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Stress and the Resiliency of Teachers

Michelle L. Abiyou
University of Missouri-Saint Louis, mlh398@mail.umsl.edu

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Michelle Leigh Abiyou
B.S.Ed., Southwest Missouri State University, 2000
M.Ed., University of Missouri-St. Louis, 2002

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Advisory Committee

Nancy Singer, Ph.D.
Chairperson

Amber Candela, Ph.D.

Vanessa Garry, Ph.D.

Susan Catapano, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This study used a mixed methods approach to examine the factors that cause teachers' stress--specifically burnout and the strategies teachers use to become resilient. The study took place in a Midwest, rural school. Previous research suggests that stress is a common predictor of burnout (Torelli & Gmelch, 1992). Researchers have shown that teaching about stress and strategies to cope with stress are effective (Wu et al., 2006). However, there is limited research on the strategies used to cope effectively with teachers' stress and burnout. The Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey was used to assess the stress levels of sixty-one rural educators. The results of the study show that the population experienced greater Emotional Exhaustion and, therefore, were at a higher risk for burnout.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my dissertation work to my mother, Pat. The unconditional love and support you have given has been indescribable. You were the rock that built my foundation, the one who believed in me, cheering from the sidelines. Your silent whispers from Heaven encouraged and pushed me through this journey. Your legacy lives on, through me.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Sintayehu. I could not have done this without your love and support. You are the better half to our whole.

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Chapter One

Overwhelming evidence in the literature indicates that teaching is one of the most stressful professions (Jennett, Harris, Mesibov, 2003; NCES, 2004; Rottier, Kelly, Tomhave, 2001; E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik, 2010). According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2004), there is a 15% teacher mobility rate each year. Approximately 7% of teachers leave the profession and an additional 8% transfer to a different school each year, accounting for the 15% percent. Stress-inducing conditions, lack of support, and negative working conditions are among the reasons teachers cite for leaving (NCES, 2004). Within the next ten years of a teacher's career, mobility rates increased from 15% to 16%. With 3 or less years of teaching experience, the gap widens; 80% of teachers stayed at their school, while 13% of the teachers transferred to another school and 7% of teachers quit teaching altogether (Goldring et. al, 2014).

According to Leung & Lee (2006), exhaustion due to burnout is a high predictor of teachers leaving the profession. Job burnout is one of the first reactions to stress; therefore, teachers should be monitored frequently so that burnout can either be eliminated or reduced (Zhong, You, Gan, Zhang, and Lu, 2009).

Research shows there is a strong relationship between stress and overall health. Stress is also known to correlate to unhealthy behaviors such as self-medication, avoidance, etc. According to the American Psychological Association (2012), participants' responses from the Stress in America survey indicate high levels of stress and a reliance on unhealthy behaviors to cope with stress (p. 5). Kyriacou (2001) supports the notion that teaching is a stressful job, reporting that about 25% of

schoolteachers rate their job as very stressful (p. 29). Teachers experiencing high levels of stress may turn to unhealthy behaviors such as excessive drinking, smoking and avoidance behavior (Sinclair, 1992).

Several research studies show the effects of burnout (Hansen, Sullivan, 2003; Torelli, Gmelch, 1992; Zhong et. al, 2009). In a study conducted by Torelli and Gmelch (1992), there is evidence that indicates stress is a common predictor of burnout. Another study conducted proves that burnout is the highest level among job stress, burnout, depression symptoms, and physical health (Zhong et. al, 2009). Emotional exhaustion, an element of burnout, is caused by feelings of being overstretched (Hansen & Sullivan, 2003).

Because teaching is such a high-stress level profession, issues of burnout must be addressed if the United States is to keep a consistent, healthy, and engaged teaching workforce.

According to Maslach et al. (1996):

> Future work may want to focus on those who have successfully avoided the experience of job burnout by examining the coping mechanisms they have develop to stay energized, positively engaged with their students, and fulfillment through their work. Consider the opposite end of the MBI scales as a definite state of "engagement with work" will father this research objective. (p. 31)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that increase or decrease teacher stress and burnout and to determine what strategies teachers use to become

resilient to stress. In gaining a better understanding of the conditions causing teacher stress, I was able to transfer this knowledge to the suggestions for effective professional development programs to address stress for in-service teachers and suggest steps to teach preservice teachers to recognize and prevent stress.

This study is situated in several frameworks including Self-Efficacy from Bandura's (1989) Social Cognitive Theory and Bullough's (2005) Positioning Theory expanded by developmental psychologists Harré & Van Langenhove. Self-efficacy is one's belief in their ability to be successful. "Based on social cognitive theory teacher self-efficacy may be conceptualized as individual teachers' beliefs in their own ability to plan, organize, and carry out activities that are required to attain given educational goals" (E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik, 2010, p. 1059).

Bullough's Positioning Theory (2005) is based on moral development. Resilient teachers position themselves to persist and endure; they are constantly changing their strategies, experimenting with new techniques in order to become successful (Bullough, 2005). Developmental psychologists Harré & Van Langenhove (1999) further this theory by expanding resiliency to include a person's desire to do good, to rise to a challenge, and to display moral development. Self-efficacy is crucial to the effectiveness and longevity in the classroom.

Teachers who have a solid foundation of their content area and display self-efficacy can influence struggling students to higher levels of achievement. These frameworks provided tool through which to view and analyze the data gathered in this study. Additionally, the frameworks helped to answer my research questions (Bandura, 1989, p. 66).

Research Questions

The specific research questions relevant to the purpose of this study are:

1. What are the factors that cause teacher stress?
2. What strategies do teachers use to deal with teacher stress?
3. How do the strategies differ from teachers who have high teacher stress to those who have low teachers stress?
4. Is there a difference between degrees of burnout when comparing among three components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment?

Significance of the Study

Research in the workplace reveals that professional development about stress and coping strategies are very effective (Borg & Falzon, 1990). However, there is limited research on how teachers cope with stress and burnout (Wu, J. Li, M. Wang, M. Wang, & H. Li, 2006).

Stress can contribute greatly to job burnout; therefore, teachers should be monitored frequently so that burnout can either be eliminated or reduced (Zhong, et al., 2009). The need for this study is established by outlining the factors that cause teacher stress, along with identifying strategies teachers use to cope with stress. As a current educator, I have observed and experienced the negative consequences that can develop from teacher stress. It is in my best interest to investigate such phenomenons to better prepare myself in the field to both personally guard against burnout and also help colleagues to experience burnout. Also, developing a clearer understanding of teacher

stress, how it is manifested, and how it can be avoided will supply me with the additional knowledge to help guide and support my fellow teachers.

Definitions

In order to contextualize the study, certain words are defined. The following definitions will be used in this study:

Administration: Refers to both principals and assistant principals.

