Ann enjoyed walking before and after work as forms of exercise and meditation. Shelia "walked six and a half miles every morning before work". She said, "Walking relieves that stress build up in me." Along with being an avid reader to reduce work stress, swimming was an outside resource for Ann. "Swimming every day after work and spending time with my family (i.e., daughters) at home has helped me handle all this stuff here at school!" Tom enjoyed playing a musical instrument and found an escape through graphic arts. All participants discussed and emphasized the quality outside resources and various forms of

activities that proved beneficial for their well-being. Benefiting from her resources at home, Judy exclaimed, "Thank God for my husband and kids at home that truly keep me grounded!"

The emotional rewards and spiritual benefits discovered in church settings greatly benefited Dave and Shelia. They both discussed the great meaning it brought to them because of how challenging each day of teaching can be. Dave stated, "It is my faith and involvement with my church that has been my foundation and my relief. I feel I am better equipped to handle these situations and challenges on this job that I encounter everyday". In a similar expression, Shelia declared, "My walking is good, but it's my prayer life and Bible reading that keeps me strong!"

Though EE and DPZ were apparent within the teaching tenure of all the participants, findings suggested that all participants eventually progressed toward a more psychological well-being that help them achieve the kinds of coping strategies needed for quality job performance, resiliency, and a degree of well-being.

Chapter VI

Discussion and Summary

As service providers, teachers should be mentally strong, professionally skilled, and socially able to adjust to the challenges of teaching students and upholding various other professional responsibilities. Nevertheless, burnout has been a pressing issue among all professional teachers (Maslach, 2003; Mee, 2009). The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who have experienced burnout and their transformational learning experiences because of burnout. This chapter summarized the various job-related factors that lead to teacher burnout, coping strategies employed by teachers as they handled their job demands and such strategies that mitigated the adverse effects of EE and DPZ, and the transformational learning experiences of teachers because of burnout. Due to the nature of this qualitative study, there were research questions formulated to guide my study (See Appendix B). This chapter provided a summary of this study, discussed the major findings along with related perspectives from the literature. This chapter also provided implications for action and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Present Study

Teachers that become emotionally exhausted with high demanding job can lose a sense of their professional effectiveness and quality of care. In addition, when teachers become callous or insensitive (i.e., depersonalization) their students tend to suffer and teacher/student relationships deteriorate. Recognized as a job performance issue in the field of teaching, burnout has negatively affected the emotional and mental makeup of teachers at all grade levels; consequently causing them to develop negative attitudes, prolonged frustrations, periods of

indifference, and carelessness regarding their work (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Some working conditions and job challenges may require teachers to undergo some psychological development to remain positive, strong, resilient, effective, and remain caring. The art of learning how to cope and employing meaningful methods/strategies to counteract the adverse conditions of burnout potentially enables a person to preserve the needed qualities and attributes for appropriate work performances and personal sustainability (Podsen, 2002). According to Bandura (1993), teachers need to believe in their self-efficacy as professionals to motivate students and establish measureable learning within the environments they create in classrooms. When teachers are unable or fail to manage the daily tasks, demands, and responsibilities of their profession, the results could be costly to their happiness and/or personal fulfillment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

In short, the findings in this study suggested that the burnout phenomenon negatively affected all the teachers with prevailing issues associated with EE and DPZ. According to the burnout themes that emerged from the data, all the teachers noted the external job-related factors (i.e., outside themselves) that stimulated such prevailing issues and exhausting frustrations. However, it is worth noting that no participant in this study accepted the makeup of their own particular kind of personality or mental incapacity that could have possibly contributed towards or played a role in their burnout experiences. The internal factors (i.e., personalities and/or mental incapacities) of the participants could have played a significant role in their burnout experience just as must as the external job-related factors. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress/burnout should not be perceived as the personal property of the person, neither is it the property belonging to that environment. Their work suggested that the stress/burnout issues arises when there is a close association between a particular kind of person and that particular

kind of environment; consequently, leading to a threat that becomes apparent upon the person's mental state.

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who have experienced burnout and their transformational learning experiences because of burnout. A study of this nature has produced limited exposure**.** To help satisfy the phenomenological research design applied in this study, the researcher employed the kind of inquiries in one-on-one interviews that produced some common themes that emerged from collected data. Despite the internal rewards and personal satisfactions experienced by teachers who help students succeed, the realities of burnout and its affects upon the job performance and well-being of these high school teachers in this study are evident.

The discussions that follow are in conjunction to the research questions guiding this study. In short, these questions examined: (a) factors leading to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization of teachers, (b) teachers' strategies for coping, and (c) teachers' transformational learning experience. Discussions include four distinct themes correlated to the effects of emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DPZ) and three distinct themes associated with teachers' strategies or methods for coping.

