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Needed Supports of Middle Grade Teachers in Georgia During Times of Stress and Burnout

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NEEDED SUPPORTS OF MIDDLE GRADE TEACHERS IN GEORGIA DURING TIMES OF
STRESS AND BURNOUT

by

KANIA GREER

[Under the Direction of James Green]

ABSTRACT

Understanding what teachers need to help them relieve occupational stress can help administrators effectively combat teacher burnout. With the multiple roles teachers play, it is easy to see how role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload increase the chances that a teacher will suffer from occupational related stress and subsequent burnout. If left unalleviated, teachers may begin to feel emotionally exhausted, detached from their colleagues, and lack feelings of personal accomplishment which can lead to burnout.

The purpose of this study was to ascertain what teachers would like to see administrators do to help them combat the day-to-day stresses of teaching. The study consisted of two phases, one quantitative and one qualitative. The quantitative portion showed that the teachers in this study were suffering from moderate degrees of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. However, these teachers also felt high degrees of personal accomplishment.

During the qualitative phase of the study, the researcher interviewed teachers to determine precisely what supports they would like to see from their administrators. The results fell into the following five categories, communication, discipline, professional development, consistency of rule enforcement, and reduction of paperwork. In addition, the researcher examined county documents to see what resources were available to help teachers who were

feeling stressed. The results of this study showed that teachers are stressed; however, none of the documentation from the county offered assistance to teachers in times of stress. While the teachers in this study did feel mostly positive about their jobs and their impact on students, it is still obvious from the results of the study that small changes by administrators in the day-to-day operations of the school would go a long way to assisting teachers in combating job stress.

INDEX WORDS: Middle grades, Teacher, Georgia, Stress, Burnout, Role conflict, Role overload, Role ambiguity, Administration

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STRESS AND BURNOUT

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband Brian for standing by me when I doubted and grounding me when I got overconfident. You are my everything. Also, to Pops, even though you are no longer with me, you were the first to believe it was possible.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Few would deny the importance a quality education plays in the fulfillment and attainment of dreams and goals. In fact, education can be seen as the maker or breaker of dreams for many students. While there are many important components of a quality education, one of the most influential is teachers (Arnold, 2001; Wigfield, Lutz, & Wagner, 2005). Teaching, like most jobs, has its share of stresses. Unfortunately, in the teaching profession stress and burnout often lead to early voluntary attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Worse yet, are teachers who stay in the classroom mechanically going through the motions of day-to-day teaching but are disconnected professionally and emotionally from colleagues (Ahghar, 2008).

Every year, teacher training programs at universities around the world are steadily churning out eager teachers. However, studies have shown that between 30% and 50% of these teachers leave the profession within the first five years (Berg, Charner-Laird, Fiarman, Jones, Qazilbash, & Johnson, 2005; Boyer & Hamil, 2008; Coulter & Abney, 2009; New, 2009). It is difficult to fully understand why these teachers are leaving, but studies have suggested that their initial induction into the profession was not what they were trained to expect. For example, Berg et al. (2005) and New (2009) each found that many new teachers were dismayed at the lack of collaboration and teamwork they found in the school setting as well as the lack of administrative support available. Regardless of whether new or “seasoned” teachers feel stress, and while some stay in the classroom longer, there is still a trend even among experienced teachers to retire earlier than other professionals (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

With the increasing demands for accountability, productivity, testing, and student achievement, it is easy to understand why many teachers have been experiencing disconnect between their expectations of teaching and the actual practice of teaching, resulting in high rates of stress and burnout (Berg et al., 2005; New, 2009). Even those who continue to work in the field of teaching periodically experience stress and decreased morale (Blase, 1990; Littleford, 2007). In fact, Cedoline (1982) argued that unalleviated stress in the teaching profession is a very serious problem, especially when those teachers remain in the classroom, because these teachers tend to alienate themselves even within their school communities. Through this alienation process, they are able to “disconnect themselves so effectively that the activity of work is no longer a mode of personal self-expression” (Abraham, 2000, p. 276) which in turn leads to teachers “mere[ly] compl[ying] with ... directives” (p. 278) rather than being intrinsically motivated to teach.

Research has shown many different types of causes for teacher burnout including organizational factors like unequal wages for work done, students attitudes, incompetent administration, and a lack of control (Abel & Sewell, 2001; Adams, 1988; Blase, Dedrick, & Strathe, 1986; Cedoline, 1982; Gilbreath & Benson, 2004). However, lack of administrative support has ranked among the top reasons teachers feel stressed and burnt out (Adams, 1988; Ahghar, 2007; Blase, 1990; Blase & Blase, 2000, 2004; Coulter & Abney, 2009; Littleford, 2007; Spaulding, 1997). While administrative support may not be on the top of the list as a stress-inducing phenomenon, administrative reactions to teacher stress and burnout can be crucial in determining a teacher’s choice to stay in the profession, disconnected, or to leave for a different profession (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

Administrators typically are aware of options for handling teacher stress and burnout (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003); however, what is most effective from a teacher's point of view remains unclear. Therefore, it is vital to investigate and understand, from their perspective, what support teachers need from administrators to overcome stressful situations. In this study, full-time teaching professionals in middle grade education in the state of Georgia were asked to indicate their level of stress and potential for burnout. In addition, they were asked to share their perceptions of what their principals are doing to help alleviate any stress.

Background

Teaching is an interpersonal profession. Many teachers consider themselves to be "people-centered" (Blase, 1986); and in addition to the academic content, teachers often times project personal emotions into their classrooms, work, and academic teachings (Hargreaves, 1998). While this seems logical, as many teachers enter into the profession out of a love of teaching or love of students, Hargreaves has contended that a teacher's emotional state becomes intricately intertwined with the level of satisfaction he or she feels on the job. In fact, he stated unequivocally that "the emotions of teaching and teacher[s]...are... absolutely central to maintaining and improving educational quality in our schools and to the work of educational leaders who are ultimately responsible for producing the quality" (p. 315). However, for the teacher struggling with unalleviated job stress, it can oftentimes be difficult to regulate those emotions in the classroom and toward students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). When these emotions go unchecked, it can have detrimental effects on the personal and professional lives of teachers (Kyriacou, 2001).

Stress and Burnout

Freudenberger (1980) stated that when the expected result is diametrically opposed to the real situation and the person continues to try and obtain the expected result, stress occurs, and if left unalleviated, burnout is almost inevitable. According to Mathney, Gfroerer, and Harris (2000), burnout is a loss of idealism and enthusiasm for work. In addition, Dworkin (1987) added that alienation from work and feelings of powerlessness and isolation also contribute to the definition of burnout. Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) and Senge (1990) further added to the definition of burnout by stating that cynicism toward work is also a component of burnout and occurs at high incident rates among those who work with people. Abraham (2000) defined cynicism as “a negative attitude toward one’s employing organization, composed of the belief that the organization lacks integrity” (p. 269). From these definitions, one can easily imagine the potential harmful effects of unmediated stress and related burnout on teachers.

In order to reduce the instance of occupational stress and burnout and understand how these phenomena affect teachers, it is imperative to get a clear picture of how stress can build up and lead to burnout. Unrelieved stress can rapidly grow into a state of physical and emotional exhaustion which, when coupled with an attitude of cynicism, and manifested in a loss of idealism, lack of enthusiasm, and alienation in an attempt to reach some unrealistic personal or professional goal established by ourselves and/or others, can lead to burnout (Adams, 1988; AL-Bataineh & Kirk, 2004; Aschuler, Carl, Leslie, Schweiger, & Uustal, 1980; Cassel, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Ceyanes, 2004; Dworkin, 1987; Freudenberger 1974; Pines, 2002; Schwab & Iwanicki 1982; Wood, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). When full burnout occurs, it is often seen as a “breach of faith” (Abraham, 2000, p. 271) between the employee and employer. Because of this, a teacher may begin to lose trust in a system, display a lack of confidence in others’ abilities,

and feel he or she has been unduly persecuted, all of which lead to even deeper feelings of burnout (Meyer-Emerick, 2007). However, because “burnout is a progressive syndrome that requires further research” (Arthur, 1990, p. 188), it is difficult to say when exactly stress leads to burnout or what specifically causes it.

Indications of Stress

Early researchers investigating the causes of stress and burnout were consistent in their analysis and interpretation of the causes of the phenomena, but the ideas developed many different connotations depending upon the setting in which the research was done (Adams, 1988; Ceyanes, 2004; Littleford, 2007; Pines, 2002). However, there is a general consensus among most researchers that stress and burnout can manifest themselves in both mental and physical ways (Abraham, 2000; Blase & Blase, 2004; Cassel, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Pines, 2002; Wood & McCarthy, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). Mentally, they can result in lack of motivation, poor self-image, poor self-actualization, emotional exhaustion, alienation, little sense of achievement, decreased self-respect, feelings of helplessness, anxiety, and a myriad of other symptoms (Adams, 1988; AL-Bataineh & Van Kirk, 2004; Cassel, 1984; Pines, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). Physically, they can lead to problems associated with fatigue, ulcers, weight loss or gain, addiction to a variety of substances, poor posture, undiagnosed aches and pains, and migraines (Aschuler et al., 1980; Cedoline, 1982; Dworkin, 1987). Maslach and Jackson (1981) summed up the mental and physical signs of stress into three categories: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion. According to many researchers, emotional exhaustion is the basic building block of burnout and the first stage of the burnout process (Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2002; Gaines & Jermier, 1983). Emotional exhaustion is often categorized by feelings of

pervasive fatigue and this often leads people to distance themselves emotionally from their work (Maslach, 2003). People are most likely to experience emotional exhaustion when they have role overload, role conflict, and/or lack of available resources to do the job (Gaines & Jermier, 1983).

Depersonalization. Depersonalization has been defined by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996) as indifferent and often times negative attitudes which cause teachers to distance themselves from students both physically and mentally. Depersonalization can be seen as very similar to dehumanization which has connotations of hostility toward others (co-workers, clients, and/students) and indifference (Garden, 1987). Depersonalization can often be manifested as a blatant disregard of others feelings, a refusal to accommodate requests of others, and an emotional withdrawal from others (Maslach, 1981).

Lack of personal accomplishment. While emotional exhaustion and depersonalization can be identified by others, a lack of personal accomplishment, as it relates to stress, is an internalized feeling that may not manifest itself outwardly. When stress builds up, people often become unmotivated, disengaged, and develop persistent feelings of inefficacy toward their work (Maslach, 2003). Often times they will appear to lack vitality and ambition which serves to increase their feelings of non-accomplishment.

Indications of stress, while highly researched, are also very individualized. In all cases, it is critical to remember the individual behind the stress. Some individuals will be highly stressed and not exhibit all three sub-categories of stress. In addition, it is possible that an individual will have stress manifest itself in unanticipated ways. It is imperative for administrators to remember that each teacher represents a unit of one and, therefore, blanket stress reduction techniques may not be appropriate (Blase, Dedrick, and Strathe, 1986).

Administrator Response to Teacher Stress and Burnout

Administrator style is often considered one of the causes of teacher stress and burnout (Mazur & Lynch, 1989). Ahghar (2009) reported on two administrative styles that negatively support teacher emotions. The first one he labeled as “directive behavior” (p. 322). This style corresponds with a job-oriented principal who follows Weber’s view of work in which personal emotions are inconsequential to the job. Ahghar’s (2009) second administrative style is “restrictive behavior” (p. 322). This style is characterized by leaders who use threats to ensure compliance and make the workplace one of increasing difficulty. The result of both of the styles is that the administrator is seen as just one more person in the building rather than a resource for dealing with stress.

Increasingly, there is a push for school leaders to adopt a transformational style of leadership and while this is, on the surface, a positive move, it is important to consider the relationships cultivated between the principal and teacher in order to fully understand the role of the principal in alleviating or increasing teacher stress (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). Research has shown that irrespective of administrative style, it was the level of support that teachers received which had the most influence on stress and burnout (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). In fact, Mazur and Lynch (1989) reported that the principal’s approach to decision making was far less important to teachers than the level of support they felt. Litrell, Billingsley, and Cross (1994) went further to state that principal support could actually stop the cycle of stress and burnout. This information is not new. In 1957, Lautenschlager cited three important needs that teachers require in order to feel supported: “to be accepted and appreciated, to feel successful, [and] to understand their immediate world” (p. 258). It is easy to see how meeting these three needs would help to alleviate some occupational stress. However, even if administrators actively

engage in meeting the needs of teachers, some will still feel stressed and burned out. The questions for administrators, then, are how to best assist a teacher who is feeling stressed and what constitutes support from the teacher's point of view.

Assessing Stress and Burnout

Adequately assessing the causes and multiple dimensions of stress and burnout has been something many organizations have hoped to achieve. Researchers have been studying the phenomenon for many years and yet the results have produced very little knowledge or direction when it comes to prevention of burnout (Eldridge, Blostein, & Richardson, 1983). The primary mode of studying burnout is in self-reports, whether they are instruments filled out by the participants or interviews with senior level management regarding performance. However, these studies may not adequately report the results due to distortion of the facts by the participants or the organization in the study (Eldridge et al., 1983).

By far, the most prevalent research is conducted post-burnout. While burnout inventories seem to try and capture those educators who are prone to burnout, most of these inventories are designed to examine causes after the fact. One of the most highly used instruments is the Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators (MBI-ES) developed by Maslach and Jackson in 1986. This inventory is widely used in education settings as it has been specifically designed with the educator in mind. This inventory is one of only a few specifically designed to measure burnout in education over three dimensions including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Byrne, 1994). It must be noted, however, that the MBI-ES is only designed to capture stress in the present moment and can not be used to predict future occurrences of burnout.

The study of teacher stress and burnout is not a new one. This research has shown, among other things, a high correlation of teacher stress and burnout to administrative support (Adams, 1988; Ceyanes, 2004; Littleford, 2007). Schools where the leaders have high demands and offer low control often create unfavorable working conditions which results in higher levels of stress (Söderfeldt, Söderfeldt, Ohlson, Theorell, & Jones, 2000). Stress and burnout can manifest themselves many ways which are unique to the individual and, therefore, difficult to measure; however, decades of research has shown that teaching is a stressful job (Kyriacou, 2001; Troman, 2000; Troman & Woods, 2000; Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis, & Parker, 2000). It would be easy to conclude that all the necessary research in this area of burnout has been done; however, with many stressed and burned out teachers leaving the profession every year, it is evident that previous research has failed to present any teacher-preferred solutions that administrators can employ when a teacher is stressed and vulnerable to burnout.

Problem Statement

Alleviating the causes and consequences of teacher stress and burnout has long been an ideal for those in educational administration. As a result, teacher stress and related burnout have been studied for decades. Because of this previous research, there is a wealth of knowledge on circumstances which cause teacher burnout. In addition, while there is an abundance of surface information for administrators on dealing with teacher burnout, what has not been addressed is the teacher's perspective of what they need from administrators to prevent ordinary occupational stress from turning into burnout. Instead, much of the quantitative research places the answer in the vague category of administrative support. While this has given administrators a starting point, it has not really provided concrete solutions for effectively handling teachers in a stress or burnout crisis. Even the current qualitative reports from teachers on alleviating stress stop short

of giving specifics for administrators. Therefore, this study will seek to answer the question of what teachers perceive their administrators are doing to assist them in successfully combating any negativity they are currently feeling.

Research Questions

Because the attitudes of educational administrators can help teachers remain positive and enthusiastic about their work (Blase & Kirby, 1992), this study focused on the following research question: What do middle-grade teachers in Georgia perceive their administrators are doing to assist them in successfully combating any stress they are experiencing?

Sub-questions in this study include:

Sub-question 1: What is the proportion of middle grade teachers who are feeling stressed and burned out to those who are not?

Sub-question 2: What are middle grade teachers currently doing to alleviate stress?

Sub-question 3: What do middle grade teachers in Georgia need from school administrators to assist them in alleviating stress and burnout?

Significance of the Study

Decades of research has shown the impact of administrator support on a teacher's mental and physical well-being. There can be no denying that this support can be crucial to teachers staying in the profession or leaving the field. However, this research has done nothing to alleviate the preponderance of teachers who are currently leaving the field of teaching, each year, due to being overstressed and burned out. In preparation programs, future administrators are taught theory and design but little about how to successfully interact with people. A 21st century administrator is no longer just the school manager, but must also be able to guide the

professional lives of his or her teachers as well deal capably with the inevitable emotional consequences of someone in the human services field.

The results of this study are significant to current leaders in training and leaders who are already working in school systems. Giving them concrete and applicable ideas from the teachers themselves assists them in becoming a resource for future teachers who are in need. It is hoped that this study will also lead state Department's of Education to consider adopting an employee assistance program as an additional resource for teachers who are feeling stressed both professional and personally.

The largest beneficiary of this study is the teachers themselves. Being asked to consider what specifically they need assists them in finding the words to ask for help when they begin to feel overwhelmed. When administrators provide solutions and resources to combat the stress to teachers, the relationship between the two grows into one of trust and appreciation rather than suspicion and mistrust.

Methods

This investigation utilized a collective case study. According to Merriam (1988) case study research is an optimal investigative technique for “understanding and interpreting...educational phenomena” (p. 2). The nature of case study research is to focus on the “insight, discovery, and interpretation” (Merriam, p. 10) in a specific context. Therefore, the researcher believed this approach was best able to address the research questions.

Selection of Cases

Three middle schools, all located in the same school district, comprised the cases for this collective case study. The school district was located in the coastal Georgia region, and it was selected for its typicality of school districts in the southeastern region of the nation.

As shown in Table 1, the National Center for Educational Statistics (2002) and the United States Census Bureau (2009) indicate the demographic information for this region was commensurate with the overall state demographics.

Table 1.

Demographic information

Demographic	Area of Study	State of Georgia
Race	White: 71.9%, Black: 25.7% Other: 75.8%	White: 65%, Black: 30.2%, Other: 70.6%
Median Income	\$50,236	\$50,834
Females	51.7%	50.8%

Sources of Data

As a collective case study, this investigation utilized both qualitative and quantitative sources of data. For the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher used the *Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators* (MBI-ES), which was administered to a convenience sample comprised of middle school teachers in a school district located in the coastal Georgia region.

The qualitative portion of this research consisted of a researcher-developed protocol (Appendix A). This protocol consisted of open-ended questions regarding the participant's experiences with stress and burnout. Since the researcher was attempting to establish a relationship with the participants and allowed them to guide the interview process (Glesne, 2006), the interviews were not so thoroughly scripted as to disallow deviation from the protocol.

Lastly, in order to triangulate the data received, documents from the local Board of Education were examined to see how teacher stressed is addressed. Documents included policy manuals, health insurance options, and professional development records.

Procedures

After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board of Georgia Southern University, survey forms were mailed to the three schools in the study. All data were expected to be returned within 7-10 days (Creswell, 2009). After the deadline had passed, the researcher sent out reminder cards to all the teachers in order to obtain an acceptable response rate (30%). The researcher then randomly chose 11 respondents, whose returned surveys indicated a willingness, to participate in an interview. Upon completion of the interviews, the researcher hired a transcription service to transcribe the interviews verbatim for coding and analysis.

Data Analysis

Results from the quantitative survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The overall results for the three sub-categories (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment) were calculated independently and differences among the population were analyzed.

