EVALUATING ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AND TUTOR BURNOUT IN AKATSI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Pickering (2008) observed that administration is a major determinant of a teacher's perception of stress in the school. Besides, work overload is one of the factors causing burnout among teachers that causes reduced physical and emotional energy (Malik, 2019). The study sought to assess the extent to which administrative support and workload contribute to tutor burnout. The study employed descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from thirty-five tutors who were purposively sampled for the study. Concerning administrative support, the Principal often explained to teachers what was going on in the College. A majority of tutors agreed that the College created a positive environment and a conducive climate for them to work. However, a majority of tutors in the College agreed that they were not involved in planning school activities. With regard to workload, a majority of tutors accepted that large class sizes increased their workload demands and made it difficult for them to meet the needs of all students. Also, tutors acknowledged that their workload interfered with their family life. It was recommended that College management organise retreats or seminar to discuss issues and intervention plans on burnout with tutors to show concern instead of being silent on the issue. Also, college management should put measures in place to reduce number of classes taught by tutors.

Keywords: Burnout, Administrative Support, Workload.

INTRODUCTION

Burnout has been identified as a psychological risk, especially in fields which demand social relationships (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Burnout is defined as "a psychological syndrome emerging as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job" (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Burnout is considered a mental health issue but not a mental illness, and can affect both physical wellbeing and mental health. Burnout develops gradually when an employee begins to feel uncomfortable with conditions of work and the work environment. The concept of burnout is in three dimensions: emotional exhaustion; chronic negative responses to stressful workplace conditions; and feelings of cynicism and detachment from the job. (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

Teaching has been ranked as one of the most stressful professions and research substantiates the issue of teacher burnout in different countries and diverse educational contexts (Durr, Chang, & Carson, 2014); (Marek, Schaufeli, & Maslach, 2017). In the United Kingdom, teaching was ranked one of the most stressful among twenty-six occupations (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005). In Finland, teachers experienced stress and burnout more frequently (12%) than other professions (8%) (Kauppinen, Hanhela, Kandolin, Karjalainen, Kasvio, Perkiö-Mäkelä, & Viluksela, 2010). Teachers also suffer the highest level of burnout compared to other workers in the human services and white-collar jobs (Kalimo & Hakanen, 2000). As teachers have to constantly modulate their social interactions with students, colleagues, administrators, and parents, they are continually exposed to "emotional labour" in their career (Xu, 2013), and this can lead to an ever-growing likelihood of teacher burnout. Moreover, Research indicates that teacher burnout negatively affects teachers' self- efficacy, self-confidence, motivation, self- esteem, productivity, professional engagement, and job satisfaction (Larrivee, 2012; Gold & Roth, 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; (Marek, Schaufeli, & Maslach, 2017); Herman, Hickmon-Rosa, Reinke, 2018).

Burnout affects many teachers and has been considered a serious problem since it cannot coexist with teaching engagement. Aggression and disengagement from teaching in some teachers is linked to burnout. Burnout behaviour in teachers is exhibited through high absenteeism, ineffectiveness, interpersonal conflicts, lower level of productivity, lack of commitment, dissatisfaction with job, and inability to take work seriously. According to Wanyoyi and Ouda, (2019), the problem of burnout in schools can be managed with a conducive administrative climate as it plays a critical role in teachers' productivity. Martin (1991) further intimated that unless unconducive administrative climate which triggers burnout is dealt with and prevented in professionals like teachers, it is likely to cause rapid job turnover, teacher dissatisfaction, inefficient service and inadequate address of the clientele needs.

Psychological burnout among teachers has been identified as one reason for capable teachers leaving the profession for other careers (Leiter & Maslach, 2009). Therefore, if antecedents that cause burn out are not identified and controlled early, teacher burnout may culminate in chronic anxiety, and physical and somatic afflictions, as well as job abandonment ((Marek, Schaufeli, & Maslach, 2017). Larrivee (2012) observes that the teaching profession is becoming more onerous and stressful, owing to the far- reaching changes imposed by modern neoliberal

educational and managerial systems in the forms of expanding workload and pressure on teachers. According to Brock and Grady (2000), the first step to eradicating teacher stress and burnout is acknowledging that it exists in schools and that it is a correctable and preventable problem (Brock & Grady, 2000).

Meanwhile, Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) identified six administrative risk factors that trigger burnout behaviour in teachers: Firstly, the mismatch in workload where the amount of work may be too much as compared to the available time to accomplish it; secondly, mismatch in control systems put in place like inadequate or excessive controls from the administration which denies those who are not administrators the opportunity for creativity and autonomy; thirdly, lack of appropriate awards which lead to dissatisfaction; fourthly, loss of sense of positive connection with others in work place which has a negative effect on productivity as one cannot work in isolation; fifthly, perceived lack of fairness which leads to de-motivation; and lastly conflict between values of teachers, especially among teachers who want to achieve best performance. Besides, Thakur (2018) studied the relationship between workload and burnout of Special Education teachers and found that work overload does result in higher levels of burnout.