Burnout: Extreme exhaustion, both physical and psychological, resulting in feelings of weakness and incompetence (Hansen & Sullivan, 2003).

Coping Action: The process of successfully managing in a difficult situation.

Strategies: A method used in achieving a goal, usually over a duration of time.

Resiliency: The ability to be able to bounce back or recover from difficult situations and challenges.

Rural: A place with a population with less than 2500 people (Beeson & Strange, 2000).

Teacher Stress: The negative emotions experienced by a teacher as a result of their work or workplace (Kyriacou, 2001).

Delimitations

The researcher wishes to acknowledge that there are certain delimitations to this research. One delimitation is the small number of participants. There were only sixty-one participants because the researcher studied one small rural school district. Another delimitation is the research was conducted during one particular school year.

Assumptions

Although it may be difficult for teachers to openly admit to feeling stressed, it was assumed the participants in this study were truthful and accurate when filling out the surveys and questionnaires.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Teacher Stress

Forty-two percent of educators report high stress levels (Smith et al. 2000). Literature reveals the importance of autonomy to guard against the effects of stress; teacher stress builds if teachers feel they have no voice in their classrooms (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Many school districts have attempted to correct some of these ailments. Some school districts started using site-based management, allowing teachers and principals to make decisions rather than all decisions being directed by a centralized body such as a superintendent or school board. Other school districts are experimenting with new innovative models such as peer coaching, integrating technology, increased parental involvement, and extending the school year. It is believed that when stakeholders are involved in the decision making process, teachers will feel less stress and experience less burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Benmansour (1998) conducted a research study with 153 high school teachers regarding job satisfaction, coping strategies, and stress among teachers. According to Benmansour (1998) the following are the main factors of stress:

- Teaching pupils who lack motivation
- Maintaining discipline
- Time pressures and workload
- Coping with change
- Dealings with colleagues
- Self-esteem and status
- Administration and management
- Role conflict and ambiguity

- Poor working conditions

Researcher Albrecht et al. (2009) conducted a mixed method study with 776 special education teachers who worked with emotional and behavior disorder students (EBD). The purpose of this study was to identify common factors causing EBD teachers to leave the profession as well as resiliency factors for those who stayed.

Albrecht's et al. (2009) findings revealed that out of 651 respondents 140 stated their intentions were to leave their job within the next two years. "Five main themes emerged from their comments, including lack of support already described. Other reasons described included promotion and better job opportunity; stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction; further academic pursuit; and approaching retirement (p. 1016). The other 511 respondents stated they planned to continue in their present position. "Five main themes emerged in the comments given by 511 respondents, including the support system provided by administrators, other teachers, and parents" (p. 1016).

In conclusion, Albrecht et al. found that EBD teachers who had six or fewer years of teaching experience would most likely leave the profession within the next two years. Also, the teachers who indicated staying for the next two years "reported using integrated methodological strategies for behavior management and modification" (Albrecht et al., 2009, 1017). Teachers who have self-efficacy may feel they have freedom to experiment with other strategies, which may in turn keep them more engaged with their practice.

Burnout

Burnout is defined as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981: Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Educator burnout is an ongoing field of study for several reasons. Teaching is a highly visible profession, meaning teachers' work and outside pressure is on display. Teachers

are pressured to expand their responsibilities beyond education by being involved with many after-school activities and responsibilities that stretch beyond their role, and teachers' perceived lack of credibility and inadequate funding are some of the reasons for teachers' burnout, and contribute to them leaving the profession. The pressures on teachers stretch far beyond the classroom.

According to Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter (2016):

> Teachers are often expected to correct social problems (for example, drug, alcohol, and sexual abuse), educate students in academic subjects while also developing job skills, provide enrichment activities, meet the individual needs of students with a wide range of abilities, and encourage students' moral and ethical development. (p. 29)

Burnout occurs at the point of not being able to handle prolonged stress (Jennett, Harris, & Mesibov, 2003). Research shows a correlation between burnout and motivation (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007) and the exhaustion component of burnout predicts teachers' leaving the profession (Leung & Lee, 2006).

According to E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik (2010):

> Teacher burnout depersonalization refers to negative, cynical attitudes and feelings about one's students or colleagues. Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a tendency that teachers evaluate themselves negatively as well as a general feeling that they are no longer doing a meaningful and important job. (p. 1060)

Resiliency is important to overcoming burnout. Therefore, one of the research questions that pertained to this study answered the question: What strategies do teachers use to deal with teacher stress?

Coping with Teacher Stress

The strategies teachers use to cope with stress or to help build teacher resiliency can be identified in two categories: Direct Action Techniques and Palliative Techniques (Kyriacou, 2001). Direct action techniques refer to the action teachers can do to reduce stress. This may include: Self-organizing, obtaining new knowledge, skills, and practices; managing or organizing oneself more effectively; negotiating with colleagues to help deal with the situation. Palliative Techniques do not address the problem; however, techniques used in this category are aimed at lessening the feeling of stress. These techniques could be either mental or physical strategies (Kyriacou, 2001). Sinclair (1992) suggested some Palliative Techniques are dangerous. These techniques include excessive drinking, smoking and avoidance behavior. In extreme cases where teachers who used Palliative Techniques have not been successful, they may seek medical attention using medicine and/or start a reoccurring pattern of absenteeism (Dinham, 1992). As a result, concerns surrounding students' academic achievement surface, particularly the literacy development of students. As teachers' absenteeism increases, students' academic achievement decreases (Hoglund, Klingle, & Hosan, 2015).

Borg and Falzon (1990) identified strategies teachers use to cope with stress that includes both Direct Action Techniques and Palliative Techniques. The three most commonly used strategies are relaxing after work, avoid confrontations, and to stop or eliminate stress or the source before it begins (Borg & Falzon, 1990, p. 50). Other

coping strategies suggestions adapted from Kabat-Zinn (1991) are as follows: Try to relax during work breaks and after work, surround oneself with enjoyable and pleasant people, and be cognitive of one's feelings and emotions throughout the day.

Researchers Huismann, Singer, and Catapano (2010) conducted a qualitative research study with 12 novice urban teachers to determine what the teachers deemed supportive during their first years of teaching. All participants taught in the same urban school district, ranged in age 21 to 50, and taught grades ranging from kindergarten to 4th grade (Huismann et al., 2010). Out of this study seven themes emerged. "These themes included: significant adult relationships, mentoring others, problem-solving, hope, high expectations, sociocultural awareness, and professional development" (Huismann et al., 2010, p. 487).

Murphy (2005) documented a new teacher's perseverance and resiliency when faced with administration conflicts. After being denied basic services as a first-year teacher (classroom time set up and class roster, mentor support, and administration support), the new teacher persevered and sought support from the union, the school social worker, and school counselor, while bridging support from the students' parents. Murphy and the new teacher documented the students' progression throughout the year. Murphy (2005) believed the key to the first year teacher's success was her belief that every child was capable of learning. Perhaps just changing a strategy, or using a different approach, students would be successful learning the skill.