Data from the qualitative interviews were analyzed, using a preliminary coding list (Appendix C). A minimum of three iterations of coding were conducted, as recommended by Anafara, Brown, and Mangione (2002).

A content analysis of the documents received from the local board of education and individual schools was conducted in order to assist with triangulation of data. According to Palmquist (n.d.), content analysis is used to determine the presence of “certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts...and to quantify this presence in an objective manner” (¶ 1). The analysis of documents in this study was a conceptual analysis to identify whether there was a presence of key items related to this research.

Limitations/ Delimitations

In order to view this research in context, some limitations had to be considered. Since the investigation utilized a collective case study, the results were not statistical generalizable (Yin, 2009); however, results may be transferable to settings with comparable demographic profiles as the sample.

In addition to the lack of generalizability, there are some basic limitations to qualitative research that also need to be noted. As a counselor, the researcher is familiar working with people who are stressed and burned out. Such familiarity had the potentiality to impact the researcher's objectivity and cloud the interpretation of the data. As a way to guard against this happening, the researcher proposed the study be done in a geographic area where she did not work; thereby, eliminating the potential for previous exposure to the population sample and allowing for a greater degree of objectivity.

In addition, the time of year when the study was done may have impacted the results, as it is possible that teachers reported less stress during the first semester of school than they would have during the second semester of school.

Given that teaching environments are so variable between elementary, middle, and high school, the researcher wanted to focus on a particular grade level. Thus, this study was delimited to teachers in the middle grades only.

Definitions of Terms

In order to be consistent, the following definitions were used for the purposes of this study.

Administrator Support

According to House (1981), there are four aspects to administrator support: emotional support which consists of open communication, being interested in the teachers work, and consideration of ideas; instrumental support where the administrator provides assistance with work-related tasks; informational support where the administrator provides timely and useful information to the teachers in order for them to improve classroom practices; and, appraisal support where the administrator provides on-going constructive feedback to the teachers about the work they are doing.

Burnout

A chronic condition that results from unrelieved stress that grows rapidly into a state of physical and emotional exhaustion which becomes coupled with an attitude of cynicism, and manifested in a loss of idealism, lack of enthusiasm, and alienation in an attempt to reach some unrealistic personal or professional goal established by the individual and/or others (Adams, 1988; AL-Bataineh & Kirk, 2004; Aschuler et al., 1980; Cassel, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Ceyanes, 2004; Dworkin, 1987; Freudenberger 1974; Pines, 2002; Schwab & Iwanicki 1982; Wood, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007).

Depersonalization

An emotional state comprised of indifferent and often times negative attitudes that causes teachers to distance themselves from students both physically and mentally (Bakker, Schaufeli, Demerouti, Janssen, Van Der Hulst, & Brouwer, 2000; Maslach, Jackson, & Lieter, 1996). For the purposes of this study, depersonalization was defined as a score of 10 or more on the MBI-ES.

Emotional Exhaustion

The tired feeling that develops as emotional energy becomes drained and educators discover they can no longer give as much to students as they had once previously done (Bakker, et al, 2000; Maslach, Jackson, & Lieter, 2002). For the purposes of this study, depersonalization was defined as a score of 24 or more on the MBI-ES.

Personal Accomplishment

This is the internal feeling of reward and intrinsic motivation that teachers often get when they contribute to a student's knowledge. Lack of this can result in profound disenchantment with the profession when teachers no longer feel they are making any contributions (Maslach, Jackson, & Lieter, 1996). In addition, it can lead to feelings of inadequacy and an inferior self-esteem (Bakker, et al, 2000). For the purposes of this study, reduced feelings of personal accomplishment were defined as a score of 34 or less on the MBI-ES.

Chapter Summary

Existing information regarding burnout in teachers had largely failed to identify what the principal could be doing to assist teachers. Most of the research, up to this date, labeled "administrator support" as a key element in assisting teachers who were stressed and burning out. What was unclear was what this term meant specifically to the teachers. Therefore, this study sought to ascertain the preponderance of burnout in middle grade teachers in Georgia and asked them specifically what they needed from their administrators in times of stress.

This study was a collective case study. Accordingly, it utilized multiple sources of data, both quantitative and qualitative. Data sources included participant responses to the MBI-ES, participant interviews, and content analysis of various school and school district documents pertinent to the research questions. However, the interviews were expected to be the most

informative aspect of the investigation as they allowed the researcher to probe more deeply into how teachers perceived their principals' responses to teacher burnout.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Occupational stress and burnout has been the subject of an abundance of research across many occupational fields. Due to the nature of this dissertation, the researcher arranged this literature review to first give the reader a general understanding of the concepts and the theories related to stress and burnout across working environments, including indications of stress and at-risk populations. Because this study was isolated to teachers in traditional educational settings, the researcher then focused attention on the multiple roles of educators and how this contributes to stress in teaching. From here, the researcher considered how to assess stress in an educational environment. Lastly, because it was the focus of this study, the researcher focused on the role of the educational administrator in contributing to and/or alleviating teacher stress and burnout. The researcher chose this layout to bring the reader from general information regarding stress and burnout to more specific literature regarding what administrators could do to alleviate stress in the teaching profession.

Search Strategies

The study of stress and burnout in the working environment is not isolated to the field of education. In fact, researchers in the study of business, psychology, anthropology, human resources, and sociology, as well as education, have produced a preponderance of literature on the phenomenon of stress and burnout. In order to thoroughly review the topics of stress and burnout, the researcher, in this study, considered the research done in these and other fields of study on the current understandings of stress and burnout. As such, databases such as Psychnet, Ebscohost, ERIC, and JSTOR, to name a few, were utilized to find information and resources. In addition, a wide variety of literature and studies have been conducted on stress and burnout in

other countries. This information was also reviewed as potential sources of information on stress and burnout.

In order to find information on stress and burnout, several key words and phrases were used while searching internet databases. Accordingly, the words “stress” and “burnout” were used by themselves and in combination, as well as “strain,” “emotional exhaustion,” “depersonalization,” and “attrition” among others to denote the concept of burnout. In addition, the researcher combined the words “stress” and “burnout” with “teaching,” “teachers,” “educators,” “theories,” “psychology,” and “work.” Oftentimes, these searches would open up further avenues of investigation into stress and burnout. Because the field is so widely studied across disciplines, professional literature on the phenomenon abounds. However, the purpose of this literature review was to focus on burnout among middle school teachers and principals might be doing to address the problem.

Stress and Burnout

Freudenberger (1980) stated that when the expected result is diametrically opposed to the real situation and the person continues to try and obtain the expected result, stress occurs, and, if left unalleviated, burnout is almost inevitable. According to Mathney, Gfroerer, and Harris (as cited in Wood, 2002), burnout is a loss of idealism and enthusiasm for work. In addition, Dworkin (1987) added that alienation from work and feelings of powerlessness and isolation also contribute to the definition of burnout. Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) and Senge (1990) stated that cynicism toward work is also a component of burnout and occurs at high incident rates among those who work with people. Abraham (2000) defined cynicism as “a negative attitude toward one’s employing organization, composed of the belief that the organization lacks

integrity” (p. 269). From these definitions, one can easily imagine the potential harmful effects of unmediated stress and related burnout on teachers.

In order to reduce the instance of occupational stress and burnout and get a clear picture of how these phenomena effect teachers, it is imperative to get a clear picture of how stress can build up and lead to burnout. Unrelieved stress can rapidly grow into a state of physical and emotional exhaustion when coupled with an attitude of cynicism, a loss of idealism, a lack of enthusiasm, and alienation. At this point further attempts to reach a, typically unrealistic, personal or professional goal established by ourselves and/or others, can lead to burnout (Adams, 1988; AL-Bataineh & Kirk, 2004; Aschuler et al., 1980; Cassel, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Ceyanes, 2004; Dworkin, 1987; Freudenberger, 1974; Pines, 2002; Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982; Wood, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). When full burnout occurs it is considered by some to be a “breach of faith” (Abraham, 2000, p. 271). Because of this, a teacher may begin to loose trust in a system, display a lack of confidence in others abilities, and feel he or she has been unduly persecuted, all of which lead to even deeper feelings of burnout (Meyer-Emerick, 2007). However, because “burnout is a progressive syndrome that requires further research in the form of longitudinal studies” (Arthur, 1990, p. 188), it is difficult to say when exactly stress leads to burnout or what specifically causes it.

Etiology of Stress

Researchers have been investigating the causes of job related stress for decades. Due to job related stress being very a subjective and individual experience (Peiró & Rodriguez, 2008), it is difficult to say with any absolute certainty how job related stress occurs. However, in the 1970’s researchers were beginning to investigate theoretical models that would describe “stress transactions as well as their interrelationships” (Cooper, Dewe, & O’Driscoll, 2001, p. 14).

From these investigations theoretical frameworks of stress emerged which then led to the development of various stress models.

Theoretical models of job related stress. While many different models of stress have been posited, there are only two authoritative frameworks for considering stress. According to Cooper et al. (2001), one is interactional, which focuses on considering the many different constructs “that play a role in understanding stress” (p. 14); and the other is transactional, which, while considering the constructs of the interactional framework, also considers the stress process itself. It should be noted that all of the theories discussed are far more complex than implied in the brief summaries written here. However, it is critical to understand some of the basic theories of stress in the workplace in order to consider how to assist employees with overcoming it.

McGrath’s stress cycle model. In the 1970’s McGrath developed the stress-cycle model which stated that stress happens due to an “imbalance” (Cooper et al., 2001, p. 17) between a person’s perceived ability to respond and the environment. In essence a stress reaction will occur only if the person “anticipates” (p. 17) he or she will be unable to successfully combat the stressor. Therefore, the person does not feel stressed by the situation itself, but rather by his or her anticipation of ability. In addition, stress will also occur when the inability to meet work place or societal demands results in a negative outcome (McGrath, 1970). The major difference in McGrath’s model as opposed to other models of job related stress is that it only considers the effects of stress on job performance (Eulberg, Weekley, & Bhagat, 1988). However, it should be pointed out that prior to this theory there were few that made the connection specifically between “task-based stress on task performance” (p. 339).

According to Eulberg et al. (1988), McGrath’s model delineates how a small number of variables can link directly to outcomes. The result is a theory of job related stress which is

internally consistent and explicit in nature. However, there are some limitations to the external consistency of the model. For one, external situational variables which impact task performance are not considered by McGrath. This limits the comprehensive perspective of the theory; however, it is this limited perspective that, while a weakness of the theory, is also considered a major strength of the theory as it narrowly defines the causes of job-related stress.

Person-environment fit theory. The 1970's also saw the emergence of the Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) model of stress. Developed by researchers at the University of Michigan, P-E Fit explains stress as likely to develop when there is a “discrepancy between the [characteristics] of the person and the supplies of the environment” (www. Workhealth.org, n.d. p 1, ¶1) or when a person does not have the abilities to meet the “misfit” (Cooper et al., 2001; Landbergis, 1988) on the job.

According to researchers, all “misfits between [a] person and his or her environment are negative” (Eulberg et al., 1988) and lead to psychological stress. Because of the fact that this theory generalizes, a lack of clarity makes it difficult to apply. In addition, in spite of the circuitous definition of stress applied in this model, it does not have a strong internalized consistency (Eulberg et al., 1988). This is due in part to the fact that the theory hypothesizes that job stress occurs whenever needs are left unfulfilled. However, the theory does not state explicitly how a “misfit results in need deprivation” (Eulberg et al. 1988, p. 340). This conundrum has led opponents of the theory to state that P-E Fit is irrelevant since it is need fulfillment which defines stress, rather than person or the environment.

Another issue with the P-E Fit Model is the absence of control in determining job-related stress. This has led to some adaptations of the model through the years, but there is still no clear indication of when to assess job-related stress using this model. Because there is no clear

set of criteria, many researchers still feel that an element of control is lacking in this model. They feel this leads to employers putting the burden of stress reduction squarely on the individual employee (Landbergis, 1988).

Job-demands control model. The job demands model was formulated by Robert Karasek in 1979. In this model job stress is the result of “high job demands combined with low job decisions” (Cooper et al., 2001). In other words, as Karasek (1979) stated, job-related stress is heavily reliant both on the demands placed on the worker, and the decision making ability of that worker. This is an environmental model which attempts to identify the true source of job stress. According to Karasek’s model (Figure 1), any situation where demands exceed an individual’s control can lead to high levels of arousal which result in stress (Landbergis, 1988).

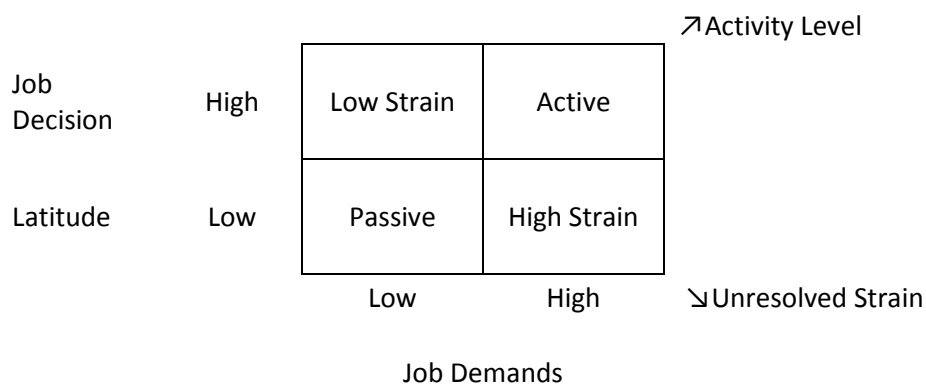


Figure 1. From “Job Demands, Job Decision Latitude, and Mental Strain: Implications for Job Redesign” by R.A. Karasek, 1979, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, pp 285-308. Copyright 1979 by Cornell University. Reprinted with permission *Administrative Science Quarterly*. All rights reserved. A multidigit code at the bottom of an article’s first page indicates that 10 or fewer copies of the article may be made, free of charge and without securing permission, for purposes of teaching, research, or library reserve, and that additional copies may be made for personal or internal use, or for the personal or internal use of specified clients, provided that the copier pay the state per-copy fee through the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. Articles with no code carry no such permission. Consent to other kinds of copying, such as that for general distribution, for advertising or promotional purposes, for creating new collective works, or for resale must be obtained directly from the copyright holder.

According to the model developed by Karasek, mental stress occurs as demands increase in relation to decisions making ability. At higher levels of demand and decision making ability, a higher degree of coping strategies is developed. Conversely, low demands and low decision making ability often lead to learned helplessness in the form of an inability to solve problems, make decisions, or take on new challenges (Landbergis, 1988).

General system approach. The general systems theory of stress was modified from a theory originally developed in 1928 by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (Walonick, 1993). His theory stated that systems are “characterized by the interactions of [their] components and the nonlinearity of those interactions” (Walonick, 1993, ¶2). There are three main positions in general systems theory: the detector, the selector, and the effector. The detector’s job is to communicate between the systems, while the selector is concerned with the rules of the system,

and the effector is the way information is communicated. Only two interactions are of any concern to these three roles: communication, “the exchange of information,” and transactions, “the exchange of matter-energy” (§ 3). A breakdown in one of these interactions between any of the three positions causes a disruption to system and stress occurs as a result of trying to move the system back toward “equilibrium” (§4).

In 1981, Cox and McKay took Bertalanffy’s theory and modified it into General Systems Theory. They explained that stress is the result of a personal imbalance between individual perceptions of demands and ability to cope with those demands (Cooper et al., 2001). In their view, stress is the result of on-going and “embedded” (p. 18) interactions between people and their environment.

Cybernetic theory. The cybernetic theory of stress considers stress in terms of a cycle rather than an isolated event. The idea is that individuals have an idealized goal-state and that all behavior is directed at reducing “deviations” (i.e., stress) from this state (Cummings and Cooper, 1979, p. 396). The concept of stress is that it is the organisms’ way of maintaining homeostasis in relation to its environment. Through “adjustment processes” (p. 398) individuals incorporate “purposeful [and] direct...” (p. 397) coping mechanisms specifically directed at dealing with the stressor and returning the body to homeostasis. As seen in Figure 2 below, cybernetic theory employs the concept of the negative feedback loop. This unconscious reaction to stress “acts to minimize discrepancies between environmental characteristics and relevant reference criteria” (Edwards, 1992, p. 238).

According to Edwards (1992), this concept of a feedback loop is evident in other theories of job-related stress including the Person-Environment Fit Model and McGrath’s Stress Cycle Model. The difference is that cybernetics posits that there are “multiple interrelated feedback

cycles” (Edwards, 1988) that are arranged in a hierarchical order based on an individual’s ranking of stressful criteria.

All of the theories of job related stress rely on the premise that stress is the result of a “misfit, mismatch, or imbalance” (Cooper et al., 2001, p.19) between the resources or abilities of an individual and the demands of the job. While researchers have tried to determine an answer, there does not appear to be a clear cut way to describe the exact nature of the perceived imbalance. Because situations are perceived differently by individuals, what causes an imbalance in one person may not cause an imbalance in another person. It is, therefore, difficult to theorize about the nature of stress in the workplace and telltale signs of stress can not be generalized from employee to employee.

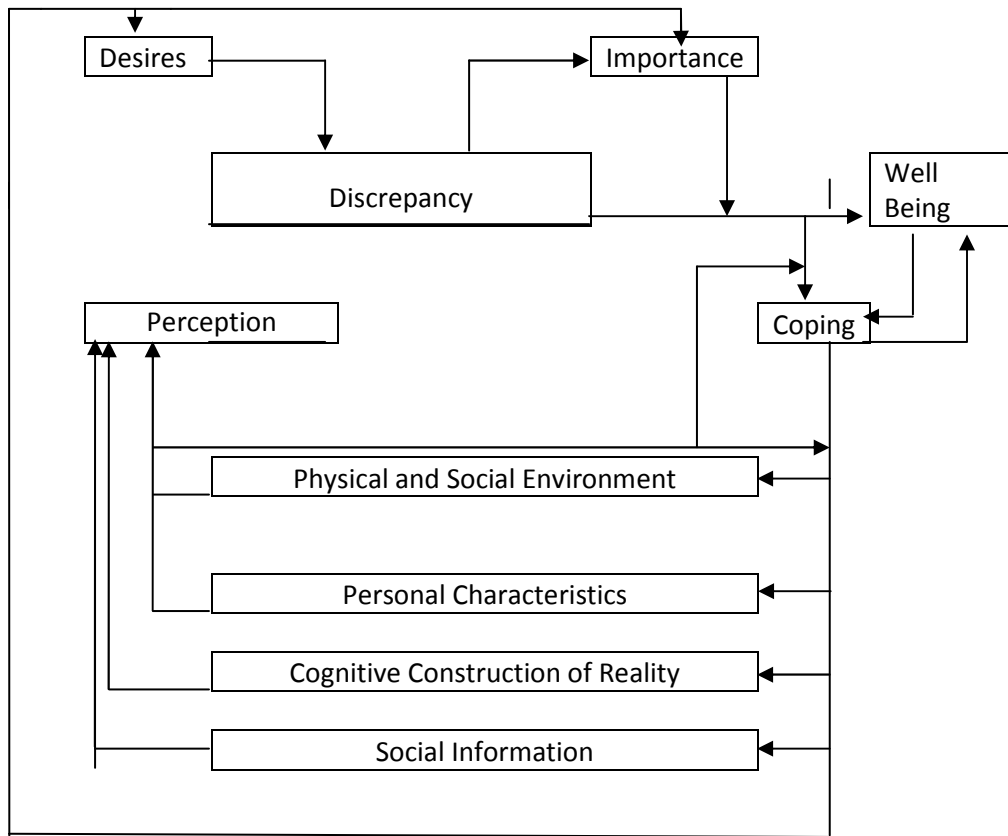


Figure 2. “A Cybernetic Model of Stress, Coping, and Well-Being in Organizations” by J.R. Edwards, 1992, *The Academy of Management Review*, 17(2), pp. 238-274. Copyright 1992 by ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT (NY). Reproduced with permission of Academy of Management (NY) in the format Dissertation via Copyright Clearance Center.

