

BURNOUT AND AGGRESSION LEVEL OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN MALASIQUE II-A DISTRICT

INGRID L. NORIEGA
Master of Arts in Education
Major in Educational Administration

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the burnout and aggression levels of public secondary school teachers in the Malasique II-A District during the School Year 2024–2025, and to propose a plan of action to address these concerns. Employing a quantitative–descriptive correlational research design, the study profiled teachers in terms of highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended in the past five years. Data were gathered from 113 randomly selected teachers using a structured survey questionnaire. The statistical tools utilized included frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and the Chi-Square Test of Independence.

Findings revealed that the typical public secondary school teacher in the district does not hold a postgraduate degree, has been teaching for more than 10 years, and has attended no more than three relevant trainings. Results further indicate that teachers have a moderate level of burnout in all dimensions—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement—as well as a moderate level of aggression across physical, verbal, anger, and hostility dimensions. Significant relationships were found between burnout level and the profile variables, as well as between burnout and aggression levels.

In light of these findings, a comprehensive plan of action was proposed to reduce burnout and aggression among teachers. This intervention emphasizes professional development, mental health awareness, and stress management strategies. The study concludes that addressing burnout and aggression requires a holistic, proactive approach to ensure teacher well-being and sustain effective educational delivery.

Keywords: Burnout, Aggression, Public Secondary School Teachers, Quantitative–Descriptive–Correlational, Malasique II-A District

1. Introduction

Teaching, especially in public secondary schools, is widely recognized as a demanding profession, frequently exposing educators to prolonged emotional and interpersonal stress. Consequently, teacher burnout—characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment—has emerged as a global occupational concern (Yang & Que, 2023). Moreover, aggression, including physical, verbal, anger-based, and hostility dimensions, has been linked to burnout and occupational stress among teachers (Alqassim et al., 2022). In the Philippine context, while some studies reveal low levels of burnout and aggression among teachers, others document moderate to high emotional fatigue due to increased administrative workload and ancillary duties (Jimenez, 2021).

In line with national policy, Republic Act 11036 (Mental Health Act of 2018) mandates that public institutions, including schools, adopt comprehensive mental health policies and programs to address psychosocial hazards such as excessive workload and bullying. Furthermore, DepEd Memorandum No. 98, s. 2020 calls for the provision of mental health and psychosocial support services across all DepEd events and programs, particularly emphasizing teacher well-being

during crises. Therefore, proactively addressing teacher burnout and aggression aligns with both global literature and local policy mandates.

Despite broad recognition of teacher stress, few empirical investigations have specifically examined the interrelationship between teacher profile variables—such as educational attainment, years of experience, and mental-health-related training—and burnout, and how burnout then influences aggression within Filipino secondary schools. Available Philippine studies, including one by Fabella et al. (2023), surveyed only 47 public school teachers and reported low burnout and aggression levels, with no significant associations identified between these constructs. By contrast, other local studies have indicated that heavy workload and ancillary roles contribute to moderate emotional exhaustion and reduced self-efficacy among teachers (Beames et al., 2023).

Moreover, international research suggests that aggressive student behavior and unhealthy school climate contribute to teacher emotional distress and burnout. These findings underscore a gap: limited evidence exists linking teacher profile variables to burnout, and burnout to aggression, particularly in the Philippine secondary school context. In addition, few studies have developed comprehensive intervention plans tailored to local school districts to mitigate these concerns, despite DepEd policies advocating mental-health promotion (Romero, 2022).

Accordingly, this study addresses this gap by investigating public secondary school teachers in the Malasiqui II-A District during School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it aims to: (1) profile teachers based on highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental-health-related trainings attended in the past five years; (2) assess their burnout level across emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement; (3) evaluate their aggression level in terms of physical, verbal, anger, and hostility dimensions; (4) examine whether teacher profile variables are significantly related to burnout; (5) determine whether burnout level significantly relates to aggression level; and (6) propose a plan of action grounded in both data and DepEd policy to alleviate burnout and aggression.