Administration Issues

The researcher determined the teachers in this study who perceived their administrators as being unsupportive, uncaring, or seem somewhat disengaged from the practical needs of teachers were more likely to report feelings of internal frustration, weariness, and emotional exhaustion. All the participants reported that principals often did not fully support, or at times poorly supported, the school policies and rules intending to govern student behavior, support

teacher morale, and promote the proper atmosphere conducive for learning (e.g., excessive tardiness, cutting class, improper dress code, properly wearing student IDs). Additionally, perceived issues regarding principals' procedures in handling or mishandling disruptive students were prevailing negative factors among teachers. According to Vatcharasirisook (2011), the important role of relationship between supervisors and subordinates suggest that the insensitivities from administration or administrators towards their subordinates had significant negative effects (i.e., frustration and stress) on the employee.

Whitehead (2001) suggests that there is a distinct relationship regarding the lack of social support from supervisors and the burnout components of EE and DPZ affecting the adults supervisors serve within that environment. Other causes of frustration, poor morale, and burnout may arise from administrative neglect or lack of sensitivity from those occupying administrative roles in district or state offices. Additionally, known insensitivities from administration or administrators towards their subordinates have had significant negative effects (i.e., prolonged frustration and stress) on employee's intention to remain in the job (Vatcharasirisook, 2011). The concept of insensitivities from administrators and them displaying a lack of moral support is evident in the research of Sardiwalla et al., (2007). According to Sardiwalla et al. (2007), when workers perceived their administrators less caring or insensitivity regarding the well-being of employees, it affected their work-related enthusiasm and commitment levels. Having the priorities of administrators turned away from the needs and concerns of subordinates, attitudes of indifferences and mounting frustrations will affects employees' work performances.

Administrative Workload

Teachers in this study clearly expressed the mental strain, constant frustration, tiring efforts, and emotional exhaustion of handling daily duties and classroom expectations. Additionally, teachers complained of mental exhaustion and physical weariness dealing with other tasks such as, but not limited to, hallway supervision, preparing engaging lesson plans, filing progress report every three weeks, informing parents and motivating their involvement, and adhering to administrative mandates for teachers to help students meet state required academic standards. Teachers who perceived their quality classroom instructional time minimized due to disruptions (e.g., school drills, announcements, issues in hallways, and assemblies), enforcing school policies, and other administrative expectations, reported feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The researcher noted the negative effects upon teachers' attitudes and resiliency when they were required to multi-task with administrative procedures on a consistent basis while their daily work schedule did not permit the needed breaks (physically and mentally) between classes.

The research from Lueken, Lyter, and Fox (2004) suggested that among the teachers who left the profession, one of the five most commonly reported sources of dissatisfaction was a lack of planning time allocated for handling the varying measures of administrative work. Sardiwalla et al. (2007) suggested that EE and DPZ of teachers were associated with constantly handling school policies regarding discipline and tardiness. However, Philipp and Kunter (2013) suggest properly evaluating teachers' profile regarding their work can be very complex. There is no doubt that the art of classroom teaching, preparing lesson plans, curriculum writing, and correcting class work requires considerable amount of time given by teachers. However, classroom teaching and those other class-related responsibilities are not the only aspects of

teachers' highly demanding and complex job profile. Teachers perceiving other required tasks from an administrative nature are insignificant and can feel so frustrating and agonizing to complete when attention is required. This was the case for the participants in the study. This is similar to the research of Gunter et al. (2005). They found that on-going irritations and deep frustrations occur within teachers when there are constant interruptions from the demanding class-related tasks and daily teaching performances with handling general administrative/school reports and forms.

Negative Teacher/Student Relationships

An additional factor that contributed towards emotional exhaustion and depersonalization of teachers was in the area of the teacher/student relationships. Teachers candidly reported fluctuating measures of frustration, feelings of disrespect, verbal abuse, and emotional exhaustion in their daily efforts to manage their classrooms while forced to discipline disruptive behaviors of students in their classrooms (sometimes in hallways). Teachers that gave of themselves to meet daily objectives of their classes and yet became constantly distracted handling disrespectful students became very irritated and emotionally drained. Teachers, who perceived their students having negative attitudes about the learning process, not complying with class rules, and displaying negative behaviors affecting others, reported having daily frustrations and lower levels of tolerance. This resulted in developing toxic relationships with those students. It appears that the teachers encountered levels of detachment from students (i.e., lacking care, limiting their services to students).

The significance of establishing and maintaining a positive teacher/student relationship is an important characteristic within the learning process. When the job demands are perceived

overwhelming, teacher interactions with students may become taxing or toxic. Accordingly, teachers often feel drained intellectually and emotionally when they deal with students' misbehaviors (Chang & Davis, 2009). As was determined in this study, teachers had experienced a significant decline in their quality of professional care and educational performance toward students when experiencing emotional and mental exhaustion (Lumpkin, 2007; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005).

Hargreaves (1998) and O'Connor (2008) suggested that establishing and building positive teacher/student relationships are one of the core reasons for teachers staying in the profession for any length of time. There is a consensus among some researchers that the most common source of teacher burnout and the emotional overload of teaching stem from individual relationships with students (Chang, 2009; Split et al., 2011). Hargreaves (2000) found that good relationships with students were the most important source of enjoyment and motivation for teachers. Endangering a developing positive teacher/student relationship exist when teachers perceive their fluctuating job challenges and ongoing demands as becoming overwhelming, frustrating, and stressful (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Negative relationships with students of classroom teachers are often associated with problems regarding classroom management (Wubbels, Brekelmans, den Brok, & van Tartwijk, 2006).