Primary Causes of Work Related Stress and Burnout. Most careers these days have a detailed job description which lists the primary duties of the individual for that particular job, and most people understand that they will have a role to play in any organization where they work. While duties detail what tasks are to be performed, roles have been defined as what each employee believes are expected of him or her (Tubre & Collins, 2000). Because of this, roles are not always clearly defined and are subject to change by management or administrators in terms of specific duties and individual expectations.

Many researchers (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Mitchell, 1990; Bliese & Castro, 2000; Coverman, 1989; Melton & Gaffney, 2010; Pomaki, Supeli, & Verhoeven, 2007; Peterson et al, 1995; Tubre & Collins, 2000) support Whitaker's (1996) claim that there are three primary causes of work-related stress and burnout: role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. However, not all researchers agree to the level of importance each one plays in the development of stress and related burnout.

Role conflict. Role conflict is best defined by Melton and Gaffney (in press) as occurring when an individual receives conflicting messages regarding his or her role from different sources. These messages may separately be clearly defined and understood but the overall nature of the messages lend themselves to contradiction and confusion of an individual's primary role obligation. Role conflict can also occur when an individual attempts to give top priority to one role over another (Coverman, 1989). Ultimately the decision to give top priority to one role makes accomplishing the second role more difficult which creates a stressful situation. According to Bacharach, Bamberger, and Mitchell (1990), role conflict can occur anytime there is an incompatibility between two equally important demands. This can occur when the organization's values and the individual's values are in contradiction, when personal problems arise for an individual, when personal or work-related resources are scarce, or when an individual's personal or work-related obligations are in opposition with, what they see is, their primary role. As such, role conflict can occur between the expectations of people or between the multiple aspects of a single role (Peterson et al, 1995). Regardless, when role conflict occurs it can easily lead to an individual feeling unable to resolve the discrepant expectations of their various roles.

Due to the discord that role conflict can create, it has been closely associated with job stress and “low job satisfaction” (Tubre & Collins, 2000, p. 156). In fact, role conflict “is considered a source of chronic stress, psychological distress, [and] burnout...” (Pomaki, Supeli, & Verhoeven, 2007, p. 317). In this respect, role conflict becomes another piece of the stress cycle. As such, when a person receives conflicting information, they feel stressed which can in turn lead to more conflict as they attempt to resolve the original discrepancy. Ultimately, if left unmediated, this could lead an individual to feeling overwhelmed and overloaded.

Role overload. Despite its similarities to role conflict, role overload is its own piece of the stress and burnout cycle. Role overload as defined by Melton and Gaffney (2010) happens when expectations surmount an individuals capacity to handle them. According to Peterson et al. (1995) role overload occurs when an individual lacks the resources to satisfy their obligations and/or requirements. In addition, Coverman (1989) added the component of time to the concept of role overload. She argued that role overload is having too many duties and too little time to complete them. Role overload can come from trying to satisfactorily meet the expectations of multiple roles. The duties of each role may be clearly defined but overload occurs when there is simply an overabundance of demands.

Role overload has also been shown to equate negatively with job satisfaction (Coverman, 1989) and has been shown to increase psychological distress. This is a logical conclusion since the more pressure a person feels the more likely they are to feel stressed. If role overload is left unmediated, it could potentially lead to role ambiguity for an individual.

Role ambiguity. Role ambiguity happens when a person has a high work load but is unclear as to what he or she should be doing (Bliese & Castro, 2000; Melton & Gaffney, 2010;). According to Bacharach et al. (1990) and Singh (1993), role ambiguity occurs when individuals

do not have all the information required to meet the obligations of their position. This often occurs because the information is “insufficient, inconsistent, or lacking in clarity” (Bacharach et al., 1990, p 417). Role ambiguity most often comes from the role senders, or those in charge who create role ambiguity by not communicating clearly what is expected or communicating “difficult-to-prioritize requirements” (Peterson et al., 1995, p 431). However, role ambiguity can also come from employees who lack information regarding “effective job behaviors” (Tubre & Collins, 2000).

Role ambiguity tends to lead to job dissatisfaction because it often hinders job performance as concerns over how to handle the most critical job duties increase (Singh, 1993). This happens most often in jobs where performance primarily relies on interactions with others (Tubre & Collins, 2000).

All work environments carry some level of conflict, overload, and ambiguity. According to Peterson et al. (1995) this happens because, some [job duties] are ambiguous because they are unusual or unprecedented, and others because they do not fit with people’s established interpretive frames. The sheer quantity of work events requiring attention can generate overload. Work events can stimulate role conflicts by making salient otherwise latent inconsistencies in priorities or expectations (p. 431).

It is easy to see how, even with clearly defined job descriptions, role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity can lead to low levels of job satisfaction and stress. It, therefore, becomes even more crucial for administrators to recognize the signs of stress and mediate before an individual becomes burned out.

Indications of stress. Early researchers investigating the causes of stress and burnout were consistent in their analysis and interpretation of the causes of the phenomena, but the ideas

developed many different connotations depending upon the setting in which the research was conducted (Adams, 1988; Ceyanes, 2004; Littleford, 2007; Pines, 2002). However, there is a general consensus among most researchers that stress and burnout can manifest themselves in both mental and physical ways (Abraham, 2000; Blase & Blase, 2004; Cassel, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Pines, 2002; Wood, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). Mentally, they can result in lack of motivation, poor self-image, poor self-actualization, emotional exhaustion, alienation, little sense of achievement, decreased self-respect, feelings of helplessness, anxiety, and a myriad of other symptoms (Adams, 1988; AL-Bataineh & Van Kirk, 2004; Cassel, 1984; Pines, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). Physically, they can lead to problems associated with fatigue, ulcers, weight loss or gain, addiction to a variety of substances, poor posture, undiagnosed aches and pains, and migraines (Aschuler et al., 1980; Cedoline, 1982; Dworkin, 1987). Maslach and Jackson (1982) summed up the mental and physical signs of stress into three categories: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion. According to many researchers, emotional exhaustion is the basic building block of burnout and the first stage of the burnout process (Grandy, 2003; Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2002; Gaines & Jermier, 1983). Emotional exhaustion is often categorized by feelings of pervasive fatigue and this often leads people to distance themselves emotionally from their work (Maslach, 2003). According to Grandy (2003), people suffering from emotional exhaustion will often initially “surface act” (p. 87); that is, they will change their outward appearance without making any internal changes, which can lead to “emotional dissonance” (p. 87). This emotional dissonance creates deeper feelings of exhaustion as there is a further drain on personal resources due to the “discrepancy between expressions and inner feelings” (Grandy, 2003, p. 89). While most people feel tired and “act” from time to time, people experience

chronic emotional exhaustion when they have persistent role overload, unmediated role conflict, and/or a lack of personal and/or professional resources to do the job (Gaines & Jermier, 1983).

Depersonalization. Depersonalization has been defined by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996) as an indifferent and often times negative attitude which causes people to distance themselves from co-workers, clients, and family members both physically and mentally. Depersonalization can be seen as very similar to dehumanization, which has connotations of hostility toward others and indifference (Garden, 1987). Depersonalization can often be manifested as a blatant disregard of others feelings, a refusal to accommodate requests of others, and an emotional withdrawal from others (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Maslach, 1982).

Lack of personal accomplishment. While emotional exhaustion and depersonalization can usually be easily identified by others, a lack of personal accomplishment, as it relates to stress, is an internalized feeling that may not manifest itself outwardly. When stress builds up, people often become unmotivated, disengaged, and develop persistent feelings of inefficacy toward their work (Maslach, 2003). Often times they will appear to lack vitality and ambition which serve to increase their feelings of non-accomplishment.

Indications of stress, while highly researched, are also very individualized. In all cases, it is critical to remember the individual behind the stress. Some individuals will be highly stressed and not exhibit any of the three sub-categories of stress. In addition, it is possible that an individual will have stress manifest itself in unanticipated ways such as the development of an addiction or the use of humor. It is imperative for administrators to remember that each teacher represents a unit of one and, therefore, blanket stress reduction techniques may not be appropriate.

At-Risk Populations

While stress and burnout “may be common to all jobs” (Narayanan, Menon, & Spector, 1999, p. 64), researchers have observed that people in “helping-type professions” tend to have more long term negative reactions to stress and burnout than people in other professions; this includes teachers, counselors, and people in all aspects of the medical profession (De Silva, Hewage, & Fonseka, 2009). According to De Silva et al., (2009) this is most often due to a desire of individuals entering these fields to have “significant contributions to the lives of those they serve” (p. 53). This type of work is also very emotional and research has shown that it is both the quantity of relationships and quality of experiences that lead to higher levels of stress and burnout in these occupations (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Woman in most Western countries have been shown to suffer from stress and burnout in greater numbers than men (Bekker, Croon, & Bressers, 2005). This could be due to the overwhelming numbers of women in these helping-type professions, as opposed to men; but there are other considerations as well. One is simply gender differences in general. There are issues that women face as they age (menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause) that could exacerbate the physical and emotional symptoms of stress (Bekker, et al. 2005; Narayanan et al., 1999). In addition, even in the pro-equality times we live in, women are still the primary caregivers of children and older parents. In addition, while not necessarily the primary breadwinner, women are most often responsible for the family budget and primary housekeeping duties. These responsibilities add non-job related external stressors to women (Bekker et al., 2005).

Narayanan et al. (1999) also discovered that, for women, stress is based more in interpersonal conflicts than for men. They speculate that because interpersonal relationships are

an expression of emotionality for women, when there are conflicts in these relationships it causes stress. Bekker et al. (2005) concurred with these findings in their study and found that women tend to have higher levels of emotional exhaustion when compared to men. This is not to say that men do not burnout. Rather, men who are stressed tend to “depersonalize people and to exhibit negative attitudes” (Bekker et al., 2005, p 224). According to Narayanan et al (1999) men also tend to attribute stress more to time constraints and wasted effort than to interpersonal factors. In other words, men tend to see stress as more “problem-focused and women more emotion-focused” (Narayanan et al., 1999, p 65). Researchers have also found that even when exposed to similar stressful situations, men and women respond differently, and it is speculated that this is a condition of gender as well (Pearlin, 1989).

Coping with Stress and Burnout

Individual responses to stress and burnout have been shown to vary across occupations, age, gender, and time (Narayanan et al., 1999). In a study which quantified previously acquired qualitative responses, van der Klink, Blonk, Schene, and van Dijk (2001), categorized responses into four types: “focus, content, method, and duration” (p. 270). In their study, the researchers accessed four databases to locate and review 48 different studies which were published in 45 different articles (van der Klink et al., 2001). Using a variety of statistical methods, van der Klink et al. (2001) found that most employees benefited positively from stress-reducing interventions. The researchers also noted in that those interventions which were aimed at individuals were far more effective than those interventions aimed at the organization (van der Klink et al., 2001).

Van der Klink et al., (2001) explained that focus responses were equivalent to what is commonly referred to as “stress management training” (p. 270) where an individual aims to

increase personal resources and to change the occupational roles causing the stress. These responses are, in essence, coping behaviors an individual has learned in order to effectively deal with stress.

The content category encourages interventions in “organizational development and job redesign” (van der Klink et al., 2001, p. 270). Researchers discovered that those individuals who had a high level of job control were more positively effected by stress reducing interventions than those individuals who classified themselves as having a low level of job control. van der Klink et al. (2001) attribute this phenomenon to the possibility that individuals with higher degrees of job control are more easily able to implement stress-reduction techniques and to practice these techniques.

The category labeled method encompasses varying modes of alleviating stress such as “cognitive-behavioral approaches...relaxation techniques...and multi-modal interventions” (van der Klink et al., 2001, p. 270). A cognitive-behavioral approach targets a reinforcement of coping behaviors and desires a cognitive change in the way stress is mediated within an individual. Relaxation techniques, on the other hand, are designed to deal with the immediate physical and emotional consequences of stress. The multi-modal approach combines the cognitive behavioral approach and relaxation techniques to help individuals acquire both “passive and active coping skills” (van der Klink et al., 2001, p 270). van der Klink et al. (2001) also discovered that of the approaches studied, the cognitive-behavioral approach was significantly more effective (at the $p < .005$ level) in increasing the “quality of work life, enhancing psychologic resources,...and reducing complaints” (p 274). However for psychophysiologic effectiveness, relaxation techniques worked the best.

The final category, duration, places the focus for intervention on the “organization as a whole” (van der Klink et al., 2001, p 270). In their study, van der Klink et al. (2001) found that interventions focused on the organization as a whole were much less effective than individual interventions. They speculated that because results were not immediately felt on an individual level, people were less inclined to believe the interventions were effective (van der Klink et al., 2001). In addition, changes in an organization, even those designed to relieve stress over the long-term, create stress in the short-term.

In learning to effectively cope with stress van der Klink et al., 2001 pointed out that the type of work people do should drive the type of interventions that should be implemented. In some cases, professional assistance may be necessary to adequately alleviate an individual’s stress.

Multiple Roles of an Educator

It is commonly held knowledge that teachers have a variety of tasks to do everyday. Nowadays, the role of the teacher goes “far beyond information giving” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 335) and the multitude of tasks facing teachers “are not simple or easy” (p. 334). To get an idea of the many roles a teacher plays each and every day, Harden and Crosby (2000) researched the various tasks teachers face and placed them into 12 roles within six activity areas (see Figure 3). It is important to note, that these activities and roles are not hierarchical in nature but rather are all aspects of the whole role of a teacher.

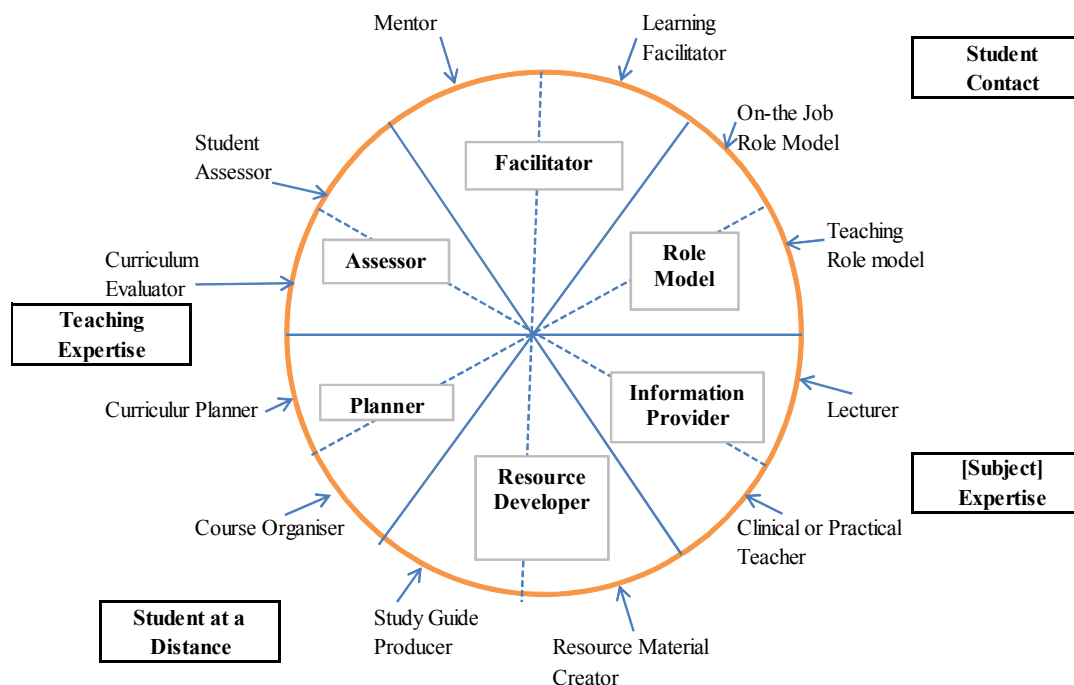


Figure 3. From “AMEE Guide No 20: The good teacher is more than a lecturer-the twelve roles of the teacher,” by R.M. Harden and J. Crosby, 2000, *Medical Teacher*, 22, p. 336. Copyright 2001 by Taylor and Francis, Ltd. Reprinted with permission.

Teacher as a Role Model

Harden and Crosby (2000) stated that teachers, as role models, have two distinct roles to play. The first is the “on-the-job role model” (p. 338). Here the teacher is expected to model what is to be learned for the students. Just by role-modeling enthusiasm for their subject and reasoning skills teachers impart knowledge to students about how to operate effectively in the world of work (Harden & Crosby, 2000). In addition, to the “on-the-job role model” role teachers have they can also be a “role model as a teacher” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 339). In the case of role modeling as a teacher, teachers are showing students not just what it means to teach but how to perform a variety of duties both in the classroom and outside of it, in small groups, and during one-on-one tutoring. Being a role model to students gives teachers the

opportunity to kindle student's curiosity and drive for further understanding (Harden & Crosby, 2000). Even if teachers do not see themselves as role models, it is hard to argue that students are not "influenced by the example set before them" (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 339).

The Teacher as an Information Provider

The second activity area described by Harden and Crosby (2000) is the teacher as an information provider. They posit there are two ways in which teachers provide information to students. The first is as a lecturer. As a lecturer, the teacher gets the opportunity to impart information, in a hopefully enthusiastic and infectious format (Harden & Crosby, 2000). The second role as an information provider is that of a "clinical or practical teacher" (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p.337). We most often think of clinical teachers as those who work in higher education, but teachers at the secondary level can also be clinical teachers as well. Clinical teachers are those who reflect on their knowledge and "illuminate" their process of decision making for the student (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 338). In this way the student is, in effect, an adult "apprentice" to the teacher (Harden & Crosby, p. 338).

The Teacher as a Resource Developer

The next activity area that Harden and Crosby (2000) discussed is that of the teacher as a resource developer. As a resource developer teachers become builders of activities and creators of learning environments which foster intellectual curiosity (Harden & Crosby, 2000). In addition to developing the resources, teachers need to be able to provide study guides for the students in order for students to take learning into their own hands. In this way, the teacher becomes more of a "manager of students' learning" (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 341). Because of the time constraints often placed on teachers, there is a limited amount of time for classroom learning. Providing students with guides allows them access to materials and tells the students

“what they should learn- the expected learning outcomes...-the learning opportunities available and whether they have learned it...” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 341).

The Teacher as a Planner

The fourth activity area described by Harden and Crosby (2000) is that of the teacher as a planner. While most people will acknowledge that teachers plan for their classes, Harden and Crosby (2000), broke this section down into two separate roles the teacher plays: that of curriculum planner and that of course planner.