In an article by Green-Reese, Johnson, and Campbell (2001) on teacher job satisfaction, the researchers identify teachers with fewer than five years of experience as having higher stress levels (p. 247). According to Johnson et al. (2010), there is no

greater time than the present time to study teacher resilience. They state, "Research on early career teacher resilience is particularly significant at this time given the current economic, social and political context which surrounds the teaching profession. There is no dispute that these are tough times to be a teacher" (p. 1). In their study, their findings identified conditions that help support early career teacher resilience. They grouped the conditions into five areas: Relationships, School Culture, Teacher Identity, Teachers' Work, and Policies and Practices. As a result of their findings, Johnson et al. (2010) created a framework that supports early career teacher resilience.

Recruitment and retention are ongoing problems for many school districts. Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) is no stranger to new teachers leaving the district. Researcher Saffold (2006) reported MPS lose 50% of their new teachers within the first three years of teaching. Saffold conducted a study to research the importance of mentoring and teacher relationships. Saffold documented three main categories that created a positive mentor and new teacher relationship and may impact teacher retention. Saffold's (2006) categories were as follows: "building self confidence in teachers, developing competence in beginner's ability to teach, and engaging with collegial networks to support teaching" (p.257).

As a result of having mentors, data showed that 84% of MPS new teachers reported having an increase in their self-confidence and 95% of new teachers reported their teaching competence was improved. Saffold reported the new teachers' "stories emphasized that their learning and retention in teaching was linked to their personal and professional relationships with their mentor" (p. 260).

Attrition and Resiliency

A major debate in education is whether teacher quality impacts student achievement. Goldhaber and Anthony (2003) suggest student achievement is impacted; however, previously most believed the curriculum—rather than the teacher--had a higher impact on student achievement. Goldhaber and Anthony stated, "Research has shown that among education factors and school resources (e.g., investments in technology, educational materials, class size), teacher quality has the largest impact on student achievement" (p. 14). Currently there are new data sources related to teacher effectiveness and teacher quality. Based on results, there is an overwhelming consensus that teacher quality impacts student learning and there is a wide variety in teacher quality (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2003).

Contrary to what Goldhaber and Anthony believe, researchers Hanushek and Rivkin (2008) show the movement of quality teachers has little to no impact by investigating teacher quality differences by transition status and school characteristics. They confirm similar findings in regards to teacher attrition in lower performing schools. They argue that not only are the lower performing schools not losing the highly qualified teachers, it's quite the opposite. Their findings reveal the teachers leaving the lower performing schools are less effective than the teachers who remain teaching. On a larger scale, their study confirms the finding that teachers who left the Texas Public School System are less effective than their colleagues (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2008).

Researchers have shown teacher burnout also affects the students. In 2015, Hoglund, Klingle & Hosan conducted a study with 65 elementary school teachers and their 461 students. Their findings demonstrated "being in a classroom with higher aggregate externalizing behaviors relative to the average classroom and having a teacher

who reported more burnout relative to the average teacher appears to be a source of double jeopardy for children's relationship quality with teachers and friends, school engagement, and academic skills" (p. 352).

Linking the significance between teacher burnout affecting students, Roffey (2012) conducted a qualitative study in six Australian schools to determine the possibility of improving teacher resiliency and specifically exploring the factors that support both teachers and students. Results reveal "that relational quality and social capital is a major factor in resilience and wellbeing throughout a school. What is in students' best interests is also likely to be in the interests of teacher wellbeing" and "it is also clear that whole school work must support the wellbeing of teachers in order to promote wellbeing for pupils and that there are synergies between these strands of intervention" (Roffey, 2012, p. 15).

Even though teacher stress and burnout can ultimately affect commitment and attrition, some researchers believe attrition may be necessary. Torres (2012) studied teacher commitment and attrition in both public schools and Catholic schools. Torres stated, "Leaving early is not inherently negative for schools and students. Some attrition is good and necessary. For example, schools should not seek to retain early career teachers who believe they are ineffective if indeed they are not reaching their students" (p. 148).

As this great debate between teacher attrition and student achievement unfolds, one thing stand true: teachers have a stressful job and without coping strategies or the ability to be resilient there is a greater chance teachers will leave the profession. As researchers have pointed out, there are several reasons for teacher attrition. Ultimately the leadership team within the school has to decide what is best for the students and their academic needs. The bottom line is effective teaching leads to academic growth.

Researcher Torres (2012) said it best: "If schools can find ways to sustain teacher quality and effectiveness, they stand a better chance of not only improving student achievement but also retaining teachers" (p. 150).

Rural Schools

Rural schools, defined as a place with a population with less than 2500 people, are attended by 25% of public school children (Beeson & Strange, 2000). Rural schools are often small in size and strong relationships among the teachers, the students, and the community (Beeson & Strange, 2000).

Researchers Rottier, Kelly, and Tomhave (2001) studied teacher burnout in small and rural schools. Their findings reveal a significant amount of teachers are not satisfied with teaching. 46% of the teachers revealed the lack of support from administration, while 93% of the teachers reported decline of students' behavior in regards of being respectful. They suggested even with their unsatisfying job, experienced rural teachers, who are rooted in the district, would continue to teach in the same school district.

Rottier et al (2001) stated,

> They and their families are a part of these communities. Although unhappy with a particular school district, they may feel that because of their long-term commitment to stay in one place they are "stuck" and worse, they see no hope in changing their situation. (p. 77)

Researcher Abel (1999) conducted a comparison study of teacher sources of stress and burnout between rural and urban teachers. While some stressors did not show a significant difference, the reported stressors for both rural and urban areas were student behavior, time management, working conditions, and support from colleagues (1999).

Abel (1999) also reported difference between the studies conducted in urban areas compared to rural areas. The number of studies in an urban area is significantly higher compared to a rural area. This is important because it demonstrates the need for future research in rural schools.

Research clearly demonstrates a link among teacher stress, burnout, and resiliency. Teacher stress and burnout undoubtedly contribute to teacher attrition. If we are to staff U.S. classrooms in the future, supporting teachers with healthy working conditions is paramount.

Chapter Three: Methods

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that impede or enhance teacher stress and burnout and to determine what strategies teachers use to become resilient to stress. Using a survey and semi-structured interview, this researcher sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors that cause teacher stress?
2. What strategies do teachers use to deal with teacher stress?
3. How do the strategies differ from teachers who have high burnout to those who have low burnout?
4. Is there a difference between degrees of burnout when comparing between three components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment?