Lack of Student Effort

In order to teach well, the teachers in this study declared how important it was to encourage positive behaviors for classroom participation, motivate students to listen, and provide verbal communication that leads to learning. All teachers believed that effective teaching involves having a passion to help kids. To these participants, teaching involves a daily

determination to reach all students in their classrooms. Additionally, the participants highly regarded the required energy needed to motivate their students to stay on task while inspiring them towards academic achievement, and helping them to embrace positive attitudes about achieving. Teachers in this study declared how negatively affected they were because of the negative attitudes and expressions of indifferences/carelessness from students regarding required academic work and class participation. Teachers declared their frustrations about their students not taking ownership over their learning process.

Being tired physically and emotionally can have adverse effects on teachers and their classroom performance when they constantly deal with poor efforts, or the lack thereof, from their students (Hargreaves, 1998; Skvoholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2010). Other findings in the literature were consistent. Evers et al. (2004) suggested that poor attitudes of students toward schoolwork and their lack of motivation are consistent contributors of EE and DPZ. Additionally, when passionate, idealistic, and dedicated teachers feel unable to educate and inspire their students because of their apathy and poor academic efforts in the classroom, this tends to contribute to further discipline problems from these students. Consequently, along with other known stressors, teachers are likely to burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

Studies that focus on various stressors of teachers found that the most common stressor involved the classroom practice of working with poorly motivated students (Kyriacou, 2001). According to Bandura (1997), motivating students is an aspect associated with a teacher's perceived ability to perform his or her job and relates to the construct known as self-efficacy (i.e., one's belief or perceived capabilities to execute the required actions to affect an individual's behavior and motivation in achieving their goals). Burnout among teachers is associated with teachers' assessment of student classroom involvement and parent participation in the academic

process of their children. When students constantly fail to prioritize their academic achievement, it may decrease the actual or perceived demands of a teacher's job to educate or reach the students in their classrooms. Therefore, the higher ratings of parent involvement, classroom involvement of students, and academic emphasis of students would be associated with high levels of teacher efficacy and lower burnout (Pas, Bradshaw, & Hershfeldt, 2012).

However, as noted within this study, determining to discover, embrace, and maintain strategies for coping with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization may alleviate its negative effects and help preserve the quality performance teachers need for the classroom and other job-related tasks. Preventing negative outcomes, minimizing unproductive behaviors and unprofessional performances due to adverse effects of emotional exhaustion, and detached attitudes towards students can help teachers become more effective in the classroom. Thus, promote more responses that are positive from students (Zonlnierczyk-Zreda, 2005). The following discussions include the three distinct themes associated with teachers' strategies or methods for coping.

Coping with EE and DPZ

The coping strategies employed by all these teachers varied. Some strategies included incorporating leisure activities/hobbies, enjoying members of the family unit, spirituality, exercise, and enjoying other forms of interpersonal relationships (i.e., after school events, scheduled social gatherings) that reduced the burnout affects found within their workplace. This was very significant to this study. Despite the nagging symptoms of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization experienced by all these teachers throughout their teaching tenure, they apparently found stress reducing relationships among colleagues and other forms of activities that help preserve the quality work performance and positive attitudes required for their job.

Research suggests that teachers cannot change the school, principal's level of support, or the number of students in the classroom, but teachers are empowered to improve and practice effective coping strategies proven helpful for them (Richards, 2012).

Positive Interpersonal Relationships

Teachers who perceived their positive interactions with colleagues, mentorship programs, positive influence in the home (spouse and/or kids), and other forms of social interactions outside the work environment were beneficial towards mitigating EE and DPZ. All teachers in this study benefited emotionally and mentally as they formed other meaningful relationships with teachers, which enabled them to share concerns and receive motivation. Some teachers found effective benefits working with other students in different environments (school clubs, sports, school organizations).

According to Botwinik (2007), teachers need to make time for family and friends as a support system. This includes mentoring someone or having someone to mentor the teacher. Setting up a buddy system with other personnel in your grade level or subject area is beneficial. Having supportive family members that care when job-related issues or conditions became overwhelming are important. According to the literature, when adults dealt with burnout the most frequently mentioned coping strategy included talking with family and friends (Whitehead, 2001). Consequently, the factors believed to contribute to teacher burnout included the lack of social support from friends, colleagues, and administrators (Maslach et al. 2001). Teachers seeking out social and emotional support by turning to others outside the framework of their job have shown it benefits them while under stress (Mearns & Cain, 2002). Teachers have coped with the issues and adverse conditions of burnout with assistance from their colleagues through

supports groups and other collaborative interactions among staff members (Tatar, 2009). From an earlier study, Viswesvaran, Sanchez, and Fisher (1999) suggested that social support participation help reduced the work-related strains experienced, mitigated perceived stressors, and moderated the stressor-strain relationship.