As a curriculum planner, teachers have the opportunity to have the greatest impact on what students learn because teachers are free, to a certain degree, to individualize the subject matter (Harden & Crosby, 2000). Planning properly can present “a significant challenge for the teacher” in addition to the “time and expertise” needed to do an effective job (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 341). As course planner, teachers must be able to take the principles of the curriculum and relate it to the course being taught (Harden & Crosby, 2000). No longer are courses merely subject specific but rather teachers must plan for integrated curriculums and courses which will meet the outcomes specified by the institution (Harden & Crosby, 2000,).

Teacher as an Assessor

Few would argue against the idea that education thrives on assessment. Teachers are required to assess students many times throughout the school year and these assessments can make or break a school and/or system. As an assessor, the teacher has two roles. The first role is that of “the student assessor” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 340). Assessment of students “must be regarded as an integral part of the teacher’s role” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 340). In addition, as an assessor, a teacher must also assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and their

ability to deliver the required information (Harden & Crosby, 2000). In essence, teachers must be accountable for the information in the curriculum and their ability to teach it.

The Teacher as Facilitator

Being a facilitator is the last activity described in the research by Harden and Crosby in 2000. Here the teacher is more than a teacher; here the teacher is a mentor and facilitator of learning. A teacher is often seen as “dispenser of information” rather than a “manager of student learning” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 339), when in fact, Harden and Crosby (2000) emphatically state that the role of the teacher is “not to inform students but to encourage and facilitate [students] to learn for themselves using the problem as a focus for the learning” (p. 339). The last role of the teacher is that of mentor. In the realm of teaching, mentoring becomes less about looking at a student’s academic record and more about taking a look at the student in the context of the big picture (Harden & Crosby, 2000). In essence, mentoring is about providing a “supportive relationship” (Harden & Crosby, 2000, p. 339) outside and in addition to the education relationship.

Each of these 12 teacher roles requires time and attention. If this was all teachers had to worry about they would be able to use their own discretion on how to deal effectively with their roles. However, teaching is not an isolated event. It takes place within a larger context and that context has to be considered when looking at teacher stress.

Stress In Teaching

Because schools are organizations, it stands to reason that those people working in the organization would be susceptible to the same types of stress and strain that any organization has (Wan, 1991). As such, teaching, worldwide, has been and is still considered to be a very stressful occupation (Hansen & Sullivan, 2003; Lampert, 1985; Thomas & Kiley, 1994;

Tuettmann, 1991; van Dick & Wagner, 2001; Wan, 1991). Many researchers have studied the nature of teacher stress, and although stress inducing phenomena differ for individuals and organizations, there seem to be consistencies in the teaching profession which tend persist regardless of individual factors (Olivier & Venter, 2003). It should be noted that while several of the factors will be discussed, these are not to be construed as the only factors leading to stress and burnout in educators. It is also important to remember that burnout is not an isolated event nor can it be attributed to just one factor.

Teachers admit to feeling most overwhelmed with increased paperwork, meetings, accountability, salary conditions, difficulties with classroom management, lack of adequate resources, lack of administrator support, low status of the profession, and student attitudes (Blase, 1986b; Friedman, 2000; Lampert, 1985; Tuettmann, 1991; Tye & O'Brien, 2002; Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis, & Parker, 2000; Wood & McCarthy, 2002; Yong & Yue, 2007). These stressors come in addition to the same "life stressors as the general population" (Wilhelm, et al., 2000, p. 291). The difference seems to be that the occupational stressors for teachers tend to be unending. Even with recuperative school breaks (ie: summer) teachers still feel the pressures of the above occupational stressors due to the nature of public and educational policy to "nam[e]..., blam[e]..., and sham[e]" (Troman & Woods, 2000, p. 271) failing schools and teachers. This idea is built upon the one stated by Swick in 1989 who said that "teachers often experience much public criticism" (p.12). In addition, according to Getzels and Guba (1955), even though a teacher should be considered an expert in their field, most people "feel free to exert pressure and make demands on how he [or she] shall function in his [or her] own field of expertise" (p.30).

Friedman, (2000) grouped the stressors that teachers experience into four domains “...tasks pertaining to students...relations with students...tasks pertaining to the school as an organization...[and] relations with administration and colleagues” (p. 601). This work, coincides with the research of Oi-Ling (1995) which said that teacher stress results from what is happening in the classroom and, while not to the same degree, administrative policies and procedures. However, in considering the primary causes of stress discussed earlier, all these causes of stress can also easily fit into the categories of role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity.

Role Conflict in Teaching

The role of the teacher has changed over the past several decades. With the implementation of laws such as the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (1997) and No Child Left Behind (2001) teachers can no longer afford to be just a teacher. Nowadays, teachers are accountable to many stakeholders and are expected to make a “noticeable change in their student’s lives” (Freidman, 2000, p. 601) in addition to educating them on subject matter. However, many teachers find that even with great enthusiasm for their subject and a great deal of planning, their efforts make little impact on students (Yong &Yue, 2007). As such, teaching demands “considerable investment of self” but may result in feelings of low achievement (Grace, 1972, p. 15). In addition, the results of teaching are often invisible and because of this teachers are often left unfulfilled emotionally (Grace, 1972).

It is well established, based on the work in 2000 by Harden and Crosby, that teachers have multiple roles to perform. However, occupational role conflict for teachers occurs when a teacher is given more than one primary role in the organization and then is given inconsistent information on the expected behaviors of the roles (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982). In considering the roles listed by Harden and Crosby (2000), it becomes evident how these roles can overlap,

buildup, and become misunderstood which all lead to stress. Teachers are no longer able to sit back and impart information; rather they are required to be involved on a variety of levels with all aspects of education. It is no wonder then, “that teachers, when compared to people in other professions, had the highest levels of occupational stress” (Oi-Ling, 1995, p. 108).

Teachers are constantly required to resolve their internal role conflicts so they can present themselves as a whole person to their students (Lambert, 1985). However, these conflicts are not often black and white with clear lines of separation; instead they are inseparable and as such can cause even greater degrees of stress as teachers struggle to maintain an internal and external homeostasis.

Role Ambiguity in Teachers

Being a teacher seems like a clear cut job to most people outside of the profession. However, teachers are often assigned a multitude of other tasks and without consistent information on their “rights, duties, and responsibilities” (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982) these tasks get muddled together with what is seen as their primary job: to teach. These roles are often left intentionally vague (Swick, 1989) and this can cause increased stress, because in addition to the expected job duties of a teacher (to plan and to teach) they are often expected to meet arbitrary standards of success based on state and federal guidelines.

According to Helsing (2007), the very nature of teaching is uncertain, so it should come as no surprise that role ambiguity is a cause of teacher stress. She explained that teaching is centered on “predicting, interpreting, and assessing others’ thoughts, emotions, and behavior” (Helsing, 2007, p. 35) and teachers are ultimately left on their own to resolve the role ambiguities that inevitably accompany human relationships. They are often required to choose between the roles of “encourager and evaluator” and are required to find ways to “challenge

students without defeating them” (Helsing, 2007, p. 35). In addition, teachers ultimately have to “encourage children’s overall development while *guaranteeing* academic progress” (Helsing, 2007, p. 35; italics by author added for emphasis). These roles become increasingly uncertain in schools where reform is needed. In these schools, teachers find they have even less of a idea of what their roles are as previous roles and responsibilities change (Helsing, 2007). This uncertainty and indecision if left unanswered can cause underlying stress to develop and manifest itself into all aspects of teaching.

Role Overload in Teachers

In all, the most pressing cause of stress for teachers is role overload. From an outsiders perspective teachers merely go into the classroom, teach for five hours, and then go home; not to mention only working nine months a year. However, those in education are aware that this is a pipedream. Teachers are often expected in their classrooms early and are required to stay late. They are grading papers at home during the evening when most of the general population has settled down to relax. Teachers are often fielding phone calls from parents during their off times and are expected to arrange their schedules to be available to students. They are expected to deal effectively with unruly students and apathetic students. Even in their off time (i.e., holidays or summer) teachers are often working to plan for the upcoming year.

Occupational stress is not isolated to teaching. However, as shown time and again, teachers tend to feel the pressures of stress more than other occupations. While individuals can implement stress-reducing techniques, administrators and principles, are not immune to the effects stressed and burnout teachers have on classroom learning. Therefore, it becomes important for administrators to understand how to recognize and evaluate stress and burnout in teachers.

Assessing Stress and Burnout

Adequately assessing the causes and multiple dimensions of stress and burnout has been something many organizations have hoped to achieve. Researchers have been studying the phenomenon for many years and yet the results have produced very little knowledge or direction when it comes to prevention of burnout (Eldridge, Blostein, & Richardson, 1983). This is likely due to the fact that the primary mode of studying burnout is in self-reports (Maslach & Schaufeli, n.d.), whether they are instruments filled out by the participants or interviews with senior level management regarding performance. However, these studies may not adequately report the results due to distortion of the facts by the participants or the organization in the study (Eldridge et al. 1983). In addition, Maslach and Schaufeli (n.d.) state most previous studies tended to focus on “job factors” (Maslach & Schaufeli, n.d., p. 7) rather than other possibly related variables.

By far, the most prevalent research is conducted post-burnout. While burnout inventories seem to try and capture those educators who are prone to burnout, most of these inventories are designed to examine causes after the fact. One of the most widely used instruments is the Maslach Burnout Inventory for educators (MBI-ES) developed by Maslach and Jackson in 1981 (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1995). Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed their burnout inventory in response to “the need for an instrument to assess experienced burnout” (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p.112). This 22-item inventory is widely used in education settings as it has been specifically designed with the educator in mind to measure burnout in education over three dimensions including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Byrne, 1994; Lee & Ashforth, 1990).

Maslach and Jackson (1981) considered an employee's emotional withdrawal to be "the central quality of burnout and the most obvious manifestation of the syndrome" (Taris, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2005, p. 238). They determined that when employees develop "negative and cynical" attitudes about their clients, there tends to be a direct correlation with higher levels of emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p. 99). As these feelings escalate, employees no longer see clients as "deserving" of their attention (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p.99) and begin "treating [them] as objects or numbers rather than as people" (Lee & Ashforth, 1990). In addition, employees begin to "evaluate [them]selves negatively...[and feel] dissatisfied with their own accomplishments on the job" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p. 99). It has been debated among researchers and remains unclear whether the three dimensions of burnout described in the MBI-ES are causal in their relationship or whether they follow developmental phases in the burnout process (Taris et al., 2005).

Despite its being the most widely used inventory to study burnout in educators, there are some issues with the MBI-ES that need to be addressed. Primarily, the instrument sets cut-off points based on "arbitrary statistical norms" (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1995, p. 1084). Because of this, there is no room to "allow [for] differentiation between levels of burnout" (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1995, p. 1084) which means that this inventory cannot be used in the "clinical diagnosis" (p. 1084) of burnout. In addition, there has been concern among researchers as to whether the MBI-ES can be used to predict developing burnout or if it just measures the end-point of the phenomenon (Taris et al., 2005).

Administrator's Role

It has been said that "the teacher leader relationship is pivotal to the ethos of every school and is by nature profoundly emotional" (Beatty, 2000). Beatty (2000) further states that crucial

to the learning experience of children is the relationship between principals and teachers. In fact, Beatty (2000) reports that emotional interactions with principals tend to remain in teachers' memories and affect them "psychologically and physically" (para. 10) throughout the school and in their classrooms. Sitler (2007) concurs and reports that many teachers feel undermined by administrative practices which, in turn, creates an atmosphere of instability within the school and classroom and ultimately impacts student learning. Therefore, while it is well known that a supervisor impacts an employee's attitude and performance, in the case of teachers the "characteristics" and leadership style of the school administrator are "critical to teacher performance and school effectiveness" (Blase, Dedrick, & Strathe, 1986, p. 159). In fact, according to Ramsey (2005), how administrators treat teachers is "the single most powerful determiner of how teachers feel about themselves, their jobs, and their careers" (p. 46). Administrators in schools do much more than manage people, they "affect virtually all aspects of school life" (Blase & Kirby, 1992, p. 1) and as such "set the tone for a community of...teachers who freely exchange information and ideas" (Scholastic, 2010). As such, whether teachers see an administrator contributing to or alleviating stress can greatly impact the health and well-being of his or her teachers and school (Nagel and Brown, 2003; Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

Ineffective Administration's Impact on Teacher Stress

A study of 81 teachers in five states conducted by Spaulding (1997) determined that teachers recognized "seven major categories of ineffective principal influence upon teacher...behavior" (p. 39). Through qualitative inquiry into the principal-teacher relationship, Spaulding (1997) found that teachers may feel the stress of only one, or they may feel the stress of a combination of two or more, or they may feel all. Using "triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking" (p.40), Spaulding (1997) found that regardless of which category (or

categories) of stress are being felt by a teacher, the influence of the principal on the school climate, and as such on teachers, can greatly impact teacher stress.

The seven areas that teachers felt administrators were ineffective included “lack of participatory decision making; lack of support; showing favoritism; unclear/unreasonable expectations; flexing muscle; micro-managing; and contradictory body language” (Spaulding, 1997, p. 41). In regards to a lack of participation in decision making, several teachers in the study stated that “teachers...often ‘go through the motions’ without committing to a decision...they had little or no say in” (Spaulding, 1997, p. 43). Having little or no influence on the decision making procedures in the school was shown to be a stress inducer for many teachers in a study conducted by Leithwood and Beatty (2008). Without this shared decision making, teachers feel their opinions are not being taken seriously and begin distrusting whether they will receive support when they question decisions that are being made (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

A lack of support was cited by 54 out of the 62 teachers used in Spaulding’s (1997) study as a behavior of ineffective leaders. The major area in support where teachers felt the principal to most lacking was in “student discipline” (Spaulding, 1997, p. 44). This lack of support creates negative feelings and “overwhelming hopelessness” for the situation (Spaulding, 1997, p. 40). In addition to a lack of support, teachers often feel that principals play favorites with the teachers in the school and that these teachers receive “special treatment” (Spaulding, 1997, p. 45). Teachers also stated that principals are continually asking teachers “to do more with less” and that they keep getting job duties added “without anything being deleted” (Spaulding, 1997, p. 46). In essence teachers are feeling a sense of “strangulation by regulation” (Ramsey, 2005). Teachers said they also felt trapped and unable to discuss issues openly and freely with their principals because the principals would “flex their muscles” and teachers felt they would be retaliated

against if they didn't "conform" to the principals' ideas (Spaulding, 1997, p. 45). When principals do flex their muscles teachers stated that they begin to feel "nervous, incompetent, distrusted, and under constant observation" (Spaulding, 1997, p. 48). They began to distrust the intentions of the principal and closed themselves off professionally so as not to draw undue attention to themselves (Spaulding, 1997). Lastly, teachers felt that ineffective principals don't always say what they mean (Spaulding, 1997). This creates a further level of distrust and feelings of "powerlessness" (Spaulding, 1997, p. 50). An ineffective administrator can have just as great an impact on the emotional well being of a teacher as an effective one. However, ineffective administrators create a pervasive climate of "distrust and unhappiness" (Spaulding, 1997, p. 47) that permeates into teachers at a deep emotional level as teachers feel their complaints or concerns are just dismissed rather than taken seriously (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

In addition to Spaulding's (1997) seven categories of ineffective principals, administrator style is often considered one of the causes of teacher stress and burnout (Mazur & Lynch, 1989). Ahghar (2009) reported on two administrative styles that negatively support teacher emotions. The first one he labeled as "directive behavior" (p. 322). This style corresponds with a job-oriented principal who follows Weber's view of work in which personal emotions are inconsequential to the job. Ahghar's (2009) second administrative style is "restrictive behavior" (p. 322). This style is characterized by leaders who use threats to ensure compliance and make the workplace one of increasing difficulty. The result of both of the styles is that the administrator is seen just one more person in the building rather than a resource for dealing with stress. However, while administrators are in the position of authority and, as such, can

contribute to teacher stress, they are also in the unique position to be able to alleviate, if not prevent, teacher burnout.

Administrator Role in Alleviating Burnout

In a 2006 master's thesis study, Ngobeni, found that as the head of the school, an administrator's leadership style can play a critical role in alleviating some of the stress teachers feel by being the person who "absorbs, modifies, or even suppresses" (p. 41) outside stressors and protects teachers from their consequences. In order to do this, administrators have to be open to recognizing the "signs and causes of stress" (Ngobeni, 2006, p. 45), including their own role in the creation of stress. Administrators must also learn to be "empathetic and forge alliances" (Farber, 2000, p. 679) with teachers in order to help them. It is important for leaders to remember that they can be "[an] emotionally significant "other" in teachers' lives" and leaders must be aware of how their leadership style impacts this emotional relationship (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). Leaders are also cautioned by Northouse (2007) to remember that "their actions...occur on [both] a task level and a relationship level" (p. 77).

Regardless of administrative style, the level of support that teachers receive has the most influence on stress and burnout (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). In fact, Mazur and Lynch (1989) reported that the principal's approach to decision-making was far less important to teachers than the level of support they felt. This information is not new. In 1957, Lautenschlager cited three important needs that teachers require in order to feel supported: "to be accepted and appreciated, to feel successful, [and] to understand their immediate world" (p. 258). Litrell and Billingsley (1994) went further when they stated that principal support could actually stop the cycle of stress and burnout.

According to a quantitative study done by Litrell and Billingsley (1994), of 603 teachers in Virginia, administrator support “includes four broad dimensions of behaviors: emotional, appraisal, instrumental, and informational” (p. 298). Within each of these categories, the researchers looked at areas where the administrator could provide the support needed to “break...the link between stress and burnout” (Litrell & Billingsley, 1994, p. 298). In a qualitative study of 836 teachers, Blase and Kirby (1992) also found that by giving emotional support, administrators demonstrate respect for the teachers and show that they value the teacher’s expertise. They take an interest in the work of the teacher and trust the teacher to do what’s best inside the classroom (Blase & Kirby, 1992; Litrell & Billingsley, 1994). Using the principals of comparative analysis in their data coding, Blase and Kirby (1992) found that the results of this alone can produce a higher level of teacher morale through increased teacher confidence and effectiveness. Through appraisal of their work, administrators provide “frequent and constructive feedback” as well as “clear guidelines regarding job responsibilities” (Litrell & Billingsley, 1994, p. 298). They stay involved and show that ideas are valued, even when challenged (Blase & Blase, 2001). Administrators also show support by giving teachers adequate planning time, space, and resources, and they assist the teacher in balancing teaching and non-teaching duties, and encourage professional development by giving teachers time off for in-service training (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby, 1992). Blase & Kirby (1992) summarized much of their previous research and discovered that teachers most often reported administrators showed teachers support through praise. While in this research, teachers reported this as one of the more effective practices of administrators, it still fails to take into account what the teacher actually wants or needs in the ways of support; praise is a wonderful acknowledgement but doesn’t necessarily alleviate on-going stress.

The roles and responsibilities of a school administrator are vast and even those administrators who have their finger on the pulse of the school, can overlook the needs of teachers in favor of those of the students, the board office, or other stakeholders. In fact, Leithwood and Beatty (2008) stated that it is becoming increasingly difficult for an administrator to separate out the various job roles he or she has, of which dealing with teacher emotions is just one, “albeit a critical one” (p. 90). Because of this, teachers often feel left out of decision making and unsupported by their administrators. By considering the expertise of the teacher when making decisions and allowing for shared decision making, the administrator can show support and thereby decrease stress (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby, 1992). This idea is not a new one, in 1976 Chernow and Chernow were reminding school administrators good ideas flow from teachers as well as administrators, and that good administrators use the expertise of the teacher’s experiences to develop new ideas.