A mixed-methods design was used to determine the factors that cause teachers stress, specifically burnout, and the strategies teachers use to become resilient. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods combines the "what" with the "why", allowing the data to be explained in greater detail (Roberts, 2010). This study relied primarily on qualitative data; however, there was a small quantitative survey that determined the degree of burnout and compared it to the frequency of Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. This researcher relied on interview questions to identify the strategies used by teachers to handle stress and how the strategies differed from teachers who have high burnout to those who have low burnout.

Participants

Participants in this study were selected using a convenience sample that is criterion based. The criteria included teachers who were employed in the same district and who were willing to participate in the research study. Participants consisted of sixty-one certified schoolteachers from the same school district located in a rural, Midwest school district. The town itself is considered rural by definition as it has a population less than 2,500 (Beeson & Strange, 2000). Besides the school district, the main employers for the town are one major retail store, a hospital, and a handful of factories. The school district consists of four buildings: 1 elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school, and 1 vocational building. There are a total of 178 faculty and staff members, of which 96 are certified teachers. Total enrollment for the school district is slightly over 1000 students and approximately 59% of the students quality for eligible of free or reduced-price lunch. The graduating class averages fewer than 100 graduates per year, with a graduation rate of 91.51%.

The researcher actively selected the most productive sample to answer the research question using a purposeful sample. This productive sample is more of an intellectual strategy, as opposed to using a simple demographic stratification. The researcher is an employee in the school district; therefore, the researcher may know the subjects. The researcher protected participant privacy by using a pseudonym to replace the participants' names when the MBI-ES was analyzed. Transcribed interviews were also anonymized.

Locating the Research

The researcher herself is a school district employee. She has 17 years of teaching experience, with 2 years in this district. She teaches in the elementary school and has connections in the middle and high school as well.

Instruments and Data Collection

Two instruments were used in this study: 1.) Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form (MBI-ES) 2.) Interview protocol. Samples of both of these instruments can be found in Appendices B and C.

Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form (MBI-ES).

Christina Maslach (1981) developed the most commonly used theoretical theory of burnout. The MBI-ES instrument indicates how educators view their job and colleagues. The instrument consists of 22 items using a seven-point Likert Scale (0=Never; 6= every day). MBI-ES is measured by three components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment (Maslach, 1981). Each component is measured by a separate subscale. The Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscale consists of nine items and measures individuals being emotionally exhausted and overextended. The Depersonalization (Dp) subscale consists of five items and measures the lack of feeling or impersonal response to instruction. The Personal Accomplishment (PA) subscale consists of eight items and measures an individual's feeling of competence and successfulness of teaching (Maslach et al., 1996).

Reliability has shown to be moderately strong. The reliability coefficient for Emotional Exhaustion subscale was .90, Depersonalization subscale was .79, and Personal Accomplishment subscale was .71.

Maslach et al. (1996) states,

> Overall, longitudinal studies of the MBI-HSS have found a high degree of consistency within each subscale that does not seem to diminish markedly from a period of one month to a year. The stability is consistent with the MBI-HSS's purpose of measuring an enduring state (p. 12).

Convergent validity has been demonstrated through the correlation of burnout scores with behavior ratings (peer ratings), characteristics of job burnout, and personal outcomes. Discriminate validity has been demonstrated through the correlation of burnout scores and job satisfaction (Maslach et al., 1996).

Interview Protocol

In addition to the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form, participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview protocol adapted (with permission) from "Resiliency to success: supporting novice urban teachers" (Huisman, Catapano, & Singer, 2010). The interview protocol was developed by Huisman, Catapano, & Singer. The interview protocol consisted of 14 questions in the areas of sources of support, resiliency, rural teaching, teaching effectiveness, and school support (See Appendix C).

This research was conducted with approval from the university Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants provided signed informed consent and the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form was sent to each participant. Participants received a phone call from the researcher informing them that the survey was sent. Participants were asked to complete MBI-ES within one week from receiving it. Once the participant completed the MBI-ES, the researcher interviewed each participant using a

semi-structured interview protocol. If the participant didn't respond within 2 weeks, the researcher made a phone call to the participant. Each interview was conducted off school locations. The interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participants; however, the researcher offered several times and locations. All interviews were successfully completed on time. To prevent access by unauthorized personnel the transcripts, codes, results from MBI-ES, along with any information related to the study is only located on the researcher's personal computers, which are password protected.

Data Analysis

Using Excel, the researcher computed descriptive statistics for analysis of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form. Participants' scores in either severe burnout or little burnout were measured in three categories. Composite means and standard deviations were computed for Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment.

The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researcher used microanalysis to open code and axial code. The researcher completed a microanalysis of data and applied coding methods in a grounded theory manner. Inter-rater reliability was used in the coding phases to ensure there was not any bias. Another person who read and coded also verified 100% percent of the qualitative data analysis. There was 100% agreement in coding.

To analyze the qualitative data the researcher used the following steps:

- Initial reading of all transcripts
- Development of codes
- Transforming codes into concepts

- Development of categories
- Articulate relationship between categories
- Review of total transcript to ascertain validity of findings
- Report of findings

Trustworthiness

The key to research is producing results that are trustworthy. Trustworthiness can be obtained in a variety of ways. For this study, the researcher used member checks to ensure internal validity. After the interviews, the researcher asked for feedback on the initial findings from some of the interviewees. The feedback correlated with what the initial findings revealed.

According to Maxwell (2005):

> This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your won biases and misunderstanding of what you observed. (p. 111)

It is also important to recognize the researcher as an instrument in the study. The findings in the study are as the researcher understood it. To the extent possible, the researcher remained neutral with her feelings. Adequate engagement in data collection was used. The researcher had enough information the data or emerging findings reoccur, to the point of saturation.

Study Limitations

While it is hoped that this study's results will provide beneficial information on teacher stress, burnout, and resiliency, there are some limitations. The study has limited generalizability. Only one district, located in one Midwestern state of the United States was included in this study, results were from one current school year which was one time of the year (end of the year), individual results were based upon a volunteer sample, and the study used a small sample size; therefore, other researchers should take note of these constraints before generalizing to other populations.

In the chapter that follows, the researcher will provide more detail on the data analysis and the results of that analysis.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis

Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the quantitative and qualitative data analysis collected in this study that pertained to the factors of teachers' stress and the resiliency of rural teachers. This mixed methods study measured teacher burnout using a 22-item Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES) and qualitative data acquired through semi-structured interviews.

The first part of this chapter identifies the research problem, and provides a description of the research participants, the survey data, and the interview data. The last part of the chapter outlines the survey and interview results. The research questions and findings are embedded throughout the chapter.

Research Problem

The problem addressed in this research study was to identify the factors that impede or enhance teacher stress and burnout and determine what strategies teachers use to become resilient to stress.