Mental Efficiencies

The cognitive abilities and fortitude of these teachers and their willingness to become optimistic and alter their world-view were significant in them finding balance amid demanding work-related responsibilities. All teachers in this study realized the benefits of being strong-minded, forgiving, and resilient. Among these teachers, this study suggests that the nature of coping from a mental point of view can produce strategies that can become effective. According to Sprenger (2011), internal coping may include concentrating on something narrow in the field of stimuli around the person or just seeking higher levels of focus. In short, to alter the perception of stress or burnout, teachers may invoke inward coping strategies. According to Kyriacou (2001), there are coping strategies that are physical in nature, such as activities or other engagements to reduce feelings of tension. Others strategies may be mental or internal, which involves teachers modifying how they appraise or perceive stressful situations. The mental objective or idea is to keep problems in a healthy or non-threatening perspective (e.g., keep one's feelings under control). Kyriacou goes on to say that in order to reduce negative emotions and its effects upon job performance, it can be helpful for teachers to change how they think about the stress-inducing responsibilities or stressors of teaching.

The mental aspects of coping could involve employing techniques such as, psychologically arranging issues in a better or more positive perspective such as looking at

things with a humorous point of view. Coping strategies, from a mental point of view, used to reduce the nature of burnout or stress may include, "positive self-talking, accepting and using a goal as focus, use of humor, and religious beliefs" (Sharplin et al., 2011, p. 140). Kyriacou (2011) suggested learning to keep problems in a healthy perspective are greatly beneficial to teacher's well-being**.**

Outside Resources

Teachers in this study not only benefited through strong relationships stemming from supportive family, colleagues, and friends, but also through other stress-reducing activities like daily exercise, hobbies, reading books, school club involvement, church programs, and walking. According to the literature, physical activities and other meaningful activity involvements help relieve stress (Richards, 2012**).** Teachers that incorporated meaningful hobbies and other activities outside the work environment, they reported fewer incidences of burnout. To deal with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, Kyriacou (2001) found meaningful coping strategies that are productive in nature such as, making love, jogging, mediation, music, and writing poetry. Making time to execute various forms of exercise (aerobic, yoga) and engage in recreational sports will relieve stress.

Though important as the teacher/student relationships are for quality academic learning coupled with teachers attaining the cognitive abilities to conduct effective classroom management, the developmental process of these components can be challenging when teachers find themselves overwhelmed with other job-related responsibilities and tasks. In examining the coping strategies of these teachers who dealt with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, the researcher’s findings were consistent with previous studies. Burnout seems to progress in stages and evolves over a period. Teachers usually exhibit signs of emotional exhaustion (i.e.,

running out of emotional energy, experiencing a depletion of enthusiasm) when they feel that they can no longer give of themselves emotionally to students as they did earlier in their career (Haberman, 2004). The depersonalization of teachers will cause them to develop negative, cynical, and sometimes callous attitudes toward students, parents, and/or colleagues.

It was evident that the efforts of teachers to preserve on-going quality services to their clients (i.e., students, colleagues, administration, parents) hinged upon them discovering and incorporating meaningful strategies to cope and minimize negative or unproductive behaviors because of burnout. The findings from the study supported the literature. Emotional exhaustion is the core element of burnout and the most obvious manifestation of this complex syndrome (Maslach et al., 2001). Researchers (Maslach, 2003; McCarthy, Lambert, O'Donnell & Melendres, 2009; Tomic & Tomic, 2000) examining the stages of burnout found that a majority of teachers have first experienced some type of symptoms of work-related emotional exhaustion or depleted enthusiasm. Such initial conditions were prevalent among teachers in this study.

Because of the gradual development of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization was the second stage affecting the job performances of these teachers. In turn, conflicting issues associated with feelings of indifferences and prevailing attitudes of callousness became more noticeable in the teacher/student relationship (i.e., depersonalization). As the researcher noted this significant progression in the stages of burnout among these teachers, the literature suggests the same. Depersonalization is the second stage of burnout. Individuals start to ignore and pull away from the people who are in need of their service (Maslach et al., 2001). Thus, teachers may have a detached or disconnected attitude towards students. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of coping with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization has its rewards. As the findings in this study suggests, teachers can learn to eventually feel a sense of well-being, self-control,

peace, and not suffer under the burden of excessive strain, relationship demands, and work pressures (Holmes, 2005).

Transformational Learning

Self-efficacy of teachers is how they feel and perceive themselves in their abilities to succeed in motivating, instructing, managing, caring, and guiding students within the learning process (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). According to Bandura (1977, 1993), teachers that believe in their self-efficacy to motivate students and establish measureable standards of learning will determine the kinds of environments they create in classrooms; and the academic progress their students achieve. Nevertheless, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization can be toxic conditions negatively affecting the souls of caring adults who are service-providers. Both of these conflicting conditions can affect the levels of self-efficacy and teachers have reported low perceptions of self-efficacy (Betoret, 2006). However, teachers in general want to resolve the problem or problems of their declining self-efficacy created by times of personal failures, work-related stress, and adverse conditions of EE and DPZ. The vocational field of teaching is not exclusive or isolated from the taxing issues, careless attitudes of clients that teachers serve, nor the demanding and daunting tasks that require stamina each day. Consequently, while such conditions exist in the field of education, teachers can become somewhat challenged in their growth as caring and productive professionals.