Even with the preponderance of information available to administrators on how to alleviate teacher stress, it continues to be problem in education. As teachers continue to burnout year after year, administrators are left in the position of trying to pick up the pieces after the fact. The questions for administrators, then, are how to recognize when a teacher is feeling stressed and what constitutes the different levels of support from the teacher’s point of view.

Chapter Summary

It is widely accepted that work creates stress at one time or another for most individuals. However, even with theoretical models of stress and burnout being developed and refined, it is acknowledged that the exact causes of an individuals stress are unique. In addition, stress and burnout manifest themselves in many ways which are unique to the individual and therefore difficult to measure. Despite this ambiguity, decades of research has shown that teaching is a

stressful job, and those schools where leaders have high demands and offer low control can create unfavorable working conditions which often result in higher levels of teacher stress (Söderfeldt, Söderfeldt, Ohlson, Theorell, & Jones, 2000).

In addition, this previous research has shown, among other things, a high correlation of teacher stress and burnout to administrative support (Adams, 1988, Ceyanes, 2004, Littleford, 2007) and the relationship between teachers and principals. These relationships can have a significant effect on the culture and climate of schools as well as student achievement, and a key component of these relationships is open and honest communication between teachers and principals (Beatty, 2000; Eden, 1997; Nagel & Brown, 2003). However, even with open communication and positive administrator support, a large number of teachers continues to leave the profession year after year, due in part to feeling overwhelmed emotionally and experiencing conflict, ambiguity, and overload in their roles.

With the plethora of literature on stress in teaching, it would be easy to conclude that all the necessary research in this areas of teacher stress and burnout has been done; however, with many stressed and burned out teachers leaving the profession every year, it is evident that previous research has failed to present any teacher preferred solutions that administrators can employ when a teacher is stressed and vulnerable to burnout.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The researcher used a collective case study approach to this research to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data from approximately 171 teachers in a rural community in South Georgia. This chapter discusses the researcher's theoretical paradigm, researcher assumptions, the research questions, and the research design which included, the selection of cases, quantitative and qualitative data sources, procedures, and data analysis.

Theoretical Paradigm

Because the researcher agreed with D.T. Campbell that all research has some qualitative component to it (as cited in <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/gentrans/pop2f.cfm>), this research employed a collective case study design. As such, it employed multiple sources of data, both quantitative and qualitative. As stated in Chapter I, the role of the researcher in this study was to investigate the phenomenon of how teachers perceive administrators react when teachers are stressed. A large part of this involved connecting feelings and desired outcomes together. The difficult part was in understanding, and remembering, that stress levels change almost daily, that burnout was not an isolated event, and that the researcher was asking the participants to project what they needed. Accordingly, the case study method was the most appropriate for this investigation as it allowed the researcher to explore teacher burnout and how teachers perceived the support of their principals from various perspectives. In essence, the researcher was asking teachers to begin to evaluate their own stress cycle and construct a desired resolution. The multiple realities of constructivism allowed this constant process of maturation to influence the various outcomes available and allowed teachers to learn from previous experiences. By

merging knowledge with action but allowing for impermanence of thought, constructivist theory gave a more naturalistic picture of this self-construction and growth.

In addition to the constructivist theory used in this research, a humanistic-existential philosophy was employed by the researcher. Though the paradigms of constructivism and existentialism seem, on the surface, to be in contradiction to one another, it is the argument of many that these paradigms are effective in psychotherapy when used together rather than as individual modes of thinking (Klugman, 1997). While there are several similarities between the paradigms, the concept of “life as a process of continual development” (Richert, 1999, p. 168) was the most relevant to this research. Basically both theories hold that the construction of the self process is in a constant state of movement and can not be considered static. Using the theories together allowed the researcher to create a balance between participant introspection and participant observation.

Researcher Personal Narrative and Assumptions

In her role as a counselor, the researcher has had the pleasure of working with numerous teachers. These teachers ranged in experience from brand-new to very seasoned teachers. All of them had at one time or another felt the stresses of teaching. However, the researcher often found herself talking with teachers after school, on breaks, between meetings, and in the grocery store, and was dismayed to see the almost constant apathy they portrayed toward their profession. At the time, the researcher felt certain that they had just found an outlet for the frustrations because she did not work in the schools with them. In essence, the researcher was an impartial ear to listen to them.

When the researcher went to work for a small school system, she began to watch the teachers very closely. She noticed that their emotional state greatly impacted how they taught in

the classroom, their level of interaction with the students, and their level of interaction with colleagues. If a particular teacher was feeling stressed, it quickly got around the building and the researcher would hear other teachers say things like “Oh, that’s just John. He’s never happy; just ignore him” or “Watch out; Susan’s on the war path.” The researcher began to wonder, if other teachers felt this way, what was happening to students in these classrooms? Adults could easily avoid John or Susan, but what about the child who has to take his or her class? They could not just avoid them.

As the researcher entered into a doctoral program, she knew she wanted to study teacher stress for no other reason than to try and figure out why certain teachers were appearing so apathetic about their chosen careers. After taking a class in administrative theory, the research focus became more settled on what principals were doing to help these teachers. The researcher started thinking about work in non-educational settings and how managers interacted with employees in those fields. The researcher knew that in many of the places it would have been cause for concern with management if other employees had mentioned person A was “on the war path” or that person B was never happy and they were going to ignore him or her. The researcher wondered then what principals were doing to combat some of the negativity that some teachers appeared to be feeling. The researcher was not familiar with and had not heard about employee assistance programs for teachers and most teachers could not just talk to Human Resources in the middle of the day since it was usually housed miles from their schools.

The more the researcher learned about the varying duties most teachers have, she began to understand more and more why they were feeling stressed and apathetic; however, it still did not explain what was being done about it. The researcher saw principals provide professional development or doughnuts in the break room, but teachers would often mumble under their

breath about these attempts. In the case of professional development, it was seen as one more thing they had to do; the teacher lounge treats were viewed with cynicism. Finally, the researcher wondered if anyone had actually talked to teachers about what they need and want to help them alleviate some of their stress.

This line of inquiry brought the researcher to where she is today. The researcher wanted to help teachers stay positive and passionate about their careers. She also wanted to help teachers find their voices to ask for help when needed and to give principals “first-hand” recommendations for helping these teachers. Admittedly, the researcher had some basic assumptions about the relationship between teachers and their principals. First, the researcher believed that principals assumed they are already doing everything they can. It can easily be imagined that most principals take teacher stress as a consequence of the job and try to provide as much assistance as they reasonably can. However, the researcher assumed that they had never asked teachers what type of assistance they needed; rather, they just did what they thought would help and moved on to the next task. The researcher also made the assumption that teachers wanted the help of the principal. Whether job related or not, stress will impact job performance. However, it could be just as likely that a teacher did not want the principal to interfere or try to help.

Regardless of these assumptions, the researcher believed it was imperative to find a way to assist teachers who felt stressed. In the researcher’s opinion, it stood to reason that school leaders had to be the ones to extend a hand in an offer to help. After all, they were responsible for creating a healthy working environment, so they had to be able to provide that support to teachers and students alike.

Research Methods

Alleviating the causes and consequences of teacher stress and burnout has long been an ideal for those in educational administration. Therefore, this study sought to answer the question of what teachers, who were experiencing stress and burnout symptoms, perceived their administrators were doing to assist them in successfully combating the stress and possible burnout they were experiencing.

Research Questions

The character of educational administrators could help teachers remain positive and enthusiastic about their work (Blase & Kirby, 1992). As such, it was important to understand what school principals were, or were not, doing to support teachers, who were experiencing stress. Therefore, this study focused on the following research question: What do middle-grade teachers in Georgia perceive their administrators are doing to assist them in successfully combating any stress and burnout they are experiencing?

Sub-questions in this study include:

Sub-question 1: What is the proportion of middle grade teachers who are feeling stressed and burned out to those who are not?

Sub-question 2: What are middle grade teachers currently doing to alleviate stress?

Sub-question 3: What do middle grade teachers in Georgia need from school administrators to assist them in alleviating stress and burnout?

Research Design

The researcher in this study examined the phenomenon of teacher stress and burnout in relation to principal support behaviors by utilizing a collective case study approach. Collective case studies are used when a researcher wishes to describe in detail a particular event, process,

program, or activity (Miller & Salkind, 2002). The impetus for a collective case study is to understand a phenomenon which is part of a “bounded” (Miller & Salkind, p. 162) system, meaning that it takes place during a snapshot of time and place. The benefit of collective case studies is that they utilize multiple forms of data to assist in the interpretation of a phenomenon. While there is no set limit on the numbers of different forms of data needed, most researchers agree with Yin (1984), who has stated that at least six must be used for data gathering. Due to the nature of collective case studies they are most often considered as qualitative research; however, there is a benefit to considering how other types of research models may contribute to the data collection.

In designing research there are three different types of models to use: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods. Each of these designs has its pros and cons. In the basic sense, quantitative inquiry most often deals with data in terms of numbers. These types of studies consist most often of surveys and have a hypothesis that will be researched. Quantitative data is used in experimental studies and consists of variables. As Creswell (2009) has written, “quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables” (p. 233) and “in quantitative research, some historical precedent exists for viewing a theory as a scientific predication or explanation” (p. 51).

In contrast to quantitative inquiry, qualitative inquiry deals more with the human experience in research. In this form of study, researchers are looking for a “broad explanation of behavior and attitudes” (Creswell, 2009, p. 61). Researchers use theoretical perspectives which lead the researcher toward the important issues (Creswell). There are also differing characteristics in the setting of studies, the role of the researcher, data sources, data analysis, and the theoretical orientation of the researcher (Creswell).

Whereas both quantitative and qualitative inquiry are limited in approach, mixed-method studies consist of a combination of qualitative and quantitative inquiry and are, therefore, less limited. It is used most often to assist the researcher in broadening their understanding of a research phenomenon (Creswell). Mixed-methods research developed out of the field of psychology in the late 1950's and since then has been the subject of much debate between researchers. The pros of a mixed-methods approach include a better understanding of research and that it allows for the ability to use one approach to build on the results of the other approach (Creswell, 2009).

When implementing a collective case study with mixed methods, there are design strategies that must be considered. The two most widely used are concurrent and sequential. In a concurrent approach the researcher collects both the quantitative data and qualitative data at the same time, while in a sequential approach one type of data is collected prior to the other. For the purposes of the study, the researcher will be using a sequential method of data collection. Sequential data collection is most often “used to explain and interpret quantitative results [through the] collecting and analyzing [of] ...qualitative data” (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). In this way, the two data sets are connected but separate (Creswell). Due to the nature of the data being collected in this study, a quantitative to qualitative data collection approach will be used (see Figure 1).

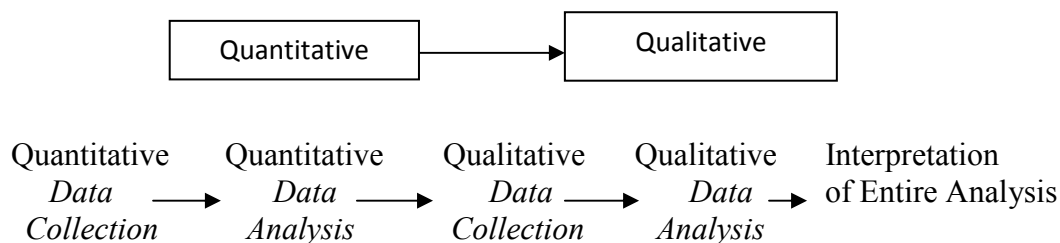


Figure 4: From Research Design, by J.W. Creswell, 2009, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc. Copyright 2009 by Sage Publications, Inc. Books. Reproduced with permission of Sage Publications Inc. Books in the format Dissertation via Copyright Clearance Center.

The intent of this sequential mixed-methods design embedded in a collective case study was to seek to answer the question of what teachers perceive their administrators were doing to support them in successfully combating any stress and burnout symptoms they were experiencing. In the quantitative phase, a standardized burnout inventory sought to address the preponderance of stress and burnout in 171 middle grade teachers in a coastal Georgia community. Following the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase, used interviews to probe significant factors related to stress and burnout by exploring aspects of the teacher's relationship with the principal with 11 middle grade teachers in coastal Georgia. The reason for following up with qualitative research in the second phase was there has been a lack of research on specifically what teachers need from their administrators to prevent ordinary occupational stress from turning into burnout. Lastly, the researcher considered documents gathered from the community's Board of Education to assist in analysis and interpretation of the inventories and interviews.

When doing research, it is important to realize that tests for statistical significance may not be able to account for individual preferences in the data (Rojewski, 1999; Yin, 1984). As Rojewski has pointed out, this is due, in part, to the idea that much "quantitative research...involves a number of subjective elements" (p. 65). This study was no exception

because the determination and interpretation of burnout are subject to each participant's personal perspective. In addition, it was acknowledged that the relationship and interaction between the researcher and participant could not go unaddressed as a potential factor in determining the degree to which individuals felt burned out and the degree to which individuals saw principals as supportive or unsupportive in times of stress. For example, participants may have considered their principal to be very supportive in times of stress but due to the nature of being in the study and the questions being asked, may have become overly critical or defensive of the principal as they were asked to consider the types of support they were provided. The probable results of this interaction would be more descriptive in nature and, therefore, more conducive to being measured in a qualitative manner. Because the researcher wanted to examine both the statistical results of the study as well as the intrinsic feelings and real world experiences of the participants, a sequential mixed-methodology collective case study approach was used.

Selection of Cases

Three middle schools located in a southern coastal Georgia school district comprised the cases for this investigation. The school district, with its three middle schools, was purposively selected because its demographic characteristics are comparable to the state as a whole (see Table 1).

As depicted in Table 2, based on 2009-2010 school year data, school A's population consisted of 61 teachers (57 white, 5 black) and had a student body of 851 with 64% white, 26% black, and 10% other. In addition, 39% of the school's student population qualified for free or reduced lunch. The school was a Title I Distinguished School and had one principal and two assistant principals. School A made annual yearly progress (AYP) for the 2009-2010 school year. School B's teacher population was 55 (45 white, 12 black), with a student body of 775

(61% white, 32% black, and 9% other). 53% of school B's populations qualified for free or reduced lunch. The school was a Title I Distinguished School and had one principal and one assistant principal. School B made AYP during the 2009-2010 school year. School C's teacher population was 55 (46 white, 8 black, 1 Hispanic) and had a student populations of 766 (47% white, 40% black, 13% other). Over half of the students (51%) qualified for free or reduced lunch. School C was a Title I Distinguished School with one principal and two assistant principals. The school made AYP for the 2009-2010 school year.

Table 2.

2009-2010 Demographic Information of Schools in Study

Demographic	School A	School B	School C
AYP Status	Met	Met	Met
Title I	Title I Distinguished	Title I Distinguished	Title I Distinguished
Bureaucratic Structure	1 principal, 2 assistant principals	1 principal, 1 assistant principal	1 principal, 2 assistant principals
Full-time faculty population	61	55	55
Full-time faculty racial make-up	57 white, 5 black	45 white, 12 black	46 white, 8 black, 1 Hispanic
Faculty level of Education	19 Bachelors, 23 Masters, 8 Specialists, 2 Doctorates	23 Bachelors, 30 Masters, 3 Specialists, 1 Doctorate	22 Bachelors, 22 Masters, 9 Specialists, 1 Doctorate
Teacher Gender	15 male, 47 female	16 male, 41 female	15male, 40 female
Average # of years Teaching	14.84 years	14.19 years	12.42 years
Student Body	851	775	766
Free/Reduced Lunch	39%	53%	51%
Student Body Racial Makeup	64% white, 26% black, 10% other	61% white, 32% black, 9% other	41% white, 40% black, 13% other
Gifted Students	27%	16.8%	18.5%
ESOL Students	3.5%	1.8%	2.7%
Remedial Students	15.5%	5.8%	9.1%
Special Education Students	8.3%	10.5%	11.1%

Note. Data retrieved from Georgia's Education Scoreboard by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

Data Sources

As previously mentioned, this study consisted of gathering both quantitative and qualitative data.

Quantitative. For the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher used the Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators (MBI-ES). The MBI-ES was developed through three decades using large samples of respondents primarily from North America. This survey employs a Likert scale to rate 22-items from “Never (0 points)” to “Everyday (6 points)” to describe the frequency of feelings. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete, and the results produce three different scores which reflect Emotional Exhaustion (fatigue and stress), Depersonalization (feelings of indifference), and Personal Accomplishment (feelings of enthusiasm and effectiveness) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). For the emotional exhaustion subscale, there are nine questions on the inventory. Scores may range 0-16 indicating low levels of emotional exhaustion, 17-26 indicating moderate levels, and over 27 which indicate high levels of emotional exhaustion. The depersonalization subscale consists of five questions. The scores on this subscale are 0-6 low levels, 7-12 moderate levels, and over 13 high levels of depersonalization. The last subscale, personal accomplishment is scored in reverse from the other two. There are eight questions and a score of 0-31 indicates high levels of personal accomplishment, 32-38 indicates moderate feelings of accomplishment and 39 or over indicates low levels of personal accomplishment or a lack thereof.

Validity and reliability were established for the MBI-ES using normative samples. Responses from 11,067 participants were received. These participants covered a wide range of

professional careers. According to the Mental Measurement Yearbook (2004), validity and reliability for the MBI-ES are well-established although future research is still needed.

Internal-consistency reliability was established using a Cronbach's Alpha for each sub-section of the instrument (Emotional Exhaustion = .90; Depersonalization = .76; and Personal Accomplishment = .76). Test-Retest coefficients were also collected after a few weeks (.82, .60, and .80), three months (.75, .64, and .62), and year (.60, .54, and .57) (Fitzpatrick & Wright, 2004). Validity of this instrument was established by comparing the results with feedback from coworkers, spouses, and the initial respondents. Despite low sample sizes (40-180) almost all were statistically significant at the .05 level. In addition, discriminant validity established that the MBI-ES is independent of other constructs similar to burnout, such as job satisfaction, social desirability, and depression.

Qualitative. The qualitative portion of this research consisted of a researcher-developed protocol (Appendix A). This protocol was a semi-structured interview which consisted of open-ended questions regarding the participant's experiences with stress and burnout. While the researcher made every attempt to anticipate follow up questions to respondent's answers, the interviews were not so thoroughly scripted as to disallow deviation from the protocol. This way the researcher provided the structure for the interview but also allowed the participants the freedom to elaborate on their experiences. In this way, the researcher attempted to establish a relationship with the participants and allowed them to guide the interview process (Glesne, 2006). In addition, a phenomenological approach was used to allow the researcher to better understand "the lived experiences" (Creswell, 2009, p. 13) of the participants.

In order to assess the appropriateness of the qualitative interview questions, the researcher conducted a brief pilot study of three teachers. Each teacher selected to participate in

the study represented a specific demographic with regards to number of years teaching (<5 years, 10-20 years, over 20 years). Any revisions to the interview questions were addressed prior to full implementation of the study.