First, by profiling teachers' educational and experiential backgrounds alongside mental-health training exposure, the study contributes nuanced local data that informs whether such factors bear on burnout risk. Second, by integrating aggression measures, it builds on limited Philippine literature by exploring whether burnout correlates with aggression, as international literature suggests. Third, by generating a context-specific intervention plan, the study aligns with RA 11036's requirement that public institutions establish mental health frameworks, as well as DepEd Memorandum 98, s. 2020, which directs the inclusion of psychosocial support within DepEd programs. Lastly, the study's findings can inform local DepEd division policies and mental health initiatives, contributing evidence-based strategies that support teacher well-being and instructional quality.

To this end, the study utilizes a quantitative-descriptive-correlational design, coupled with a developmental research phase to derive the proposed plan of action. Data collection involved random sampling of 113 public secondary school teachers, who completed structured questionnaires. Statistical analyses included frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and Chi-Square tests of independence to test relationships among variables. Ultimately, the proposed intervention plan is crafted to address identified stressors and to align with DepEd policies and RA mandates, ensuring both local relevance and regulatory compliance. contributes significantly to the holistic development of learners. Beyond physical health, PE plays a vital role in cultivating discipline, resilience, social skills, and cognitive functioning (Bailey et al., 2009). Globally, researchers have acknowledged the benefits of regular physical activity among school-age children, linking it to improved academic outcomes, enhanced classroom behavior, and increased brain function (Singh et al., 2012; Fedewa & Ahn, 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) underscores the need for adolescents to engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily to attain and maintain optimal health outcomes.

In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) has emphasized the importance of Physical Education through various policies and curriculum reforms. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019, which outlines the Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, includes Physical Education under the MAPEH (Music, Arts, PE, and Health) learning area and highlights its role in developing physical literacy among learners. Similarly, DepEd Memorandum No. 173, s. 2016, the National Fitness and Sports Development Program promotes sports activities and physical fitness as tools for youth empowerment and academic enrichment. Moreover, DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017 on the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) includes strands that advocate for learner-centered teaching and inclusive, safe learning environments—principles that align with effective PE instruction.

Despite the policies and programs, PE remains marginalized in many school settings. Often perceived as secondary to core academic subjects, PE classes are shortened, deprioritized, or inconsistently implemented (Delos Santos, 2020). This trend is particularly concerning in junior high school, where academic demands intensify, and physical activity levels tend to decline. Studies have noted that Filipino adolescents are becoming increasingly sedentary, resulting in rising obesity rates and declining physical fitness levels (Food and Nutrition Research Institute, 2019). Additionally, there is limited empirical evidence in the Philippine setting that connects physical fitness directly with academic achievement—an area that has received growing international attention.

For instance, Redondo-Flores et al. (2022) argue that regular participation in physical activity improves academic performance by enhancing blood flow to the brain and reducing stress. Similarly, Donnelly et al. (2016) found that physically fit students tend to demonstrate better memory, executive functioning, and concentration, leading to higher academic achievement (Erwin & Schreiber, 2024). However, local studies exploring these correlations, especially within the public school system, remain scarce. There is also a lack of contextualized research that differentiates between active and non-active participants in PE and how this distinction influences both physical and cognitive outcomes.

Moreover, while programs such as the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) and the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) aim to address malnutrition and promote healthy living, there is minimal integration between these initiatives and PE curricula to address both academic and physical development holistically. Likewise, the implementation of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) during the pandemic saw a significant reduction in PE learning targets, further highlighting the need to examine the consequences of limited physical activity on student performance.

In response to these gaps, this study investigates the impact of Physical Education participation on the physical fitness and academic performance of Junior High School students. Grounded in the premise that physical fitness is a contributor to academic achievement, the study seeks to determine whether active engagement in PE classes correlates with improved academic performance and physical well-being.

Specifically, the research aims to: (1) assess the physical fitness levels of students who participate in PE; (2) evaluate their academic performance based on GPA or standardized tests; (3) analyze the relationship between physical fitness and academic outcomes; (4) compare the performance and fitness of active and non-active PE participants; and (5) develop a plan of action to enhance PE participation based on empirical findings. Through a quantitative approach utilizing standardized fitness tests, academic records, and participation data, the study seeks to contribute to evidence-based policies and practices that underscore the importance of PE in the overall development of learners.