Oftentimes, discovering the need to change one's world-view or make psychological adjustments happen, because of emotionally daunting events frequently occurring or psychologically overwhelming work experiences/demands encountered by adults (Baumgartner, 2001; Elsey & Henschke, 2011; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009). When adults are emotionally

overwhelmed with taxing conditions or when constantly facing demanding situations within their job or within their personal lives, such situations may trigger the need to undergo some form of transformational learning.

When mentally and/or emotionally overwhelmed by work-related circumstances, both Adams (2003) and Mezirow (1991, 1995) defined these occurrences as a disorienting dilemma or personal crisis encountered by adults. Thus, requiring adults to establish a new psychological perspective through a process of transformational learning, which in turn helps establish a lasting change of behavior through forms of coping (Baumgartner, 2001). Adults that are able to gain new perspectives about their demanding work life or personal challenges are important components in the transformational learning process.

In this study, the makeup of teachers' self-efficacy comprises the overall reactions, state of mind, mental abilities, and attitudes regarding the quality performances provided for their job. The burnout syndrome (i.e., EE and DPZ) previously affecting these teachers became a disorienting dilemma and negatively affected their performances and self-efficacy. Over a period, teachers experienced many defining episodes and failures within their work environment that contributed towards their disorienting dilemma (i.e., personal crisis) and caused adverse effects upon their mental well-being. Episodes associated with work-related stress, emotional struggles handling the daily demands/tasks of the classrooms, dealing with toxic teacher/student relationships, perceived lack of care or support from principals, and struggling with prevailing challenges rendered teachers emotionally exhausted and callous. Additionally, their disorienting dilemma somewhat diminished the teachers' classroom creativeness and caused negligence in discharging some job responsibilities. However, there was a desire to change or renew their

mental perspective. Teachers believed that gaining a healthier or new perspective about their job was important when their care for students had change negatively.

Learning new perspectives, due to the consequences of a demanding work environment, may play a major role in preserving one's well-being. Thus, becoming better equipped to foster or maintain healthy relationships with others. Learning new perspectives can be associated with a psychological transformation. According to Baumgartner (2001), the transformational learning process that adults may undergo involves self-questioning, critical reflections, and the need to engage in rational discussions and communications with others to gain a sense of "consensual validation" (p. 17). New perspectives about one's worldview may provide the incentives to explore different behaviors or a different approach regarding present issues.

Part of this psychological transformation would first require participants to engage in making critical reflections of their prior experiences; reevaluate perceived assumptions about their job and themselves, make mental notes of prevailing attitudes, and their emotional reactions to the known stressor or stressors affecting their well-being. All teachers in this study were open to analyze or review their previous unprofessional demeanors. Teachers reflected upon their acts of carelessness, perceived assumptions, and negative dispositions because of burnout. Personal issues stemming from EE and DPZ deteriorated their zeal for the teaching profession. Teachers in this study dealt with the emotional labor of classroom management, daily confronting and handling unruly/disruptive students, and became constantly frustrated with the carelessness, inconsistencies, and unresolved issues from administration. Such prevailing issues appeared to outweigh the rewarding things experienced by teachers.

As a result, the teachers' emotional and mental state had weakened and their enthusiasms suffered lost. In the process of reflecting critically about their job-related experiences was important. After creating meaningful perspectives about being professionals while examining their deep feelings about their work, the need to become effective, caring, and productive would require meaningful strategies that would offset the stressors of the job. Adults that are able to make meaningful perspectives about their mental health-related behaviors would become the framework for establishing alternative behaviors to offset EE and DPZ (Taylor, 1998). For the teachers in this study, establishing forms of coping strategies, or engaging activities and hobbies psychological benefited them as they proceed in job-related responsibilities and other demands set before them. Transformational learning suggests that adults can psychologically change their specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions due to a personal crisis or difficult event they encountered. When teachers were willing to address their disposition and analyzing their problems and assumptions, the potential of transformational learning occurs. This form of learning can lead to adopting new behaviors, investing into alternative forms of healthy interactions, or forming other coping activities to help establish a new disposition. Disorienting dilemmas, because of the burnout phenomenon, can give way for effective learning of a psychological nature. Teachers, as with other adults, can learn to adapt within the stressors of their job. Transformational learning can lead to attitude change, personal growth, and ultimately succeed in adapting coping strategies that will allow teachers to remain as productive educators for the students they serve (Dana, 2007).

Implication for Actions

Preventing negative outcomes and minimizing unproductive behaviors and performance due to adverse effects of emotional exhaustion and detached attitudes towards students (i.e.,

depersonalization) can help teachers become more effective in the classroom and thus promote more responses that are positive from students (Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Maslach, 2003; Zonlnierczyk-Zreda, 2005). The benefits of relieving teacher burnout by learning and employing strategies for coping, before negative consequences or poor job performance start, would be of immense value to all student-teacher programs, novice teachers in the field, tenured teachers, school administrators and district officials, educational policy-makers, educational specialists, and all educational institutions that serve students (Yavuz, 2009). However, the cause of stress, along with burnout, is most likely through environmental factors, which can have profound outcomes on the attitudes and capabilities of teachers; and their willingness to remain active in the helping professions in general and education in particular (Dennis, 2008). One of the many goals of conducting researcher studies is to provide results that are beneficial to others. The findings of this present study have significant implications in the field of teaching and adult education.