In order to assess which research questions were answered through the collection of data the researcher developed a table which showed the alignment of questions asked on the instrumentation with the research questions. In addition, a preliminary coding list, derived by the investigator (Appendix C) was developed to assist in the interpretation and analysis of the data. To further assess the validity and reliability of the research questions, the researcher conducted a pilot study of three teachers. These teachers were chosen based on their years of experience: one teacher will have taught less than five years; one will have taught 10-20 years, and one will have retired from a traditional school system. This way the researcher covered most of the spectrum of teachers and ensured that questions were asked in such a way to yield the most amount of information. This pilot study was then coded using the researcher developed coding to see if any changes to the codes needed to be made.

Lastly, the researcher considered documents from the local board of education and individual schools in an effort to “corroborate and augment” (Yin, 2009) the interview data. The documents included policy manuals, procedures, professional development logs, and other related human resources material addressing teacher stress. These were analyzed for content by summarizing the data, looking for relationships and then comparing with the previously obtained interview data (Krippendorff, 1980).

Data Collection Procedures

After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board of Georgia Southern University, survey forms were mailed to the three schools in the study and placed in each

teacher's mail box. Each school had a color-coded return envelope for ease of sorting. The packets consisted of a brief letter of introduction, a confidentiality statement, a letter from the school board agreeing for the study, a signature statement for the teacher to sign agreeing to be included in the study, the MBI-ES protocol sheet, and a self-addressed stamped envelope. All data was expected to be returned within 7-10 days. After the deadline for returned surveys had passed the researcher sent reminder cards to the teachers in the study in an attempt to reach an acceptable response rate (>30%) (Creswell, 2009)

Once the deadline for the return of the instrument had passed, the researcher then randomly chose 11 teachers who returned their surveys and agreed to participate in an interview. Through email and phone calls, a date and time for the interviews was established that was convenient for both the researcher and the teacher. These interviews took place early in the spring semester (January – May). During the interview the researcher reviewed the informed consent form previously signed and discussed how the identity of each participant would be kept confidential and each teacher was given a pseudonym for the interview portion of the study. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour, and was recorded for analysis at a later time. Upon completion of the interviews, the researcher hired a transcription service to transcribe the interviews verbatim for coding and analysis. The transcriptionist did not have access to identifying information and followed the privacy/confidentiality agreement of his or her company (Appendix E). Upon completion of the transcription, documents were stored in a locked filing cabinet, in the researcher's personal residence, and the data tapes were destroyed.

Even though the interviews took place at the school where the teachers work, the school, the system, and others in the school building had no knowledge of why the researcher was there other than to see the teacher, unless the teacher imparts this information. This was explained to

the teacher before hand in communications setting up the interviews. The researcher made the option for off-site interviews available to all teachers chosen for the study. Regardless of where the interviews took place, the participants, the school, the district, and the county were all kept confidential in any subsequent data reporting.

Data Analysis

This study resulted in both quantitative and qualitative data. Each type of data could be looked at separately in order to answer the research questions. Because of this, the analysis section was broken down in to two distinct areas: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative results. The quantitative surveys were analyzed for exploratory purposes using descriptive statistics. In addition, a tabulation of the descriptive statistics were performed on the three sub-categories of data (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment) .

Qualitative results. Data from the qualitative interviews were analyzed for evidence of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment as well. In addition, they were analyzed using Moustakas' modifications of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen model (1994) (Appendix B) to explore a variety of themes related to principal support, personal interventions, and teacher needs among others. A minimum of three iterations of coding was conducted, as recommended by Anafara, Brown, and Mangione (2002).

The documents obtained from the local board of education and individual schools were investigated by content analysis. For the content analysis, the researcher will investigate documents from the study area's Board of Education. The researcher was looking for information related to the reduction of stress in teachers and used this data to make inferences (Krippendorff, 1988) on what information or policies are currently in place to support educators

in dealing with stress. The subjective nature of content analysis raises issues of reliability and validity; however, according to Palmquist (n.d.) carefully constructed and defined concept categories can greatly increase the generalizability, stability and reproducibility of the content analysis.

Reporting the Data

In order for the data to be understood, in this study, the researcher followed Creswell's (2009) sample of organizing the results into two distinct phases, one quantitative and one qualitative, and then discussed how the qualitative findings build upon the quantitative findings. The quantitative results consisted of discussing the descriptive statistics to ascertain the type and prevalence of stress experienced by the participants. The qualitative results are presented in terms of themes and ideas which are supported by direct quotations of the participants.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this collective case study was to seek to answer the question of what teachers perceive their administrators were doing to assist them in successfully combating any stress or burnout they are experiencing. The study took place in a small coastal community in Georgia. All public middle grade teachers in the community (171) were invited to participate in the quantitative portion of the study and 11 of the respondents were chosen to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. These teachers were asked to complete the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES) and then follow-up interviews were conducted. All of the quantitative data were analyzed for descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data was analyzed for themes and sub-themes.

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this investigation was to determine what teachers need from their principals when teachers experience stress and burnout. The investigator utilized a collective case study design consisting of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. For the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher sent surveys to teachers to determine the amount of stress and degree of burnout they were feeling; the overall level of burnout was calculated for each school system.

For the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher interviewed individual teachers in an effort to better understand their level of stress and burnout and what assistance they need from their administrators. Each transcript was coded and reviewed at least three times to find common themes. In addition, the researcher considered archival documents from the school district which address, directly or indirectly, assistance provided or available to teachers who are stressed or burnt out. These results are reported in terms of the overall themes found in the interviews.

Research Questions

The researcher addressed the following research questions during this study: What do middle-grade teachers in Georgia perceive their administrators are doing to assist them in successfully combating any stress and burnout they are experiencing?

Sub-questions in this study included:

Sub-question 1: What is the proportion of middle grade teachers who are feeling stressed and burned out to those who are not?

Sub-question 2: What are middle grade teachers currently doing to alleviate stress?

Sub-question 3: What do middle grade teachers in Georgia need from school administrators to assist them in alleviating stress and burnout?

Research Design

Prior to implementing the study, the researcher conducted a pilot study of the qualitative portion of the research design. Because the quantitative survey is widely used in education and has been found statistically valid and reliable (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), a pilot study for the survey instrument was not necessary. The interview protocol was piloted with three teachers. The researcher choose these teachers because one was a new teacher, one had been in education over 10 years, and one was a recently retired educator. In addition, one was male and two were female. The results of the pilot study for the interview protocol indicated to the researcher that some of the research questions were more pertinent to seasoned teachers than newer teachers. While the newer teacher had experienced stress, because he was still in the “honeymoon” phase of teaching, he did not see it as something the administrator needed to worry about. In other words, he internalized the stress and pushed through it adjusting his/her teaching style and expectations. Because of this, the researcher slightly adjusted the way the questions were worded for those teachers who had not been working in the field of education for at least five years. However, the content of the questions remained the same.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

A total of 171 survey forms were distributed to teachers in the three middle schools. The response rate was 26.9% (n=46; School A = 21; School B = 16; and School C = 9). Of these, 79% were female and 21% were male. Forty-two of the respondents indicated their race to be white, three indicated African-American, and one indicated other. The preponderance of respondents were married (79%) while 14% indicated they were divorced and only 6% were

single. Almost half of the respondents held a masters degree (49%), 28% held only a bachelor's, and 23% held either a specialist or doctoral degree. The teachers who returned surveys were almost equally divided on whether they taught multiple grade levels (49%) or just one grade, 51%. The average number of years teaching for all teachers participating in the study was 16; and their average number of years at their current location was 7.6. The average age for all participants was 45.

For the qualitative portion of the study, 11 teachers volunteered to be interviewed (School A=4; School B = 2; and School C=5). Of these, 82% were female and 18% were male. Most respondents indicated regular education to be their primary classroom setting (91%). Of the interview respondents, 91% indicated their race to be white, while 9% indicated African-American.

Findings

Analysis of the Results from MBI-ES Survey

The results of the quantitative study assisted the researcher in ascertaining not only the prevalence of stress in the study group but also helped in determining how stress was effecting them. Therefore, these results will be presented first to answer to research sub-question one.

In order to understand the quantitative results received during the survey portion of the study, a familiarity of the frequency cut-off points on the MBI-ES is needed (Table 3). When interpreting the results, it is important to note that the personal accomplishment sub-scale is read in the opposite direction from the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization sub-scales.

Table 3

MBI-ES Frequency Cut-Off Points

Categorization	Frequency		
	High	Moderate	Low
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	27 or over	17-26	0-16
Depersonalization (DP)	14 or over	9-13	0-8
Personal Accomplishment (Interpreted in opposite direction from EE and DP)	0-30	31-36	37 or over

As shown in Table 4, the mean score for the three individual schools show that as a group these teachers have moderate feelings of emotional exhaustion, lower levels of depersonalization, and high feelings of personal accomplishment.

Table 4

Mean Sub-scale Frequencies for Individual Schools (n=46)

School Name	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
School A	22.5	7.2	38.0
School B	21.0	5.6	40.5
School C	22.5	8.1	41.0

Compared with the normed results on each subscale for the MBI-ES (emotional exhaustion = 21.25; depersonalization = 11.00; and personal accomplishment = 33.54), the results of this study indicate higher levels of personal accomplishment, and lower levels of depersonalization than would be anticipated. The result of the emotional exhaustion sub-scale at

two of the schools was slightly higher for teachers in this study, while the third school was almost commensurate with previous studies. This seems to indicate that while teachers have feelings of emotional exhaustion, they do not feel isolated from their colleagues and overall express positive feelings about the about the job they are doing.

In order to better understand the overall responses of the individual schools, the researcher analyzed data for each of the items on the survey. For each question on the survey teachers had the options shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequency Choices for Individual Questions on the MBI-ES

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

Table 6 shows the results from the emotional exhaustion sub-scale. For this sub-scale question number 2 garnered the most frequency from teachers in the study. In addition, questions 13 and 14 tied for second place among teachers as cases of emotional exhaustion. From these results it could be construed that many teachers in this study are feeling used up at the end of the workday at least once a week. Based on the results of the survey, emotional exhaustion occurs in teachers on average once a week to a few times a month because teachers are feeling frustrated and that they are working too hard.

Table 6

Mean Scores for Emotional Exhaustion Sub-Scale on the MBI-ES

MBI-ES Question	School A (n=21)	School B (n=16)	School C (n=9)
1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.	3	3	3
2. I feel used up at the end of workday.	3	4	3
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	3	3	2
6. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	2	1	2
8. I feel burned out from my work.	2	3	2
13. I feel frustrated by this job.	3	3	4
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	4	3	4
16. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	1	1	1
20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.	1	2	2

Table 7 shows the results from the depersonalization sub-scale. For this sub-scale, it was question 22 that resulted in the most consistent scores across schools. Feeling that students are blaming them for some of their problems is causing teachers to distance themselves emotionally from others. In addition, as seen on question 11, teachers worry they are becoming emotionally hardened by their jobs.

Table 7

Mean Scores for the Depersonalization Sub-Scale Questions on the MBI-ES

MBI-ES Question	School A (n=21)	School B (n=16)	School C (n=9)
5. I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.	1	1	1
10. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.	1	1	2
11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	1	2	2
15. I don't really care what happens to some students.	1	1	1
22. I feel students blame me for some of their problems.	3	2	2

Finally, on the personal accomplishment sub-scale, Table 8, results indicated teachers feeling high levels of personal accomplishment. The highest score range was on question 7, indicating that teachers feel they can relate to their students and make attempts at understanding their individual situations. In addition, according to question 9 teachers feel that they are making a positive impact on the people's lives. The lowest score was on question 12 indicating that teachers do not feel very energetic about teaching.

Table 8

Mean Scores for Personal Accomplishment Sub-Scale on the MBI-ES

MBI-ES Question	School A (n=21)	School B (n=16)	School C (n=9)
4. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.	5	6	5
7. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.	5	6	6
9. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	5	5	5
12. I feel very energetic.	4	4	5
17. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.	5	5	5
18. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.	4	5	5
19. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	4	5	5
21. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	5	5	5

It should be noted that there were individual survey responses that resulted in outliers for the study, indicating both extremely high and low degrees of individual burnout. However, overall the quantitative data in this study gave the researcher good indications that teachers in this study felt good about the job they were doing despite the moderate levels of stress they were experiencing.

While the results of the quantitative data answered one of the research questions, the other two were better answered using semi-structured interviews and resulted in the following data.

Qualitative Findings

All the transcripts were read by the researcher according to the Moustakas' suggested modifications to the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of analyzing phenomenological data (1994) (Appendix B). The results of this step in analysis assisted the researcher in focusing on the

relevant statements in relation to the research questions. Initially, the researcher considered the surface content of the modified transcripts based on the preliminary coding list developed by the researcher (see Appendix C). From there, the researcher utilized a more refined coding system as displayed in Table 9 which allowed the researcher to minimize the number of coding categories in order to answer the research questions.

From the initial coding, three patterns of data emerged: teacher stress, individualized stress reduction techniques, and needed supports. The researcher then further delineated the results into three groups in order to apply them to the research questions.

Table 9

Interview Code Mapping: Three Iterations of Analysis (to be read from the bottom up)

Manifestations of teachers stress	Personal stress reduction techniques	Needed support from administrators
(THIRD ITERATION APPLICATION TO DATA SET)		
Learning How Principals Can Help Alleviate Stress & Burnout in their Faculty		
(SECOND ITERATION: PATTERN VARIABLES)		
1A. Teacher Stress	2A. Personal Stress Reduction	3A. Needed Supports
(FIRST ITERATION: SURFACE CODING/CONTENT ANALYSIS)		
1A. Emotional Exhaustion	2A. Exercise	3A. Communication
1A. Depersonalization	2A. Humor	3A. Discipline
1A. Lack of Personal Accomplishment	2A. Personal Accomplishment	3A. Professional Development/Assistance
	2A. Principal Support Behaviors	3A. Communication
		3A. Consistency of Rules
		3A. Reduction in Paperwork

Discussion of the Research Findings

The qualitative findings in the study speak volumes to how teachers are feeling and what supports teachers would like from their administrators to help them reduce and overcome stress. However, the researcher believes a note of caution must be considered when discussing the qualitative results. Because the number of teachers interviewed (n=11) was small, the opinions expressed here are not representative of all teachers in the geographic location of the study. This is especially important to keep in mind when discussing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

Manifestations of Teacher Stress. As mentioned previously stress can be caused by role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. However, it manifests itself in terms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of a lack of personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion. Similar to the results previously reported by researchers using the MBI, teachers in this study reported moderate degrees of emotional exhaustion on the survey. These data were corroborated during the interview portion of the study. In addition, many of the teachers interviewed expressed high levels of negative emotion when discussing the causes of stress in their profession. In general, teachers felt that they were not “treated like somebody who can make an assessment about what is right and what isn’t” (Teacher 1). Throughout the interviews, teachers repeatedly talked about ways administrators “diminish” (Teacher 1) teachers in little ways without even realizing it and how it causes teachers to “just [get] frustrated” (Teacher 9) and feel “completely put out of place” (Teacher 1). In addition, many teachers reported that what “makes a teacher feel like a teacher has...been stripped away” and as a result teachers are feeling they are “in a cycle of despair with little chance of hope in the foreseeable future” and that “teaching is no longer fun” (Teacher 2) because teachers feel the opportunity for

“a-ha moments” (Teacher 6) have been taken away. One teacher even likened the teaching profession to being in jail, stating that “there are very, very few places in society where we all have to be locked up with people for long periods of time, except prison and school” (Teacher 1). Some teachers even went so far as to say that being a teacher nowadays was the equivalent of being a “little slave monkey” with no “intellectual freedom” (Teacher 1). Another teacher (6) echoed this feeling by saying “there’s only so much that a person can take.”

Depersonalization. As with emotional exhaustion, teachers scored in the moderate range for depersonalization as well. However, it should be noted that they were just barely above the levels considered low. This would lead researchers to conclude that teachers had positive interactions with their colleagues. It should be noted that there were some high scores reported on individual survey results for the depersonalization subscale; however, these teachers declined to be interviewed for the study. Despite the low individual survey scores of those teachers who did participate, one still indicated that “it’s easier for me to deal with the kids sometimes than to deal with my co-workers” (Teacher 3) because we “do not collaborate with [our colleagues, and have a very poor camaraderie” (Teacher 5). The teachers in this study who had experience with depersonalization, by far, felt it from colleagues more often than they personally used it as a stress reduction technique. Primarily, this came from the teachers who taught non-academic classes such as health, physical education, and other elective classes. Many of these teachers feel they are not seen as qualified and certified teachers by other colleagues and yet they “had to go to school, the same way [they] had to go to school...[and] had to get a four- year degree” (Teacher 4). These teachers often feel like their class time is considered expendable and as such, theirs is the class that has “interruption [after] interruption [and] people coming in the door” (Teacher 5). In addition, those teachers in special education felt that their colleagues had “no

clue” when it comes to the amount of paperwork required by special education and that often regular education teachers “don’t understand” (Teacher 10) what is required. In addition, a few of the teachers did stress that administrators who had never been in the classroom could not “know” (Teacher 1) or “understand” (Teacher 5) the stresses of a classroom.

Personal accomplishment. Based on previous research, it was expected that this study would find teachers with low feelings of personal accomplishment. However, results from this study showed that these teachers felt a high degree of personal accomplishment despite feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Even those teachers whose subscales on the survey indicated high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization still had moderate to high level feelings of personal accomplishment.

During the interview phase of the study, it was not uncommon to hear teachers comment that they would not be teaching if they “didn’t love it” (Teacher 6). In fact, one teacher even stated, “I love my job, I love the kids, I love being here” (Teacher 7). Other teacher reports echoed this sentiment throughout the interview phase of the study. The teachers who participated in the qualitative portion of the study stated that they were “...confident that the kids are happy in [their] room[s]. [That students] feel productive...welcomed and loved” and as such the teachers were able to create “consistency...[and] routine” (Teacher 11). From the researcher’s perspective, this gave a deeper feeling of satisfaction to the teachers because they garnered respect for making their classroom “safe” (Teacher 11). Despite these positive feelings, many did echo the sentiment that it seems “nobody trusts teachers anymore” and as a result “the teacher as the intellectual guide in [the] classroom is diminished continuously” (Teacher 7).

The analysis of the results from the survey, for the sample, did not compare to the norms reported in the MBI-ES. Based on the survey results in this study, these teachers, as a whole, did

not report feeling overly stressed; however, based on the analysis of the qualitative data, these teachers do experience stress and there are specific areas where they believe administrators can help. One thing that was certain, however, was that teachers expect that "...in the next few years something's [going to] change. It's either [going to] get a whole lot worse or a whole lot better. We're at a pivotal point" (Teacher 7).

Personal Stress Reduction Techniques. Just how stress is individualized so too are stress reduction techniques. What works well for one person, may or may not work well for others. In addition, just as there are a variety of ways stress can manifest itself, there are a variety of ways to alleviate stress. Personal stress reduction consists of things people do to cope with stress and reduce the manifestations of stress.