Research Participants

The research participants were certified public school teachers located in a rural, Midwest school district. The criteria used for participant selection were as follows: Teachers in the same school district, and willing to participate in the research study. The number of years of teaching experience ranged from 1 year to 27 years with an average of 13 years. Table 1 shows the highest level of education of the participants.

Table 1: Highest Level of Education

Level of Education	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	43%
Master's Degree	56%
Doctor of Philosophy	1%

Survey Data

There were 66 teachers who received the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES). From the total, 61 of the teachers completed the MSI-ES survey (N=61), resulting in a response rate of 92.4% of the quantitative instrument. All 61 respondents completed the MBI-ES producing in response rate of 100%.

Interview Data

Seventeen participants were selected for a follow-up interview. The participants mirrored the demographics of the school district with years of experience and level of education. The average years of teaching experience for the school district and the 17 interview participants was 13 years. The school district's level of education was 43% bachelor's degree, 56% master's degree, and 1% doctoral degree. The interview participants' level of education was 42% bachelor's degree and 58% master's degree. All 17 teachers selected for the interview agreed to participate resulting in a response rate of 100% of the qualitative instrument.

Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES)

The initial data analysis used to study Emotional Exhaustion (being emotionally exhausted and overextended), Depersonalization (the lack of feeling or impersonal response to instruction), and Personal Accomplishment (individual's feeling of competence and successfulness of teaching) scaled scores was Mindgarden, Inc., the

administrators of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (Maslach et al., 1996).

According to the MBI-ES manual, there are two ways to interpret the data. The first way is to use the mean of the subtest score and analyze where it falls on the 7-point scale (Table 2). For example, if the Emotional Exhaustion mean was a 5, it could be interpreted as the respondent felt emotional exhaustion a few times week. The higher the number, the greater the frequency. The second way to interpret the data is to compare the subscale scores to the normative scores (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 2016). The researcher used both ways to analyze data.

Table 2: MBI-ES 7-Point Scale

Item 8 I feel burn out from my work.							
How often?	0 Never	1 A few times a year or less	2 Once a month or less	3 A few times a month	4 Once a week	5 A few times a week	6 Every day

The analyses of MBI-ES scaled scores (shown in Table 3 with the standard deviations) are as follows: Emotional Exhaustion 2.8, Depersonalization 1.3, and Personal Accomplishment 4.7. Shown in Table 4, the participants' overall scaled scores indicate higher emotional exhaustion compared to the normative group. These results answered the research question "Is there a difference between degrees of burnout when comparing among three components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment?" Emotional Exhaustion for the sample was higher than the norm, Depersonalization was below, and Personal Accomplishment scored higher. These data show that teachers feel connected to their students (low Depersonalization score),

they feel satisfaction with their classroom (Personal Accomplishment), but they also exhibit strong Emotional Exhaustion scores which may be indicative of the fact participants felt there were many things outside of their control. For instance, teachers' Emotional Exhaustion can be tied to testing mandates, issues of poverty that affect their students, and directives from administrators.

Table 3: MBI-ES Frequency and Standard Deviations

Category	Frequency Score	Standard Deviation
Emotional Exhaustion	2.8	1.3
Depersonalization	1.3	1.1
Personal Accomplishment	4.7	0.9

Table 4: MBI-ES Comparison to Norms

Category	Participant Scores	Normative Scores
Emotional Exhaustion	2.8	2.4
Depersonalization	1.3	2.2
Personal Accomplishment	4.7	4.2

The three components of the MBI-ES are measured in a different subtest. Emotional Exhaustion with frequency of 27 or higher, Depersonalization with frequency of 14, and Personal Accomplishment frequency between 0-30 indicates high degree of burnout. Emotional Exhaustion with frequency between 17-26, Depersonalization with frequency between 9-13, and Personal Accomplishment frequency between 31-26 indicates moderate degree of burnout. Emotional Exhaustion with frequency between

0=13 higher, Depersonalization with frequency between 0-8, and Personal Accomplishment frequency of 37 or higher indicates low degree of burnout (Maslach et al., 1996). As shown on Table 5, 43 participants or 70% scored 27 or higher on Emotional Exhaustion, indicating moderate to high burnout. Eighteen participants or 30% scored high on Depersonalization. Twenty-three participants or 38% scored low to moderate on Personal Accomplishment.

The subtests indicated the participants measured high on feeling over overextended and exhausted by work demands. They measured high to low on impersonal response to students receiving instruction. The majority of the participants measured high on feelings of competence and achievement.

Table 5: MBI-ES Subtest Total Scores

Category	High	Moderate	Low
Emotional Exhaustion	28	15	18
Depersonalization	8	10	43
Personal Accomplishment	38	9	14

Tables 6, 7, and 8 show the frequency scores for the participants for each MBI-ES item by scaled score, ranging from highest to lowest. The numbers on the scale are interpreted by rating each MBI-ES item.

0-Never
1-A few times a year or less
2-Once a month or less
3-A few times a month
4-Once a week
5-A few times a week
6-Everyday

Table 6: Emotional Exhaustion

Score	Item
4	I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3.5	I feel emotionally drained from my work.
3.3	I feel frustrated by my job
3.1	I feel I am working too hard on my job.
3	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on my job.

Table 7: Depersonalization

Score	Item
1.7	I feel students blame me for some of their problems.
1.7	I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
1.6	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
0.7	I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.
0.6	I really don't care what happens to some students.

Table 8: Personal Accomplishment

Score	Item
5.1	I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.
5.0	I can easily understand how my students feel about things.
4.9	I can easily create a relaxed environment for my students.
4.8	I feel I am positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
4.7	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.
4.7	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.

Qualitative Analysis

The researcher obtained the data for the qualitative analysis after the completion of MBI-ES. The data was collected through interviews and was audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for emerging themes. The interviews were scheduled at the

convenience of the participants; however, the researcher offered several times and locations. All interviews were successfully completed on time.

Interview Participants

Seventeen certified teachers participated in a semi-structured interview. The interview protocol consisted of 14 questions in the areas of sources of support, resiliency, rural teaching, teaching effectiveness, and school support. Of the 17 teachers, the average years of experience was 13 years, ranging from 1 year to 26, reflecting the same average years of experience in the district. Table 9 shows the participants' demographics. The demographics mirror the district demographics; 58% of the teachers represent the elementary building (PreK-5th grade), 24% represent middle school (6th-8th), and 18% represent high school (9th-12th).

Table 9: Interview Participants demographics

Participant	Years of Teaching	Highest Level of Education	Building Level
A	26	Masters	Elementary
B	22	Masters	Middle
C	18	Bachelors	High School
D	18	Masters	Elementary
E	17	Masters	High School
F	17	Bachelors	Middle
G	17	Masters	Elementary
H	16	Masters	Middle
I	15	Masters	Elementary
J	13	Masters	Elementary
K	10	Masters	High School
L	10	Masters	High School
M	8	Bachelors	Elementary
N	5	Bachelors	Elementary
O	4	Bachelors	Elementary
P	1	Bachelors	Elementary
Q	1	Bachelors	Elementary

Interview Results

While analyzing the qualitative data, the researcher noted one main category, stress, and several subcategories. The subcategories for the theme of stress included: factors of stress, strategies, support, resiliency, and rural school settings.