Administrators/Principals and Policy-Makers

Using this information may help create some needed understanding of the relationship between high school teacher burnout and constant change or revising of school policies regarding discipline and organizational factors related to burnout (i.e., lack of affective interventions and faculty support systems). Both school/district personnel and teachers can begin to arrange procedures in working together to find solutions that may benefit all involved. Such procedures in working together may involve consulting teachers on matters of curriculum writings, discipline procedures, and instructional planning. These efforts may help resolve or minimize administration issues (AI).

This information could help understand that need for quality mentoring programs and strategic professional development activities with teachers and with their administration/counselors that could promote interactive networking and meaningful collaborations. Such collaborations may help teacher formulate proper techniques in managing the negative relationships with students (NT/SR). These efforts could directly effect on teachers' feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Principals should foster feelings of collaboration and a supportive work environment in order to increase their sensitivities towards teachers despite their leadership style and personality. Additionally, principals can also pursue the kinds of interventions that could increase the rate of growth in teacher efficacy while decreasing the rate administrative issues (AI), such as promoting or suggesting activities that support the formation of strong interpersonal relationships and other forms of collegial support.

School Districts Officials

The professional teacher is required to become an esteemed role model, conveying the attributes and mind-sets students need to be successful for their future careers and lives. Professional development workshops or similar initiatives (supported by district-level officials) may help professional teachers develop the kinds of self-regulatory or self-controlling strategies and cognitive techniques, which can be critical for stress management. School district officials could implement strategies to support or build teacher morale. Instructing teachers in how to perform more effectively in delivering their academic content should not overshadow the need of helping teachers to preserve their quality of care.

Teacher Education Programs

For teachers preparing for the field, teacher education programs should foster collaborative efforts involving educational policy-makers, school administration, and presently employed teachers from all grade levels in pursuing initiatives/training programs that would assist teacher education programs in developing emotional regulations skills (i.e., skills for coping) for those adults advancing towards field that they then might use when addressing the various stressors of their work environments. Such initiatives and/or training programs might also assist those teachers presently in the field effective particular strategies needed to recover from stress-induced environments of their job. The benefits of relieving teacher burnout by learning and employing strategies for coping, before negative consequences or poor job performance start, would be of immense value to all student-teacher programs.

Teachers

The information in this study suggest that teachers should strive pursue and establish positive interpersonal relationships among staff members to help reduce the effects of the various stressors within the work environment, along with the negative issues that may emerge within the teacher/student relationship. Teachers may focus on improving their skills regarding the management of student behavior. Carrying out this function of their work may require peer support, administrative input, parental support, or special training from professional development.

Invite community stakeholders, corporate officials from the labor market, successful alumni, and volunteers from parent/teachers organizations to the classrooms to help students identify the characteristics and work habits for success, understand the importance of conflict

resolution, and inspire students to become good citizens and hard workers within the classroom setting. These efforts from stakeholders could minimize the issues of students lacking efforts in their academic duties (LSE).

Adult Educators and Supervisors of Adult Education/Training Programs

Serving or supporting the transformational learning endeavors affecting adults are part of adult learning (Merriam et al., 2007, Mezirow, 1995, Taylor et al., 2000). Educational strategies and/or programs can help stimulate consciousness-raising opportunities to influence changes within the perceptions of adults who have encountered disorienting dilemmas or crisis. Adult educators and education programs can provide services, initiatives, and/or professional development targeting corporate settings (i.e., educational institutions). Such services/programs should strategically focus on tailored workshops, seminars, short-term courses, or retreats implemented for the following purposes:

1. To encourage or help stimulate on-going psychological growth and development (i.e., coping mechanisms) of professional teachers.
2. Help educators learn productive strategies that will position them to respond appropriately to the issues and challenges that can emerge within the job environment (e.g., stress, handling workloads, toxic/frustrating relationships, multi-tasking).
3. Provide learning opportunities to help adult learners as professionals (i.e., teachers, district-level personnel, and support staff) to positively deal with diversity, hostility, stress management, and insensitivities that may exist within their work environment.
4. Researchers in adult education may use this information in an effort to discover how professional development programs in the field of teaching could assist novice teachers

in their transformation throughout their teaching career; while dealing with the various demands encountered. Adult education researchers could investigate the work-related factors that may motivate or deter adults, as adult learners, to continue learning throughout their teaching vocation.