Based on the results of the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher concluded that the teachers in this study had developed ways of dealing with the stresses of teaching. This was corroborated during the interview portion of the study, where some admitted to "not [doing] as much as I should" (Teacher 2), others turned to exercise, even though it meant "get[ting] up at 4:30" (Teacher 5). One teacher even said how she felt bad for other teachers because in her [specialized] classroom she and students "get to do that fun stuff" (Teacher 7) indicating that her personal stress reduction technique is to find a fun a positive outlet within her classroom.

Several teachers had developed coping mechanisms that involved leaving work at work. One teacher even adopted the attitude that "it's a job" (Teacher 8). This was in light of the fact that he loved the job and could not imagine doing anything else. Other teachers were more passive in their ways of handling stress, making comments such as "this too will probably pass" (Teacher 7). One teacher admitted that she had to change her whole attitude early in the game because she used to "carry stuff home every night... [and work] until midnight or 1:00 in the

morning,” now she “walk[s] out the door with nothing” because she feels she “lost too many years” (Teacher 6) already by doing it.

Current Administrator Supports. Based on the analysis of the transcripts, the teachers in this study did not specifically indicate what their administrators were currently doing to alleviate stress. While many (7 out of 11) were complimentary toward their administrators, the absence of stated support behaviors indicated, to the researcher, that teachers did not believe administrators were doing enough to alleviate stress. In fact Teacher 1 even went so far as to say at “this time of year, we just roll our eyes when [administrators] try to make us feel better.” Another teacher (5) said that his or her current administrator understood that teachers “[were] stressed” but was just “too kind.” In spite of these accolades, teachers were not able to point to anything that administrators were doing to help alleviate teacher stress.

Needed Administrator Supports. Despite the stress reduction techniques implemented by the teachers, most admitted to feeling overwhelmed by either a “lack of time,” the “amount of paperwork,” or “fewer resources” which were available for use. Most were understanding of the role administrators played in the building and were cognizant that many of the decisions made by the school level administrators were made “way up high...and there’s no changing it” (Teacher 6). However, in spite of the apparent sympathies these teachers felt for their administrators, each teacher had at least one recommendation for how administrators could assist in alleviating some of the stress of teaching. Each of these support behaviors fell into one or more of the following categories: communication, discipline, professional development and assistance, consistency of rule enforcement, and reduction in paperwork. There were other specific recommendations made outside of these categories but the majority fell within them.

Communication. By far, the biggest area of needed support fell within communication. All teachers agreed with Teacher 7 that “being kept in the loop is something that administrators could do for teachers”. Whether it is a discipline issue, board level decision, or new school policy, teachers feel that “it’s our school too” and it should not just be “administrative privilege to know” (Teacher 7). Teachers just felt if they understood more about “what’s going on with the system, that [it would] make the local decisions a little easier” to understand (Teacher 3). Teachers also want someone who “has a backbone” (Teacher 5) and will communicate on behalf of teachers as well. They want someone “to stand up...and say this isn’t right” (Teacher 6) when it comes to board or system level decisions that affect a teachers’ ability to teach. They also want administrators to support them in front of parents “instead of back[ing] down” (Teacher 8).

Although teachers reported wanting to be “kept in the loop” (Teacher 7), they also feel that there is an overabundance of mundane information that gets repeatedly sent to them. As an example, one teacher suggested that if some of the teachers are not following the dress code do not send a “vague email to the whole staff [but rather] address the one or two people that are doing these things” (Teacher 8). He further stated that if an administrator “know[s] whose doing it, then why don’t [they] talk to [those teachers] specifically” (Teacher 8) instead of wasting his time. Another teacher added that administrators tell the students the rules but they also need to tell the faculty “...this is the way it is. These are the rules...” (Teacher 5) rather than expecting people to intuitively understand it.

Teachers also believe that “administrators need to talk more positively and just tell people what they’re doing right” (Teacher 3). So much performance evaluation feedback is based on what is not going well in the classroom and on test scores that many teachers feel that no matter what they do it is not good enough. Teachers suggested something as simple as doing

a “drive by” (Teacher 1) such as leaving a sticky note with a positive affirmation on it. Something as simple as “love the atmosphere” today or “great bulletin board” (Teacher 1). “Just [give me some] praise...nobody ever says I really like your classroom...or I like [the art work] you put out in the hall” (Teacher 5). As one teacher said “I just need a little bit of praise...little things like that mean a lot to me” (Teacher 5). In other words, teachers appear to feel that evaluations do not always have to be about what could be done better but rather put some of the focus on what is being done well. Having some positive feedback may even “go a long way in overlooking maybe something else that was happening if [I] knew [I was] appreciated for what [I was] doing” (Teacher 9).

Lastly, when it comes to evaluations, teachers believe that the expectations are unrealistic for an evaluation that is only going to last 15 minutes and that administrators are “not really seeing what’s really happening in that classroom” (Teacher 10). As one teacher stated:

You’re having one of the administrators come in and do an observation, [and say] well you didn’t do this...you didn’t do your summarization and you didn’t use a thinking map...well, If you’re only going to observe for fifteen minutes, you’re not in there the whole seventy-five minutes. Really? You want me to go through all this in a fifteen minute period, and the kids [will be] like, what are we doing? ...that’s breaking the cycle we have with the students [and] we loose the rest of the class trying to get everything back on track.

Instead, this teacher suggested that if principals really wanted to know what was going on in a classroom then they should “talk to the kids” (Teacher 10). Another teacher stated that she understood that there were certain “directives” when it comes to evaluations and that she was not “asking for empathy” but rather for administrators to understand “where we’re (the teacher and

students) are at” and to “just give me a break. [Understand] I’m working on it. I only have so many hours a day” (Teacher 7).

Discipline. Running a close second with communication as a needed support was discipline. In fact, the two were closely intertwined since what all of the teachers indicated they wanted was a streamlined discipline policy that communicates what the outcomes of the discipline issue are. The researcher concluded that many of the teachers in this study were not sending discipline referrals because it takes too much time and they do not receive any feedback. For instance, in one school, a silent lunch is an option for students who have minor infractions (talking in the hall, chewing gum, etc). For one teacher, the process of giving a silent lunch was so time consuming that she rarely used it. As she explained,

If there is a discipline issue, and I have to give a student silent lunch, I have to call the parent, which I think is ridiculous right off the bat. [As a parent,] I don’t need to know if my son has silent lunch...maybe if he has it three times in a row or something...so [anyway, if I give a kid silent lunch] I have to call the parent. Then in Infinite Campus (the school systems data reporting software), I have to record that contact. Then I have to [physically] go down to the office and sign them up for silent lunch, which means I have to know who they go to lunch with, and I have to have their ID number....It just takes up too much of my time.

In addition, teachers did not feel that the discipline policies are consistent or stringent enough. Teachers felt like it does not pay to have a discipline policy because “it’s a joke” and “there is no consistency” (Teacher 8). Teachers also felt that administrators needed to “address the [discipline] problems” (Teacher 5). One teacher even stated that when she makes a discipline referral she does not receive “any feedback” about it and commented that “it would really be nice

to know how this situation is being handled. But [most often we are told] it's none of your business after you refer the child" (Teacher 1). Another teacher suggested that administrators "take care of the problem kids and get them out of the classroom so the other students have a chance to learn" (Teacher 2). Teacher 1 agreed with this sentiment and said "if a child is sent out the classroom, they don't need to go back to that classroom." Teacher 2 suggested "planning [for discipline] ahead of time instead of off-the-cuff and quit [leaving it] to teachers to bail out...poor [discipline] decisions." One teacher suggested a possible solution was to "have a conference with the teacher and the student and try to assess the situation and say here's what's going on" rather than just "assume the teacher is overreacting and just doesn't get along with the child" (Teacher 1).

In addition to being kept in the loop regarding the discipline of children, teachers strongly indicated that they did not want to be "called out" in front of a parent. Instead, "support [us] first and stand up for [us] first and then investigate" (Teacher 7). She gave an example where she had taken a child's cell phone, per the rules of the school, and then was called to the front office in order to explain why she took the child's cell phone, because the parent was "deranged and so unreasonably upset." The teacher recalled being very upset because, as she perceived it, she had been "thrown under the bus" by the administrator. As a result she said sarcastically that it was a guarantee that "[she will] never 'see' another cell phone at school, ever!" (Teacher 7).

Lastly, one teacher said that she did not appreciate an administrator coming into her room and disciplining the children. As she explained,

My children [are] in the middle of my lesson when I'm teaching... and you're sitting there supposed to be observing me, and all you're doing is sitting there disciplining my

students because they're not behaving the way you think they should behave. It's my classroom (Teacher 7).

By taking charge, she felt that administrator "completely put [her] out of [her] place" and undermined her authority with students (Teacher 7).

Professional Development/Assistance. In addition to discipline and communication, several (7 out of 11) teachers cited areas where they felt they could use professional development or even informal training from the principal. The first area was in discipline. Teachers commented that if there were too many discipline referrals from one teacher, then "help [him or her] with that problem" (Teacher 9). Even if that means meeting individually with the teacher who is making too many referrals, it is "going to be a positive thing, and that teacher who's having those problems can say, all right, well let me look at this, and it's this student, and this student..." (Teacher 5).

Another area where several teachers felt professional development was needed was in the area of creating and maintaining teacher web pages. In this particular county, teachers are required to update their web pages weekly. In addition to this being an added requirement of the job, it was becoming a source of stress for teachers who felt "technologically deficient" (Teacher 8) and "frustrate[ed]" (Teacher 3) when it came to understanding how to update their pages. Teachers felt that administration "could definitely step up their game" to help them, instead of sending constant emails saying "please update your...web page" (Teacher 4). One teacher suggested the administrator could say "we're [going to] have somebody in the media center Wednesday morning at 7:30 who is going to be completely available to help you with your web pages" (Teacher 3). These teachers understand the importance of web pages, but appear to need individualized time and training to address their concerns.

Consistency of Rule Enforcement. One hundred percent of teachers in this study also felt that administrators need to do more modeling for students and other teachers. Teachers felt that when it comes to following school rules there “is no consistency” (Teacher 8) from the administration. For example, in one school in the study, there was a rule that states students must tuck in their shirts; however, there are teachers “who wears [their] shirts....out” (Teacher 4). This is believed to be a violation of the rules by other teachers and they can not understand why the administration allows it to happen. As one teacher stated “a rule is a rule” (Teacher 6). In addition, teachers are aware that sometimes administration bends the rules “depend[ing] on the child” (Teacher 6) and will often say things like “there’s you know, look at him, his pants are sagging again” (Teacher 6). Teachers also felt that if an administrator sees a child breaking the rules, then “it should be the administrator that goes and says [you’re breaking the rules]” (Teacher 6).

One teacher in particular felt that administration was undermining her authority because they tell her she just “need[s] to relax” (Teacher 6) about students breaking the rules. She, and other teachers, feel that if you “make it a rule for everybody, [then] you (administrators) have to enforce it [too], not just me” (Teacher 6).

Reduction of Paperwork. All of the teachers in this study seemed to readily accept that teaching requires paperwork; however, many felt the additional paperwork required by administrators was too time consuming and took away from their ability to teach. As one teacher stated “nobody went into this job to do [this] stuff. We went into the job to teach” (Teacher 6). They all indicated that the paperwork trail could “be streamlined...[because] it’s overwhelming” (Teacher 7). For example, in one school teachers were required to do a trend analysis which means “...for every child you have to find their CRCT scores for the last three years...and then

after the first semester [we have to do] averages, and that's [on] 450 kids" (Teacher 7).

According to this teacher, this type of paperwork has to be done every four weeks and turned in to administrators. One teacher suggested that "surely one of the countless administrators in this building...has a little more time on their plate to put this together" because as teachers "[we] know whose struggling in our classroom" (Teacher 8). In addition, teachers were not sure what happened to the paperwork but that it "doesn't [appear to] matter" when it comes to promotion of students (Teacher 8). It appears that these teachers want an explanation of why they are doing the "extra work" and what is happening with the data.

In all, the teachers in the study had suggestions for administrators that fell into five categories: communication, discipline, professional development and assistance, modeling, and reduction of paperwork. Other suggestions made by individual teachers included leaving planning time alone for teachers, administration-monitored discipline for chronic offenders, having teamwork days where teachers bring a potluck and parent volunteers monitor the cafeteria, hiring a masseuse for the day, providing opportunities for staff to interact informally, giving furlough days back as teacher work days where nothing is scheduled, calling if teachers are out sick and making sure everything is OK, getting involved with faculty initiatives, giving teachers a substitute for a day so they can get caught up on the paperwork required, and understanding that students are going to backslide at times. These suggestions were from individuals and did not fall into one of categories stated above. There was no cross-over of these suggestions and they are listed merely as further indication of what teachers would like from their administrators to help reduce stress.

All of the teachers in the qualitative portion of the study had positive things to say about their administration; however, that did not stop them from feeling their job and their status as

professionals were diminished at some point by administrators. Perhaps the most telling comment was from Teacher 6 who said, “[Administrators are] not giving teachers the same consideration of different learning styles like we’re supposed to give our children... You’re trying to cookie cutter me so you can measure everything, and that’s created a lot of problems.”

Content Analysis of School Documents

In order to understand how the schools in this collective case study currently assist teachers who are stressed, the researcher also reviewed several documents. These included health insurance benefits, principal job descriptions, professional development policies and schedules, complaint and grievance policies, system expectations of teachers, and the systems accountability goals and objectives. The researcher applied the same method of analysis as used for the interview data (see Table 10) in order to determine what, if any, resources were available to assist teachers in combating occupational stress.

From the review of the material, the researcher placed the documents in three categories: professional learning, insurance, and chain of command. These categories allowed the researcher to ascertain what types of assistance are available to employees.

Table 10

Document Analysis: Three Iterations of Review (to be read from the bottom up)

Individual Professional Growth Plans	Health Benefits	Chain of Command
Third Iteration: Application to Data Set Access to stress reduction services.		
Second Iteration: Pattern Variables		
1A. Professional Learning	2A. Insurance Benefits	3A. Conflict Resolution
First Iteration: Data Sets		
1A. Classroom Management	2A. Mental Health Services	3A. Grievance
1A. Stress Reduction	2A. Insurance	3A. Complaints
1A. Getting along with others	2A. Employee Assistance Programs	

Professional Learning. The professional learning policies of the system under study provided the teachers with everything they needed to know about scheduling and participating in professional learning. Professional development classes were scheduled for each semester and could be accessed through the internet. This study took place in December 2010 and for the first semester there were no professional development classes offered that related to teacher stress (...County Professional Learning Courses, 1st Semester 2011). However, there were instructions for developing “individual professional growth plan[s]” (...County Professional Learning Policies and Procedures, n.d. , ¶11). From the review of the materials, these plans are developed when an individual needs professional learning that can not be accommodated through the school or system. In order to participate in this type of learning program, the individual must develop the learning plan from stating the objectives to evaluating the evidence upon completion. The plan is then approved by an advisory council. The policy does not put limitations on what topics may be covered on an individual plan, so stress reduction could theoretically be covered by professional development although it is not explicitly stated as such.

Health Insurance. There are several different health insurance plans offered by the state of Georgia. Each one has individual policies and procedures when it comes to mental health services.

Choice Plus Plan. United Health Care provides four health care options to employees of the state of Georgia. According to all three policies, mental health services are available with pre-authorization and notification to the “mental health/substance abuse disorder designee” of the health care company (State of Georgia Choice Plus Plan for State Health Benefit Plan, 2010, p. 33). These policies do make exclusions that may results from a person being overly stressed as “treatment for sleep disorders” (p. 59), “educational...therapy...any form of self-care or self

help training” (p. 60), or “educational/behavioral services that are focused primarily on building skills and capabilities in communication, social interaction, and learning” (p. 60).

Theoretically then, the health care options provided by United Health Care would cover occupational stress and burnout; however, it is up to the discretion of the “mental health/substance abuse disorder designee” to “authorize the services [and] determine the appropriate setting for treatment” (State of Georgia Choice Plus Plan for State Health Benefit Plan, 2010, p. 34).

State Health Benefit Plan. CIGNA provides three additional options for state health benefit plans to participants in the state of Georgia. The three options include a high deductible health plan, an HMO Health Plan, and an HRA Health Plan (<http://dch.georgia.gov>). All of these options for health plan services specifically exclude “counseling for occupational problems” (State of Georgia CIGNA Health Care, 2010, p. 47). However, mental health services are provided, with pre-authorization, should conditions exacerbate into anxiety, depression, psychosis etc.

Chain of Command. A teacher whose stress is caused by unresolved conflict has a clear chain of command to follow in order to file a complaint or grievance (...County Schools Conflict Resolution Guidelines, n.d.). This chain starts with a conference with the building supervisor. Based on the job description of the education principal for the State of Georgia, building supervisors are responsible for managing human resources in the building (State of Georgia Job Description, 2011, ¶ 2). Because of this, the job description also requires principals to have knowledge of human resources processes and procedures (State of Georgia Job Description, 2011, ¶ 3). This would indicate that principals in the state of Georgia are trained in human resources and understand how to handle complaints and grievances from stressed out teachers.

However, none of the documents relating to complaints and grievances specifically identifies stress or gives the principal guidelines on effectively dealing with stress in his or her faculty. In addition, they do not indicate what a teacher is supposed to do if the complaint is with the immediate supervisor. This can compound and create additional stress for a teacher if he or she feels there is no outlet for complaints.

Chapter Summary

This study was designed to investigate what resources teachers need from their administrators to assist them to prevent stress and burnout. In order to do this, the researcher collected and analyzed three types of data: surveys, interviews, and documents. The survey consisted of the MBI-ES and was analyzed for sub-scale means across the three schools in the study, as well sub-scales within each of the schools.

By using a collective case study design, which included both quantitative and qualitative data sources consisting of the MBI-ES survey, individual teacher interviews, and selected documents, the researcher was able to answer the research questions put forth in this study. In regard to the proportion of teachers who were feeling stressed, the researcher found that although teachers in this community reported two stress indicators (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) to be commensurate with previous research, their levels of personal accomplishment were much higher than anticipated. In other words, it appears that these teachers felt much better about the work they were doing than was anticipated based on previous research. It should be noted however, that there were teachers whose individual survey's indicated extremely high levels of stress and burnout.

The teachers who participated in the interview phase of the study were able to provide answers on what teachers do to relieve stress. Some of these teachers have very healthy ways to

channel their stress (exercise, humor, etc.) and it appears to have served them well. However, there were many of the teachers who did nothing to combat stress. In addition, the documents retrieved from the Internet provided the researcher with a clear lack of evidence that occupational stress and burnout were considered worthy of addressing by administration. No professional development was provided on reducing stress and the state health benefit plans severely limit the extent to which a person suffering from occupational stress can receive treatment, if at all.

Lastly, all of the teachers who were interviewed provided concrete examples of ways administrators could help them reduce their levels of stress. These examples typically fell into one of five categories, communication, discipline, professional development and assistance, consistency of rule enforcement, and reduction in paperwork.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The intent of this sequential mixed-methods design embedded in a collective case study was to seek to answer the question of what teachers perceive their administrators were doing to support them in successfully combating any stress and burnout symptoms they were experiencing. In the quantitative phase, a standardized burnout inventory sought to determine the extent of stress and burnout in 46 middle grade teachers in a coastal Georgia community. Following the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase used interviews to probe significant factors related to stress and burnout by exploring aspects of the teacher's stress and what administrators are doing or could be doing to alleviate stress. The reason for following up with qualitative research in the second phase was there has been a lack of research on specifically what teachers need from their administrators to prevent ordinary occupational stress from turning into burnout. Lastly, the researcher analyzed documents gathered from the school district's Board of Education to determine the extent to which policies, procedures, and programs addressed teacher stress and burnout.