Sources of Stress

Data collected from the participants of the qualitative study concerning factors that cause teacher stress revealed three major factors: student behaviors, colleagues, and administration. When asked about the support within the school, 60% of the participants reported they didn't have support, 27% of the participants reported they had administration support, and 13% of participants reported having support from colleagues. One participant responded, "Really this year there hasn't been any [support] at all. I'm not going to lie. It's terrible" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017). One participant stated in reference to a colleague and stress level, "I've flat out had a teacher tell my students if they listen to me, they will be lower academic performers receiving extra help for the rest of their lives. You are not going to do this strategy in my classroom. If I see it on your paper, I am going to rip up your paper and throw it in the trash. So, my administrator has intervened and tried to make it better. But once it's done… And, even talk really nasty about me to her students, and they feel like that need to tell me everything she says about me" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017).

Strategies for Handling Stress

The following is an analysis of the strategies teachers use to handle stress. Contributing to what made the participants successful in their teaching career, 70% cited their personality and their never-give-up attitude, while 29% stated it was because they

were called to teach and believed every child is capable of learning. This response directly mirrors researcher Murphy (2005) and his findings. Murphy (2005) believed the key to the first year teacher's success was her belief that every child was capable of learning. Perhaps just changing a strategy, or using a different approach, students would be successful learning the skill. The other 1% of research participants stated they self-medicate. "I take anti-anxiety medicine and I started taking that pretty early on in my teaching career because it's a lot of stress. I mean it's a huge job" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017). This echoes previous research regarding the Palliative Technique that teachers use to cope with stress and build teacher resiliency (Kyriacou, 2001). In some cases, individuals may seek medical attention using medicine (Dinham, 1992).

Other strategies participants used and suggested for future teachers to cope with stress correlated with Kyriacou's previous research on Direct Action Techniques. Kyriacou (2011) suggested Direct Action Techniques is the action teachers use to reduce stress, including organizing and seeking help from colleagues. Interview data collected from this study revealed that 35% use organization and 53% use help from colleagues to deal with stress. One participant elaborated on the specific need to be organized contrasting lack of support and dedication from building administrators. The participant stated, "Classroom management and organization is a big thing…you are not always going to have administrators' support. Usually the teachers outlast the administrators anyway, so you are going to have to handle things on your own and be resourceful" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017).

The researcher analyzed the collected data to determine the difference in strategies used by teachers who reported high stress compared to teachers who reported

low stress. The only difference found was that participants who scored high Emotional Exhaustion on MBI-ES, 50% reported having no school support at all. All or 100% of the participants who scored low on the Emotional Exhaustion subtest reported having school support.

The researcher noted one participant (according to the quantitative MBI-ES data) scored a high level of emotional exhaustion and low level of personal accomplishment. In other words, the participant scored high on being emotionally overextended and low on feeling successful when working with students. This participant indicated they personally didn't have any strategies stating, "I've struggled with my class, but they are pretty good and that part has helped a lot" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017).

Of the study participants, 47% felt their teaching was effective while 53% felt it was ineffective. Interviewees cited several reasons for the ineffectiveness including: student behaviors and academics, adult behavior-lack of support, and the curriculum. One participant stated, "it's not so much the skills; it is mostly the behaviors that you have that are challenging on a day-to-day basis on what you are going to pull out of your bag of tricks to see what works for that day" (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017). The researcher noted the correlation of the participants who reported not having support and the participants who felt their teaching was ineffective. Out of the 53% who reported their teaching was ineffective, 44% of them reported no support.

Support

When asked about the participants' primary support [inside or outside the school], 28% of the teachers reported family, 27% reported coworkers (37% of them reported specific coworkers), 27% principal, 8% God, and 10% reported no support at all. The

participants were then asked how their sources of support help them to stay or be successful in their teaching position. 76% of the participants reported having support, encouragement, and expectations, 1% reported faith from God, and 23% reported they didn't have primary sources of support or didn't have any help. In regards to coworker support, one participant stated, "They've allowed me to bounce ideas off of them. To fail, but not be put down because of failure. They've helped me understand what works and doesn't work in a positive light and they have just helped me get over rough patches with things in school or with family issues outside of school" (Interview, May 24, 2017). In contrast, another participant stated, "I haven't felt successful. It's been tough. When you work in a place where you feel like people in the community have selfishness and entitlement, it makes it very difficult to feel like you have support. To your face, people are all nice, kind, and supportive and behind the scenes, they aren't. So you know that a fraudulent form. It is very insecure sense of support" (May 11, 2017).

Resiliency

In the qualitative data response to reporting resiliency (defined as the ability to be able to bounce back or recover from difficult situations and challenges) in their teaching environment, 53% reported having resiliency while 47% reported having none. Of the 47% who reported not having resiliency, based on the MBI-ES, 100% scored high or moderate level of emotional exhaustion. Resiliency maybe inexplicably tied to self-efficacy. Participants in this study who showed signs of resiliency and self-efficacy were more inclined to report beliefs that all children can learn, job satisfaction, and willingness to continue in the profession.

From the 53% who reported having resiliency, three themes emerged as factors that influenced their resiliency; 74% stated support of family or colleagues, 18% religion, and 8% years of experience. Interestingly, one participant who indicated having resiliency via the interview response, scored high on Emotional Exhaustion and high on Depersonalization. This is a clear signal of distress and displays an impersonal response towards instruction of students. "There's been a couple of rough years that I've said if anyone dropped an atomic bomb, I could survive with the cockroaches afterwards. I feel like this is one of them. But, for me, in this area [of the country], what else is there? You have Wal-Mart, and you could go either way [north or south of this particular location] and get better pay, but for me, it's having somewhere, it's having a babysitter, a reliable place for the younger kids to go is what's kept me here (Personal Interview, May 24, 2017).