Recommendations for Future Study

The followings are suggestions for future research based on the findings of the current study. Further research is required regarding the effects of burnout and its relationship with: teachers' daily workload, ethnicity of teachers, teachers enforcing school rules, and overly populated classrooms of a teacher's daily class schedule. When considering the conditions of EE and DPZ and its effects upon gender or marital status, there was no collected data. However, according to Caglar and Caglar (2011), single teachers' level of emotional burnout could be somewhat higher than that of married ones. The idea of the unique social support (i.e., positive home life) to married individuals may have positives results in dealing with job burnout. As the age of teachers rise, the potential of increasing levels of confidence in students and professional abilities also may rise. Additional recommendations include:

1. Replicating the study with more than one high school from different areas of the region (rural and urban), with contrasting demographics in the student populations and teaching staff.
2. Conducting studies in schools which have mentoring programs.
3. Exploring the effects of burnout among black teachers in urban settings and white teachers in rural settings.

4. Exploring the effects of burnout among teachers at the elementary and middle school levels.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who have experienced burnout and their transformational learning experiences because of burnout. Because of conducting this study, one may conclude the following about the high school teachers who responded to this study. Because of the demanding nature within the field of teaching, the inability to handle stress and the adverse conditions of burnout affecting teachers can significantly alter the quality of classroom performance and class management required for student achievement.

1. The emotional and mental investments are needed characteristics in motivation student learning. Consequently, the well-being good teachers may be at risk along with the stamina needed to support their clients (i.e., students, parents, colleagues) if stress is not controlled. Becoming a competent, self-controlled, and committed teacher requires on-going psychological development.
2. For the respondents in this study, the teacher/student is most important for effective student achievement. Teachers have to learn to develop and preserve/protect their passion to motivate students while also fulfilling other expected job responsibilities. Mentally strong teachers with caring attitudes are distinguishing features that are learned behaviors. Seeing the value in other interpersonal relationships, having supportive and instructional mentors, and adopting measures of stress-reducing activities are essential for the well-being

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APPENDIX A

Division of Educational Leadership
And Policy Studies
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St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499
Telephone: 314-516-5941

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities
"What is the Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout?"

Participant _____ HSC Approval Number _____

Principal Investigator Julius R. Sims I P I's Phone Number 341-298-3704

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Julius R. Sims I and sponsored by the advisor, Dr. Paulette Isaac-Savage. The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who experienced burnout along with their transformational learning experiences.

2. Your participation will be a one-on-one interview, which will be conducted on campus. Approximately 8-10 teachers may be involved in this study. Teachers will be asked to share their personal experiences while implementing their strategies for coping with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

The amount of time involved in your participation will be one hour, and will be audio recorded for later transcription and analyzing of the data you and others provide. You will receive a $5.00 gift card for Panera Bread Company for your time.

There are no known risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge and importance of having measures of coping employed to help preserve the quality of classroom teaching and other professional services.
5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or withdraw your consent at any time. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or withdraw. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.
6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity

will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study. By agreeing to participate, you understand and agree that your data may be shared with other researchers and educators in the form of presentations and/or publications. In rare instances, a researcher's study must undergo an audit or program evaluation by an oversight agency (such as the Office for Human Research Protection) that would lead to disclosure of your data as well as any other information collected by the researcher. In addition, all data will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a locked office.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Principal Investigator, Julius Sims at (314) 853-4048 or jcsims84@sbcglobal.net or Dr. Paulette Isaac-Savage at (314) 516-5941 or EPIsaac@umsl.edu. You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the Office of Research Administration at the University of MO-St. Louis at (314) 516-5897.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I hereby consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature
Date

Signature of Investigator or Designee
Date

APPENDIX B

OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Emotional Exhaustion Questions (EE)

1. Describe the job-related factors that led to the emotional and mental conditions of being frustrated and burnout. How did these conditions affect your job performance?
2. How successful or unsuccessful you were coping with your negative feelings, actions, and attitude? Describe. What types of things or strategies did you use for coping and why?
3. Has job stress and your emotional overload affected you as a person? How did your employed strategies for coping help you?

Depersonalization Questions (DPZ)

1. Describe the work-related conditions and/or teacher responsibilities that generated a lack of care or concern towards your work and students. How successful were you using any preventive measures for coping?
2. What coping strategies have you used to prevent job negativity and callousness toward those in your work environment?
3. How have you changed as a person because of your experiences with EE and DPZ? Describe your personal past and present perceptions. How has your job performance and teacher/student relationship changed?

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please complete the following background information.

1. **Teaching Status** (circle one): Full Time Part Time

2. **Age**

   24-30 _____ 45-51_____ 65 and over_____

   31-37 _____ 52-58_____

   38-44 _____ 59-64_____

3. **Gender**

   Female_____ Male____

4. **Race/Ethnicity:**

   American Indian or Alaska Native_____ Asian_____ White_____

   Black or African American_____ Hispanic or Latino_____ Other _____

5. **History of Teaching** (Please indicate the number of years taught at each):

   Elementary education _____ High School_____

   Middle School/Jr. High _____ Home-Schooling _____

   Post-Secondary Education _____ (please specify):_____

6. **List the subject or subjects you are currently teaching:**

7. **Please indicate highest degree obtained:**

   Bachelor's_____ Master's Degree_____ Educational Specialist_____

   Doctorate_____

APPENDIX D

INTRODUCTION OF STUDY TO THE FACULTY

To: The U-City High School Teachers

From: Julius Sims, Retired Teacher, & Doctoral Candidate

Dear Faculty Member,

My name is Julius Sims, a retired teacher that served in this district for over 30 years (Hanley Jr. High, Brittany Middle, and U-City High). I am currently a graduate student at University of Missouri-St. Louis pursuing a degree in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, with an emphasis in Adult & Higher Education. As a dissertation study, I have selected "What is the Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout?" I am interested in the stress, burnout, coping strategies, and transformational learning experiences of high school teachers that have dealt with burnout. After briefly introducing the study to the staff here at the high school, I will ask randomly selected teachers to share their point of view along with employed coping strategies that alleviated the feelings associated with work-related emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (i.e., components of the burnout syndrome).