Furthermore, this study aligns with broader educational goals, such as those espoused in DepEd's MATATAG Agenda, which seeks to make learners resilient, healthy, and prepared for

lifelong learning. It also supports UNESCO's Quality Physical Education (QPE) framework, which advocates for inclusive, equitable, and impactful PE programs globally. By examining the cognitive and physical benefits of PE within the local context, this study aims to provide actionable insights that can inform school administrators, policymakers, and educators in reinforcing the value of physical education across all levels of basic education.

In sum, this research asserts that Physical Education is not a peripheral subject but a crucial element in developing physically competent and academically successful learners. Highlighting the interplay between fitness and scholastic performance reinforces the call for comprehensive, inclusive, and well-supported PE programs in Philippine schools.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically utilizing both correlational and comparative approaches, to systematically examine the impact of Physical Education (PE) participation on physical fitness and academic performance among Junior High School students. Through the correlational approach, the study explored the strength and direction of the relationship between students' physical fitness levels and their academic performance, both measured using objective and standardized instruments. Meanwhile, the comparative aspect aimed to determine statistically significant differences in physical fitness and academic outcomes between two groups of students, those who actively participated in PE and those who did not. To achieve this, the study utilized independent samples t-tests for group comparisons and Pearson product-moment correlation for relational analysis. Moreover, the quantitative design enabled the use of numerical data, ensuring objectivity and allowing for rigorous statistical analysis. Overall, this approach was deemed appropriate as it provided a reliable means to quantify and analyze the variables of interest and to address the research questions in a structured and evidence-based manner. This study employed a quantitative-descriptive correlational research design, complemented by a developmental approach, to systematically examine and address the burnout and aggression levels of public secondary school teachers in the Malasiqui II-A District during the School Year 2024–2025. The descriptive component was utilized to profile the respondents in terms of highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended over the past five years, as well as to measure their burnout and aggression levels. The correlational aspect was applied to determine the significant relationships between the teachers' profile variables and their burnout level, and between their burnout level and aggression level. Furthermore, the developmental method was employed to design a comprehensive plan of action aimed at alleviating burnout and aggression, ensuring that the proposed interventions were grounded in empirical findings. Through this integrated design, the study was able to generate both analytical insights and practical solutions to address the identified issues.

2.2 Participants

The participants of the study were 113 public secondary school teachers from the Malasiqui II-A District during the School Year 2024–2025, selected through random sampling from a total population of 159 teachers, as determined using Slovin's formula with a margin of error of 0.05. These respondents represented various public secondary schools within the district, thereby ensuring adequate representation of the teaching population. They provided essential data regarding their profile, specifically their highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended within the past five years. Moreover, they assessed their levels of burnout and aggression, which served as the primary variables of the study. The inclusion of participants from diverse educational backgrounds and

teaching experiences allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of the relationships between profile variables, burnout levels, and aggression levels, thus enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.

2.3 Instrumentation

The primary instrument used in this study was a structured survey questionnaire, which was designed to gather the necessary data from the 113 teacher-respondents systematically. The instrument consisted of three main parts to address the specific objectives of the research. The first part elicited the respondents' profile information, including highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended within the past five years. The second part measured the level of burnout among the teachers, covering the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement, using a Likert-type scale for standardized responses. The third part assessed the level of aggression, focusing on physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility, likewise employing a Likert-type scale for consistent measurement. The survey questionnaire was structured to ensure clarity, relevance, and ease of response, thereby facilitating accurate data collection and supporting the validity of the study's findings.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to address the research objectives and test the stated hypotheses. To describe the profile of the respondents, frequency counts and percentages were computed, providing a precise distribution of the teachers' highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended. To determine the levels of burnout and aggression, the weighted mean was utilized, with the resulting values interpreted based on a predetermined scale of interpretation. Furthermore, to examine the relationships between the profile variables and burnout level, as well as between burnout level and aggression level, the Chi-Square Test of Independence was employed, enabling the identification of significant associations between categorical variables. These statistical treatments ensured that the data were objectively interpreted and that the findings were both valid and reliable, thereby supporting sound conclusions and evidence-based recommendations.