Rural Schools

In response to the questions why did you choose to teach in a rural school and was there an isolated incident that led you to why you want to teach in a rural school, 24% reported opportunity, 12% small community, and 59% said they were born and raised there. Commitment to staying in the same school was high; 88% stated they planned to stay while 12% stated they were not committed. The 12% who were not committed reported opportunity was what brought them to this location and eventually would make them leave. "I will go where opportunities are. I will go where there is support and where it feels good to work. If I work with people who I feel good working with, that's important to me. Money is important to me, and opportunity is what it's always about for me. I will go wherever opportunities are at the right time in my life, is where I will end

up. I don't get up every day and think oh wow; I want to work in a rural school. I will go where opportunities are and what I want to pursue at whatever point of my life I want to" (Interview, May 24, 2017). After the end of the school year, 11% of the participants left the school district (not including retirement), only 1 person was from the previous 12% who stated they weren't not committed to stay in the district. The 11% of the teachers who left the school district plan on or already have another teaching job secured for the next year. This study's teacher mobility rate of moving to another school is slightly higher compared previous research on mobility rates (NCES, 2004; Goldring et. al 2014). Although the researcher can never know for certain that those who left the district did so because they were burned out, their Maslach Emotional Exhaustion scores certainly indicated that they were on the brink of burnout and therefore their departure should not be unexpected.

While the sample population reported in this dissertation was very a specific to one small rural school, the results mirrored other researchers who studied stress and burnout. Teachers who experienced high stress used coping mechanisms similar to the mechanics that other researchers cited (Kyriacou, 2001; Murphy, 2005). Other coping strategies with stress can be found in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Research Summary

Teaching is stressful profession, and stress often leads to burnout (Leung, Lee, 2006; E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik, 2010). However, there are a significant amount of teachers who remain committed to their profession (Rottier et al, 2001). This research study was conducted to identify the factors that impede or enhance teacher stress and burnout and to determine what strategies teachers use to become resilient to stress. The participants in this study demonstrated higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion indicating that 46% of the participants are burnout. While this percentage is higher than the norm, it does mirror the literature on the national statistics between stress and burnout (Jennett, Harris, & Mesibov, 2003; Smith et al., 2000).

Research Questions

What are the factors that cause teacher stress?

Like Abel (1999) and Benmansour (1998), qualitative data collected from the participants in this study indicated three factors that cause teacher stress. They are student behaviors, colleagues, and administration. To mitigate these factors and to better understand the root causes of why kids—especially those living in poverty--might have behavior difficulties, I suggest the school district explore the possibilities of additional professional development on working with students in poverty. Also, I would encourage strengthening the relationship between the school and home by conducting home visits. According to Meyer, Mann, and Becker (2011), home visits have a positive effect. The teachers in their study reported "beneficial relationships and better communication with parents, more appreciation of the influence of the child's home environment related to

school performance, and a better understanding the child's behavior in school" (p. 191). Also, teachers need to feel supported by their administrators and colleagues. To achieve this, collaboration and relationship building are key to a school's healthy profile.

What strategies do teachers use to deal with teacher stress?

The strategies teachers in this study used to handle stress are as follows: Personality, belief system, organization, selected colleagues, and self-medication. Researchers Huismann, Singer, & Catapano (2010) and Kyriacou (2001) also found these to be helpful strategies in dealing with stress. To lessen teacher stress and stem teacher burnout, teachers should be encouraged to rely on colleagues. Schools districts should provide time and encourage active mentoring and provide healthy alternatives (exercise, stress management, etc.) programs to aid teachers in dealing with stress.

How do the strategies differ from teachers who have high teacher stress to those who have low teachers stress?

The researcher identified one strategy that differed between the percentages of teachers with high stress to teachers with low stress. The strategy was school support. Of the participants who scored high Emotional Exhaustion on MBI-ES, 50% reported having no school support. All or 100% of the participants who scored low on the Emotional Exhaustion subtest reported having school support. Lessening teachers' stress levels and burnout could be done through strengthen school support. Researcher Saffold (2006) also noted the importance of having school support. To increase school support, the district should implement a plan with allotted time to increase and strengthening mentoring and teacher relationships as well as teacher and administration.

Is there a difference between degrees of burnout when comparing among three components: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment?

Emotional Exhaustion scores were higher than the norm and Depersonalization scores were below, and Personal Accomplishment scores were higher. The findings indicate that even though the participants feel stretched and emotionally fatigued, they still feel connected to their work and their students (Maslach et al., 1996). To help reduce Emotional Exhaustion I recommend examining the outside factors (testing mandates, issues of poverty that affect their students, and directives from administrators) and seek assistance from the district administration. Also, offering more preparation time throughout the year would provide additional hours so the teachers can meet the demands of paperwork and planning.

Implications and Recommendations

Even though the study may not be generalizable to all school populations, the findings shed light on teacher stress, burnout, and the importance of school support. While most participants reported their commitment to the district, 11% of the participants left the district. Of the 11% of the participants who left, only one participant previously reported intentions of leaving. One person who left scored the highest on Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and the lowest of Personal Achievement. These results indicated the participant was overextended in the work environment, felt an impersonal responsibility for students' instruction, and did not feel successful or beneficial. This could be evident of teacher burnout.

Researchers indicate teacher burnout also affects the students (Hoglund, Klingle & Hosan, 2015). The researcher agreed with scholar Abel (1999), “achieving education goals for the students in the classroom mandates addressing the negative implications of stress and burnout among teachers” (p. 293).

Reducing Stress

Key to preventing burnout is managing stress. The suggestions below are adapted from Kabat-Zinn (1991) and are provided here as ways teachers could mitigate stress and, it is hoped, become more effective educators who are more likely to stay in the classroom long term.

- As an individual prepares leave home for work, they should be aware of the things they do. They should take a moment to affirm that they choose to go to work today. They should also briefly review what they will be doing.
- Before leaving home to go to work, when saying good-bye, individuals should make eye contact, touch, and take a moment for relating.
- At work, individuals should check in on their body from time to time. They should ask themselves, "Am I feeling tension in my shoulders, face, hands, or back?" They should try to let go of any tension, relax their breathing and balance their posture.
- Individuals should try to use their breaks to truly relax. They should try to go outside the building for three minutes and walk or stand and breathe. Another option, if possible, is to shut their office door and sit quietly for five minutes and follow their breathing.
- Individuals should spend their breaks and lunch with people they enjoy.

Otherwise, they should take some time for themselves.

- Individuals should be mindful of their communication with people during the day. They should think about how they might improve it.
- At the end of the day, individuals should take time to review what they accomplished and make a list of what they will need to do tomorrow. They should prioritize the items on their list so that they know what is most important.
- As they leave work, individuals should check in with their own body. They should ask themselves: "Am I exhausted? Am I standing erect or bent over? What expression is on my face?"
- Before they walk in the door at home, individuals should think about leaving their work behind. They should be aware of the transition of "coming home." They should also be ready to make eye contact and relate to people positively.
- Once home, individuals should get out of their work clothes and get comfortable.

Future Research and Suggestions

This research study was only conducted in one rural school district, located in the Midwest. Future research should include more schools, located in various parts of the United States. This research was conducted at one particular time in one school year. Future research should include various collection dates, including data from the beginning of the year and the end of the year. This would allow for more generalizable results.