My study is complementary to many past and present studies that investigated the kinds of coping strategies teachers employed that allowed them to deal with job burnout while becoming more effective with their work and students. Participation will be a volunteer bases for those that qualify. For data collecting purposes, I will ask all volunteers to participate in interviews. Your decision to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the district. Presenting further information about the study will take place at a faculty meeting through the authorization of the Head Principal. During that pre-determined faculty meeting, inquiries will be entertained along with an invitation to the potential study participants. Participants for the study will involve those teachers who are willing to share their burnout experiences, new perspectives, and coping strategies. I honor what you do for kids and certainly appreciate your time. I truly understand how the closing of the school year can be so demanding and filled with administrative expectations and teacher responsibilities.

Peace,

Julius Sims

APPENDIX E

REQUEST PERMISSION FROM SUPERINTENDENT TO CONDUCT STUDY

(LETTER AND EMAIL)

Dr. Joylynn Pruitt

Superintendent of Schools
University City, Missouri 63130

Dear Dr. Pruitt,

My name is Julius Sims and I am proud to have been part of the esteemed teaching faculty of the School District of University City. In June 2010, I retired from the district after serving thirty-one years (Hanley Jr. High, Brittany Woods Middle, Sr. High). Currently, I am a doctoral candidate at University of Missouri-St. Louis pursuing a degree in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies with an emphasis in Adult & Higher Education. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Paulette Isaac-Savage, episaac@umsl.edu, (314) 516-5941. As a dissertation study I have selected, "What is The Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout".

Throughout the study, I propose to gain an understanding of the coping strategies employed by secondary teachers who experienced the effects of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (i.e., conditions known to the burnout phenomenon). While exploring the affects these conditions had upon teachers, the study will solicit rich detailed descriptions of teachers' point of view regarding their work, stress, burnout, their lived experiences, and their personal dilemma that stimulated a different point of view (i.e. transformation). Over the years, stress and burnout have become a more pressing issue among many teachers of the field of teaching.
It is my hope to obtain your permission to conduct this study with your teachers at the high school. My initial meeting with the high school principal will consist of reiterating the purpose of the study and discussing the opportunities (i.e., staff meetings) available to introduce the study to the teaching faculty. After the process of randomly selecting a small number of volunteer participants (8-10), in-depth interviews will be scheduled and conducted. Teachers will focus and reflect on the job-related stressors, demanding classroom duties, and their strategies for coping. Privately contacting all selected volunteers will afford me the opportunity to inform them with additional information and instructions. I will be mindful to maintain measures of

confidentiality.

If there are any questions or concerns, please afford me the opportunity to clarify or answer your inquiries. I can be reached at (314) 853-4048 or e-mailed at jcsims84@sbcglobal.net. Understanding the faculty and administrative responsibilities that exist near the closing of a school year, I will make precautions not to interfere with the job performances and/or tasks of teachers. Thank you for allowing me to conduct this study. I greatly honor your consent.

Sincerely,

Julius Sims

Graduate Student

University of Missouri-St. Louis

cc: Dale Burgdorf, Head Principal

cc: Julie Ward, Administrative Assistant

APPENDIX F

IRB APPROVAL (EMAIL)

Date: 06/11/2012 09:12 AM
To: "Paulette Isaac-Savage" <episaac@umsl.edu>, "Celeste Hazley" <hazleyc@umsl.edu>, "Julius Sims" <jcsims84@sbcglobal.net>
From: "Carl Bassi" <no-reply@irbnet.org>
Reply To: "Carl Bassi" <bassi@umsl.edu>

Please note that University of Missouri-St. Louis IRB has published the following Board Document on IRBNet:

Project Title: [238883-1] What is the Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout?
Principal Investigator: Julius Sims, Ed.D.
Submission Type: New Project
Date Submitted: June 1, 2012

Document Type: Expedited Approval Form
Document Description: Expedited Approval Form
Publish Date: June 11, 2012
The IRBNet Support Team

www.irbnet.org

Subject: IRBNet Board Action
Please note that University of Missouri-St. Louis IRB has taken the following action on IRBNet:
Project Title: [238883-1] What is the Transformational Learning Experience of Secondary Teachers Who Have Dealt with Burnout?
Principal Investigator: Julius Sims, Ed.D.
Submission Type: New Project
Date Submitted: June 1, 2012
Action: APPROVED
Effective Date: June 11, 2012
Review Type: Expedited Review