Summary of Previous Literature

The researcher in this study conducted a thorough review of the literature. As the study of occupational stress and burnout in education progressed, it became evident to the researcher that in order to understand how stress affects teachers a general discussion on theories of stress would have to be addressed. The etiology of occupational stress has been around since the 1700's when even Adam Smith understood that people lose their motivation to perform if left with no solutions to the difficulties they face in employment (as cited in Angerer, 2003).

In the 1970's there came a renewed interest in the study and understanding of occupational stress and burnout. Theories were developed to understand how stress manifests itself on the job. Five primary theories (Cooper, et al., 2001) developed including McGrath's stress cycle theory, person-environment-fit theory, job-demands control model, a general systems approach, and cybernetic theory to help explain how stress happens and how it affects employees across occupations.

From these theories, causes of stress and burnout were gleaned. Researchers were able to place the causes of stress into three categories role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity (Bacharach, et al, 1990; Bliese & Castro, 2000; Coverman, 1989; Melton & Gaffney, 2010; Pomaki, et al, 2007; Peterson, et al 1995; Tubre & Collins, 2000). Within these categories, previous research determined emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of personal accomplishment were primary indicators for stress. Maslach and Johnson (1981) took this further and developed an inventory which was able to measure the amount of stress and likelihood of burnout a person was experiencing.

It was then a natural progression for researchers to begin to study stress in teaching. Due in part to the many different roles teachers play during the day, they are highly susceptible to suffering from occupational stress (De Silva, et al., 2009). Within the last decade researchers Harden and Crosby (2000) were able to categorize the work of a teacher into six areas assessor, planner, resource developer, facilitator, information provider, and role model. These six roles play out daily in teachers and require teachers to be able to shift constantly between the roles. This has lead to teachers suffering from role conflict as they struggle to determine priorities, role overload as they juggle the emotional and physical demands of the job, and feeling they lack personal accomplishment as most of their work goes unnoticed and unrewarded. In addition to

the academic roles of teaching, the interpersonal roles between teachers and students and teachers and administrators can greatly impact the levels of stress teachers are feeling. As such, with teachers perceiving conflicting messages regarding their academic and interpersonal roles, having an un-clear understanding their academic and interpersonal role priorities, and feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work required in both roles, it is easy to see how interpersonal relationships can become marred and cause increased stress as teachers try to find a homeostatic balance between being “people-centered” (Blase, 1986) and the demands of the job.

Because teachers are so influential in the lives of students (Arnold, 2001; Wigfield, Lutz, & Wagner, 2005) the study of stress in the teaching profession has been well documented and many studies have been conducted to ascertain how to help teachers’ combat stress and burnout (Blase, Dedrick, & Strathe, 1986; Leithwood & Beatty, 2008; Nagel & Brown, 2003). These studies, often quantitative in nature, provided excellent insight to the nature of teacher stress but failed to spell out exactly how administrators could help teachers deal with stress.

Analysis of Research Findings

Quantitative Conclusions

The major quantitative finding in the study was that although teachers in these schools reported their stress levels to be commensurate with previous research, their levels of personal accomplishment were much higher than anticipated. In other words, the teachers who responded to this study, felt better about the work they were doing than was anticipated based on previous research findings using the MBI-ES. However, the teachers in this study did experience stress caused by role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. In addition, two of the three manifestations of stress (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization), as indicated in the previous literature, were also evident in the teachers in this study.

Emotional Exhaustion. According to previous research, emotional exhaustion can be a primary indicator of work-related stress (Gaines & Jermier, 1983; Grandy, 2003; Deery, et al., 2002). It often occurs when there are persistent feelings of role overload. Across the three schools, in this study, the most prevalent indicator of emotional exhaustion was that teacher's believe they are working too hard at jobs. It stands to reason that if one believes the amount of work put in to a job does not equal the amount of return that feelings of exhaustion are bound to occur. In addition, the teachers in this study indicated that they often feel used up at the end of the day and frustrated by their jobs. These feelings were occurring regularly for these teachers at least a few times a month to once a week.

Depersonalization. Based on the work of Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996), people who are experiencing stress will often have a negative attitude toward others. These feelings will often times cause them to distance themselves from people and display callousness toward others. Based on the results of this study, the researcher learned that many of the teachers believed that students blame the teacher for problems. This has led to many of the teachers feeling emotionally hardened by the job. While there was no direct indication that teachers were treating students with indifference, the overall results show that at least once a month teachers withdraw emotionally from their students and colleagues.

Personal Accomplishment. Previous research indicated that if feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are high, then feelings of personal accomplishment should be low (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). However, the results of this study indicated otherwise. Despite feeling exhausted emotionally and withdrawing from students, the teachers in this study believed they deal effectively with students, can easily understand how students feel about things, and

they are positively influencing others through their work. These results stand in direct contradiction to what one would expect.

The results of the quantitative portion of the research study gave the researcher a clear indication that while these teachers did believe their jobs made a difference and overall felt high degrees of personal accomplishment, there were still indicators of high degrees of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in the target population. There is no direct evidence from the surveys as to why there was a discrepancy between this study and previous research; therefore, the researcher can only speculate that these teachers are able to effectively distance themselves from the stress and focus on the positive aspects of their job.

Qualitative Conclusions

The results of the interview portion of the study allowed the researcher to understand how teachers felt stress and what they wanted done about it. As previous literature reports, the results indicated that those teachers who were stressed did not trust the system, have any confidence in the administrator's ability to fix the problems, and often felt unjustly treated (Meyer-Emerick, 2007). In addition, the results were commensurate with previous research that indicated the primary causes of stress to be role overload, role ambiguity, and role conflict (Whitaker, 1996).

Role Conflict. Based on previous research, role conflict occurs when teachers receive conflicting information regarding their job duties (Bacharach, et al., 1990). This information can come from one or more sources and is often in direct contradiction with what teachers see as their primary role. The teachers in this study were able to indicate clear evidence of role conflict in terms of student discipline and consistency of rule enforcement. These discrepancies caused many teachers to have feelings of stress as they attempted to alleviate the discord between roles.

Role Overload. According to Melton and Gaffney (2010), role overload occurs when a teacher's job duties requirements are beyond an individual's capacity to effectively handle them. In the case of the teachers in this study, role overload became evident in terms of the amount of paperwork teachers reported having to do. Many of the teachers in this study believed that they were spending more time doing paperwork than teaching. This was causing many to have increases in psychological stress and distress as they attempted to satisfactorily complete the requirements of their jobs.

Role Ambiguity. Researchers have defined role ambiguity as being unable to prioritize one's work load because it is unclear what should be done (Melton & Gaffney, 2010). The teachers in this study indicated high levels of role ambiguity when it came to communication and professional development. They often felt they were left out of the decision making process and yet were expected to be able to carry out decisions made by administrators with little understanding of how and why.

Personal Stress Reduction Techniques. In order to combat stress many of the teachers in the study relied on healthy habits, such as going to the gym daily. However, a surprising number did nothing to combat stress. While humor was used in some cases, it became increasingly clear to the researcher that for many teachers there simply was no positive outlet. This could explain the high numbers on the survey for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization as teachers attempt to deal with stress by removing themselves from their work.

Current Administrator Supports. The teachers in the study reported primarily feeling positive about their interactions with their principal. Teachers in this study also acknowledged that their administrators are already communicating regularly, providing discipline and

professional development activities, modeling, and utilizing the reams of paperwork provided by teachers. In spite of this, the teachers in this study felt that principals could provide specific extra supports to help teachers deal more effectively with stress on the job.

Needed Supports. The teachers in this study were very vocal about what they felt administrators could be doing to help combat some of the causes of stress in teaching. They indicated that role conflict was perhaps the most stress-causing phenomenon, although they did not call it that directly. To start with, teachers want to be able to have a discipline plan that works and an administration that will back them up when it comes to discipline. The teachers believed that administrators could streamline the process of making referrals, to isolate the causes of referrals, and to have the discipline mean something to the student. They want consistency from administration when it comes to discipline and they want feedback on what was done (or can be done in the future) to combat repeat offenders. This way the role of school disciplinarian remains in the hands of administration but still allows the teacher to have a part in the process.

In addition to discipline, teachers want a consistency of rule enforcement. Currently, the teachers in this study believe that administrators have a double standard. Teachers feel that administrators want students to follow the rules but do not enforce the rules themselves. Teachers believe that if there is a rule, then it should be followed by all the faculty and staff. According to the teachers, administrators need to be more vigilant in noticing student infractions and taking the responsibility to do something about it. Not having a strong discipline plan or consistency of rule enforcement is causing teachers to feel stressed as they tried to coalesce the role of disciplinarian with the role of teacher.

Role overload caused the teachers in the study a high degree of stress as well. They felt completely overwhelmed with the amount of paperwork they had to do that did not directly relate to teaching. All of the teachers felt some degree of ambivalence in regard to the required paperwork; however, none indicated that they were against doing it. Rather, they just did not understand the point of doing it. They wanted administrators to inform them of what happens with the paperwork and how it is used to help students be successful. Most of all, they wanted a streamlined paper processing system that would allow them to spend more time teaching and grading student papers than filling out paperwork for administrators.

Lastly, teachers were feeling role ambiguity and wanted administrators to help them prioritize their workloads. They wanted solid communications from administrators so they would know what was happening, when it was happening, and why it was happening. They also wanted administrators to provide professional development that meant something to the teachers.

Because much of teaching involves relationships, the interview phase was the most enlightening portion of the study when it came to discovering how administrators could better support teachers in combating stress. The researcher concluded that small changes in the way administrators handle the day-to-day operations of the school would go a long way in reducing teacher stress and improving interpersonal relationships with teachers. Simply communicating more effectively, being consistent with rules and discipline, streamlining paperwork, and providing more relevant professional development is what teachers need to help foster a more positive and less stress inducing environment for teachers. These small changes in policy and procedure could produce big changes in the overall health and satisfaction of teachers.

Document Analysis

The documents under review in this study consisted of professional development schedules, health insurance plans, and conflict resolution policies. The only mention of mental health issues came under the health insurance plan although, in one case, it specifically stated that occupational issues would not be covered. It is disconcerting to the researcher to know that teachers who are feeling stressed at work will not be able to receive assistance through their health insurance. Apparently, teachers will have to wait until the occupational stress gets bad enough to create full blown depression or anxiety before receiving treatment. The other health insurance option does not specifically deny coverage for occupational stress but does require pre-approval. Therefore, teachers will have to share their private information with someone who will then make a decision as to whether or not it is serious enough to be treated. It seems unlikely to this researcher, that many people would be willing to do this.

In addition to the lack of coverage for occupational stress, the professional development courses offered in this county did not address stress in teaching specifically. However, teachers were welcome to develop their own professional development program with approval from the board office. Again, this requires teachers to acknowledge there is a problem to people who may or may not understand what is happening.

No one, teachers included, wants to feel that they can not handle the stresses of their specific job but it does happen. These policies do not allow for teachers to seek help confidentially and there is clearly a disregard of the seriousness of occupational stress for the health care providers in this state. Having teachers who are stressed with no where to go to seek help contributes to the ever spiraling cyclical cycle of stress and compounds when burnout occurs and teachers stay in the classroom.

Implications

Teachers, as in any profession, want to feel respected, trusted, and supported by their administration. The results of this study should be used by those in educational administration training programs to help guide and build their students capacity for taking on the challenge of leadership in a school setting. Even those administrators who have been, or are currently, classroom teachers need to be reminded of what the front line teachers require to stay mentally and physically focused on the job at hand.

Administrators and teachers alike know that stress comes with working in education; however, leaders who are willing to go the extra step to ensure their faculty are receiving timely information and are provided with positive reinforcement feedback on a regular basis are likely to have a staff who are more satisfied with their profession and their leadership and less prone to burnout. Fostering relationships, empowering teachers, and treating teachers as professionals can only have a positive impact on the climate of a school. Teachers who feel accepted, successful, and appreciated (Lautenschlager, 1957) are less likely to allow stress to build up to levels commensurate with burnout. This will ultimately have a positive impact on both their classroom and the school climate.

Reducing employee stress should be a part of every administrator's job, both within the education field and outside of it. The suggestions offered by teachers in this study could easily be extrapolated to teachers and administrators outside of geographic area. Caring and concerned administrators who are looking for ways to reduce teacher stress could easily try any number of the suggestions offered by the teachers in this study. Furthermore, research into what teachers, who are effectively coping with stress, are doing to stay positive should be considered.

Recommendations

As with any study, there are some recommendations the researcher would like to make when it comes to interpreting and utilizing the data provided.

- 1) The information provided by the teachers should be considered only a starting point for administrators. Given the high incidence of burnout in teaching, administrators should consider placing a greater degree of emphasis on the need for periodic school climate surveys. As such,
- 2) Administrators would do well to periodically check in with their faculty to see what suggestions they might have for reducing stress. One way to do this would be to develop a school committee focused on the climate of the school to review surveys, make recommendations, and create plans to improve school climate.
- 3) Administrators need to be cognizant of the underlying levels of stress of individual teachers as well as teachers as a whole. Periodically making time for all teachers to meet one-on-one with the administrator can assist the administrator in knowing if there is a problem that needs addressing.
- 4) It would behoove local boards of education to implement an employee assistance program so that teachers and other faculty feel they have an outlet when they feel stressed. Due to the lack of health insurance and professional development addressing occupational stress, teachers currently have little options for coping. Having the county (or state) make counseling, professional development, and referral services available to teachers would allow them to seek assistance before it becomes detrimental to the teachers classroom performance. Ideally, this position would travel to the schools in the county to meet individually with teachers, create and facilitate

- professional development, and assist teachers with finding additional resources if needed.
- 5) It may benefit educational leadership preparation programs to offer a course in human resource law and management as requirement of earning an advanced degree. Practical applications for dealing with people from a leadership position may help administrators offer further assistance to teachers. In addition, a class in brief counseling would help administrators learn to diffuse intense situations.
 - 6) Administrators could put together a faculty panel to look at school discipline policies. Having teachers invested in coming up with solutions will inevitably mean more than administrators dictating solutions.
 - 7) Administrators should be aware of the interpersonal relationships they create in the school and how those relationships contribute to the overall health of a school climate.

Dissemination

There are several groups who may be interested in the findings of this study. The first would be the principals of the schools who participated in the study. They would be able to use the information first hand to better serve their faculty. The researcher plans to write a letter to the principals including an executive brief of the findings and offering to discuss the results of the study with them at their convenience after approval from the committee overseeing the research. In addition, principal groups in general may be interested in the results of the study since it offers concrete examples of way principals can assist teachers. The researcher plans to submit the final paper to various journals for possible publication including The School

Administrator published by the American Association of School Administrators and Educational Leadership published by ASCD.

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APPENDIX A

- 1) Tell me a little bit about yourself. How long have you been teaching? What brought you to middle school? How long have you been at this school?
- 2) Can you give me your definition of stress?
- 3) Tell me about a time when teaching, you felt completely and totally stressed out? Does it happen often?
- 4) What causes you the most stress? Home or work? Do you bring home stress to work and vice versa? What is the most stressful part of your job? Do you ever get relief?
- 5) How do you handle your stress?
- 6) Is there a certain time of year when your stress is greatest? What makes this a particularly stressful time?
- 7) How does your stress affect your performance in the classroom? How?
- 8) Have you ever felt so stressed that you just wanted to quit? If yes, tell me about it. What did you do/are you doing? If no, how do you stay focused every day and keep from wanting to just give up (like so many teachers)? What keeps you going?
- 9) What does “administrator support” mean to you? Be specific?
- 10) In all of your teaching years how many principals have you worked with?
- 11) Describe your relationship with your principal.
- 12) Do you feel your current principal can tell when you are stressed out? How do you think they can tell?
- 13) What specific way was your principal ever tried to help you relieve some of your stress? Be specific.
- 14) What ways would you like to see your administrator help you in the future when you are stressed? Be specific

APPENDIX B

Modifications of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen Method (Moustakas, 1994)

1. Using a phenomenological approach, obtain a full description of your own experience of the phenomenon.
2. From the verbatim transcript of your experience complete the following steps:
 - a. Consider each statement with respect to significance for description of the experience.
 - b. Record all relevant statements.
 - c. List each non-repetitive, non-overlapping statement. These are the invariant horizons or meaning units of the experience.
 - d. Relate and cluster the invariant meaning into themes.
 - e. Synthesize the invariant meaning units and themes into *a description of the textures of the experience*. Include verbatim examples.
 - f. Reflect on your own textural description. Through imaginative variation construct a *description of the structures of your experience*.
 - g. Construct a *textural-structural description* of meanings and essences of your experience.
3. From the verbatim transcript of the experience of *each* of the other *co-researchers*, complete the above steps, a through g.
4. From the individual textural-structural descriptions of all co-researchers experiences, construct a *composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of the experience*, integrating all individual textural-structural descriptions into a universal description of the experience representing the group as a whole.

APPENDIX C

Qualitative Data Preliminary Coding List

DP = Depersonalization

dpd=distancing from co-workers
 dpdis=disregard of other's feelings
 dph=hostility toward others

EE = Emotional Exhaustion

eef = fatigue
 eerc= role conflict

PA = Personal Accomplish

pas=feelings of success

LPA = Lack of Personal Accomplishment

lpam=lack of motivation/ambition
 lpaif=feelings of inefficacy

PS = Principal Support Behaviors

psemo=emotional support
 psemor=respect
 psapp=appraisal support
 psappfee=constructive feedback
 psins=instrumental support
 psinssp= time, space, and resources
 psinfo=informational support
 psinfopd= professional development

NS= Needed Supports

nspl=needed support in planning
 nsasse=needed support in assessment
 nsfac=needed support as a facilitator
 nsrm=needed support as a role model
 nsip= needed support as an information provider
 nsrd= needed support as a resource developer

PI=Individual Stress Interventions

pih=humor
 piOTH= other stress reduction techniques
 piuse=use of alcohol or drugs
 piusead= possible addiction issues

APPENDIX D

Privacy Policy GMR Transcription (Updated 07/25/09)

How do you use my personal information?

Your personal information is entered into our system (by you) when you register. This information is only used as contact information regarding your work. No one can see or have access to your personal information, such as your name, address, phone number, and credit card number. Your personal information is never shared with a third party, and it is against our privacy policy to do so.

How do you use my audio materials?

Your audio materials are used for **transcription purposes only**. The audios are used solely by the transcriptionists who type up the audio, after which they are deleted from our database. All typists are required to sign a legally binding Confidentiality/ND Agreement with us upon hire. You can be guaranteed that all audio materials will not be shared with any third party. It is against our privacy policy to do so.

How can I be certain that my audio materials are secure on your server?

Our server is SSL-encrypted. SSL means “Secure Socket Layer.” You will note when you receive your automated emails concerning completion of your files that the transcripts are encrypted. This is automatically done by our server for your protection. Should you find the need to ensure that privacy above and beyond this policy, please contact info@gmrtranscription.com or call the number at the bottom of this page.

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