Professional Development

The researcher suggests professional development classes on stress, coping mechanisms, and team building. Suggestions made are holding ongoing classes for coping mechanisms or strategies to deal with stress and burnout, offer team collaboration

activities that focus on ways to support one another (leaving the academics aside), and understanding the context and community resources that are available (Jennings, Snowberg, Coccia, Greenberg, 2011; Meyer, Mann, Becker, 2011).

Mentor Program

The researcher suggests reviewing the current mentoring program. Most of the participants (82%) felt the mentoring program was not effective due to a variety of reasons (unable to collaborate with enough time, mentor has their own classroom to take care of, not checked upon, low morale, and mentee unresponsive to suggestions). The researcher indicates the need of an Academic Instructional Coach--one that can guide the teachers (new and experienced) through effective coaching cycles, offer ongoing individualize professional development, co-teach to build teachers' skills, and guide teachers through paperwork (Thomas, Bell, Spelman, & Briody, 2015).

Preservice Teachers

The researcher suggests ongoing support from an assigned mentor, one that has experience in the field. This mentorship should take place at least a semester before student teaching. Also, implementing a yearlong program for preservice teachers to shadow an experienced teacher (in their classroom) would allow for a better understanding of what is required (e.g.classroom set up, paperwork, lesson plans, network, building relationships).

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Appendix A: Consent Form

Department of Educator Preparation

One University Blvd.
St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499
Telephone: 314-516-5000
E-mail: mlh398@umsl.edu

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities
Factors of Teachers Stress and the Coping Actions Used By Teachers

Participant _____ HSC Approval Number ____

Principal Investigator _____ PI's Phone Number _____

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1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Michelle Abiyou under the direction of Dr. Nancy Singer. The purpose of the study is to gain a clearer understanding of the factors affecting teacher stress and the strategies teachers use to cope with stress. It is the intent of the researcher to use the information gained in the study to assist in the improvement of those factors contributing to teacher stress.

2. a) Your participation will involve
    - Completion of an online survey (Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey). The survey will take about 5-6 minutes to complete.
    - A subset of those completing the survey (approximately 12) will be asked to participate in an interview with the researcher. The purpose of this interview is to ask more detailed questions regarding teacher stress and the strategies teachers use to lessen that stress. The interview will be approximately 1 hour and will be audio recorded.
3. There are no anticipated 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 about the factors of teacher stress and the strategies used to cope with stress.
5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

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 or presentation that may result from this study. 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 agency would be required to maintain the confidentiality of your data. The data will be kept locked in an office and/or on a password-protected computer.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, (Michelle Abiyou, (417) 967-6807) or the Faculty Advisor. You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the Office of Research Administration, at 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 consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature	Date	Participant's Printed Name	
Signature of Investigator or Designee	Date	Investigator/Designee Printed Name	

Appendix B: Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Form (MBI-ES)

MBI-Educators Survey

Christina Maslach, Susan E. Jackson & Richard L. Schwab

The purpose of this survey is to discover how educators view their job and the people with whom they work closely.

Instructions: On the following pages are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about *your* job. If you have *never* had this feeling, write the number "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. An example is shown below.

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

Example:

How Often 0-6	Statement:
1. _____	I feel depressed at work.

If you never feel depressed at work, you would write the number "0" (zero) under the heading "How Often." If you rarely feel depressed at work (a few times a year or less), you would write the number "1." If your feelings of depression are fairly frequent (a few times a week but not daily), you would write the number "5."

MBI-Educators Survey

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

	How Often 0-6	Statements:
1.	_____	I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2.	_____	I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3.	_____	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4.	_____	I can easily understand how my students feel about things.
5.	_____	I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.
6.	_____	Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
7.	_____	I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.
8.	_____	I feel burned out from my work.
9.	_____	I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
10.	_____	I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
11.	_____	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
12.	_____	I feel very energetic.
13.	_____	I feel frustrated by my job.
14.	_____	I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
15.	_____	I don't really care what happens to some students.
16.	_____	Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
17.	_____	I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.
18.	_____	I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.
19.	_____	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
20.	_____	I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
21.	_____	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.
22.	_____	I feel students blame me for some of their problems.

(Administrative use only)

EE: _____cat:_____ DP: _____ cat:_____ PA: _____ cat:_____

MBI–Human Services and Educators Scoring Key

Emotional Exhaustion (EE) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "EE" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____

Categorization: Emotional Exhaustion, Human Services & Educators Forms	
	Frequency
High	27 or over
Moderate	17-26
Low	0-16

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—Human Services & Educators Forms usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Emotional Exhaustion scale contains 9 items.

MBI–Human Services and Educators Scoring Key

Depersonalization (DP) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "DP" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____

Categorization: Depersonalization, Human Services Form		Categorization: Depersonalization, Educators Form	
	Frequency		Frequency
High	13 or over	High	14 or over
Moderate	7-12	Moderate	9-13
Low	0-6	Low	0-8

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—Human Services & Educators Forms usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Depersonalization scale contains 5 items.

MBI–Human Services and Educators Scoring Key

Personal Accomplishment (PA) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "PA" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____

Categorization: Personal Accomplishment,* Human Services Form		Categorization: Personal Accomplishment,* Educators Form	
	Frequency		Frequency
High	0-31	High	0-30
Moderate	32-38	Moderate	31-36
Low	39 or over	Low	37 or over

*Interpreted in opposite direction from EE and DP.

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—Human Services & Educators Forms usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Personal Accomplishments scale contains 8 items.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Interview protocol

Name of person being interviewed:_____
Position of person being interviewed: _____
Years of teaching experience:_____
Date of interview: _____**Place of interview:**_____
Time interview began: _____**Time interview ended:**_____

Sources of Support:

1. As a teacher, what are your primary sources of support?
2. How have these sources of support helped you to stay or be successful in your teaching position?

Resiliency:

1. What is it about you (your personality, temperament, tolerance for stress, skills, abilities, knowledge) that has enabled you to stay or be successful in your teaching position?
2. What advice would you give a 'school choice' applicant (early career teacher, and experienced teacher) about teaching and doing well?
3. Do you think about your own resilience as a teacher teaching in a difficult teaching environment?
4. What do you think are the most important influences on your resilience?

Rural Teaching:

1. Why did you choose to work in a rural school?
2. Was there an experience or isolated incident that led you to want to work in an rural school?
3. How committed are you to stay in a rural school?

Teaching Effectiveness:

1. Did you feel effective in your teaching this year (e.g. reaching students, student achievement)?
   Why or why not (identify specific skills, knowledge)?
2. Do you plan to continue in your position as a teacher in this next school year? Why or why not?

School Support:

1. How have you been supported in your position so far by those you work with or school administrators? What is your support system at school?
2. What type of support do you feel principals should give teachers?
3. Please comment on the administration or mentoring program of the school where you work.

Final Comments: Other comments you would like to make about your success