3 Results

The results of the study revealed notable trends in the profile of the public secondary school teachers in the Malasiqui II-A District. A majority, or 67% of the respondents, did not hold postgraduate degrees, indicating that most teachers possessed only a bachelor's degree as their highest educational qualification. In terms of teaching experience, 58% had been in the profession for more than ten years, suggesting a predominantly seasoned teaching workforce. Additionally, 79% of the respondents had attended no more than three mental health-related trainings in the past five years, pointing to limited opportunities for professional development in this specific area. These findings highlight the need for sustained teacher education and training, particularly in mental health awareness and management, to better equip educators in coping with occupational stressors.

About burnout levels, the study found that the respondents exhibited a moderate level of burnout across all three dimensions. Specifically, the computed weighted mean for emotional exhaustion was 3.30, for depersonalization was 3.29, and for lack of personal achievement was also 3.29. These results suggest that, while burnout is not critically high, it is present at a level that can potentially impact teacher well-being and performance if left unaddressed. Furthermore, the Chi-Square Test of Independence revealed significant relationships between burnout level and certain profile variables: highest educational attainment ($\chi^2 = 9.74$), length of teaching

experience ($\chi^2 = 8.21$), and number of relevant trainings attended ($\chi^2 = 7.02$). These findings imply that both professional background and access to training opportunities play important roles in influencing burnout levels among teachers.

In terms of aggression levels, the results indicated that the respondents demonstrated a moderate level in all measured dimensions. The computed weighted means were 3.20 for physical aggression, 3.20 for verbal aggression, 3.20 for anger, and 3.19 for hostility, with an overall mean of 3.20. Importantly, statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between burnout level and aggression level, with a computed chi-square value of 6.00, suggesting that higher burnout levels may contribute to elevated aggression tendencies among teachers. These findings underscore the critical need for interventions aimed at reducing burnout as a means of indirectly mitigating aggression, thereby fostering a healthier and more conducive teaching and learning environment.

4. Discussion

The findings of the present study on the moderate level of burnout among public secondary school teachers align with the results of prior research conducted in both local and international contexts. For instance, a study by Iqbal et al. (2020) emphasized that educators commonly experience moderate levels of burnout due to the emotional demands of teaching, heavy workloads, and administrative responsibilities (Iqbal et al., 2020). Similarly, a local investigation by Yingil (2022) found that Filipino public-school teachers often report moderate burnout levels, particularly in the domains of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, which they attributed to large class sizes and limited resources. These consistent findings indicate that burnout is a prevalent but manageable concern among teachers, and that preventive measures, such as mental health training and workload management, are essential in maintaining teacher well-being (Yingil, 2022).

The observed significant relationship between the profile variables—particularly the highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and number of mental health-related trainings attended—and burnout level is also supported by previous literature. For example, the work of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) noted that more experienced teachers may face greater emotional fatigue due to prolonged exposure to occupational stressors, while higher educational attainment may equip teachers with better coping strategies, thereby reducing burnout risk (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021). Likewise, a study by Harel et al. (2025) reported that participation in targeted professional development programs, including mental health seminars, was associated with lower burnout levels among educators. These parallel findings reinforce the current study's conclusion that teacher background and access to training significantly shape their resilience to burnout (Harel et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the significant relationship found between burnout and aggression levels corroborates existing research suggesting that psychological strain can manifest in outward expressions of frustration. Abbas et al. (2023) proposed in their General Aggression Model that stress, and emotional exhaustion can heighten aggressive tendencies, particularly in high-pressure environments such as classrooms (Abbas et al., 2023). In the Philippine setting, Ferreira et al. (2025) observed that teachers experiencing higher burnout levels reported more frequent episodes of verbal aggression, which they linked to diminished emotional regulation. The present study's results thus affirm that addressing burnout is not only critical for preserving teacher well-being but also for fostering a more positive and less conflict-prone school climate, ultimately benefiting both educators and learners (Ferreira et al., 2025).

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