Fernández-Suárez, Maríaluz Arántzazu García-González, Torrano, & García-González, (2021) carried out a systematic review of the existing scientific literature on the prevalence of burnout among university professors in the period 2005–2020. The results showed the presence of high levels of burnout in a sample of 2,841 teachers in the period studied, which makes it necessary to implement psychosocial intervention programs to prevent this syndrome and promote the personal and professional accomplishment of teachers.

Similarly, Owusu and Nkyi (2021) assessed the impact of occupational stress and burnout on turnover intentions among teachers. The study also looked at the relationships that existed among occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions among teachers using descriptive survey design. The study revealed that occupational stress and burnout had significant impact on turnover intention among teachers. In addition, job dissatisfaction had statistically significant impact on turnover intention of the participants.

Statement of the Problem

According to Desouky and Allam (2017), teachers experience stress because of their workload, as they plan lessons, organize activities, develop curriculum, manage extra-curricular activities, supervise classes, provide information, maintain discipline, provide cover for teacher shortage and absence, maintain records, administer time tables, evaluate and assess students' performance, in addition to motivation of students by words and actions. Similarly, Kirsch and van den Berghe (2010) as cited in Thakur (2018), established that teachers are more vulnerable to burnout because of their frequent personal interactions as compared to employees who work in production sectors.

According to Ofori, Kyere and Berko (2020) tutors in Colleges of Education in Ghana took responsibilities in capacities such as lesson planning and teaching, accountability for teacher trainees' academic performance, classroom management and discipline, supervision of project work, supervision of on-campus and off-campus teaching practice, conducting research and invigilation of examinations and quizzes. The researchers observed that tutors experienced burnout as a result of their inability to cope with teaching problems, non-cooperative students,

aggressive students, concern for student's learning and staff relationships. Additional findings included lack of job satisfaction (96 %) and delay in payment of salary (88%).

Meanwhile, studies conducted on teacher burnout in Colleges of Education did not evaluate the extent to which Administrative Support and Workload could contribute to burnout among tutors. In order to address this gap in the literature, this current study focuses on assessing the extent to which Administrative Support and Workload could contribute to burn out in tutors at Akatsi College of Education.

Purpose of the Study

As a result of inadequate infrastructure coupled with the outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic, the Government of Ghana through the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), now Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC), directed Colleges of Education to teach pre-service teachers by using online platforms.

It would be recalled that in 2020, Government of Ghana rolled out blended learning in Colleges of Education due to infrastructural challenges in the colleges. Blended Learning System is a style of learning in which students learn via electronic and online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching. However, a directive from the Ministry of Education requested the National Conference of Principals of Colleges of Education (PRINCOF) to suspend the blended Learning in Colleges of Education for the 2021/2022 academic year. This decision to suspend the blended learning was due to the numerous complaints and challenges associated with the introduction of blended learning approach.

The Ghana Tertiary Education Commission therefore tasked Principals of the Colleges of Education in Ghana to develop an academic calendar that would ensure that none of the levels 100, 200, 300 and 400 students of the new Bachelor of Education programmes continued with the blended learning and none was left behind. Principals later developed a calendar that allowed levels 100 and 200 students to stay on campus for tutorials whilst level 300 students stayed at home. After spending a number of weeks on campus, level 200 went for a short break to make way for level 300 students to come to campus. Level 300 students also left campus after a period to make way for level 400 students. With that arrangement, level 100 students were to stay on campus for a stipulated period of 12 weeks while levels 200, 300 and 400 students kept alternating till they completed the required number of weeks for the academic year. That arrangement however, did not make room for vacation for tutors and had put a lot of pressure on tutors as they had to teach throughout the year without any break which could result in tutor burnout.

The sources of teacher burnout have been theorized and studied at three different levels: organizational, individual, and transactional (Durr et al., 2014). This study therefore considered two indicators in the organizational factors namely administrative support and workload, and identified the extent to which they influenced tutor burnout in Akatsi College of Education.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does administrative support contribute to tutor burnout?

2.To what extent does workload in the College contribute to tutor burnout?

Significance of the Study

Considering the detrimental effects teacher burnout can have on educational quality and effectiveness, prevention and management of teacher burnout are imperative. It should be noted that teacher burnout is a process, not a single occurrence. The study will help tutors to identify

factors and causes of burnout on them and develop strategies of managing or coping with it. It will also help management of Colleges of Education to put in place measures to reduce burnout among tutors and also develop and adopt prevention and intervention strategies. The findings will also encourage frequent conversations between tutors and administrators about job related challenges and problems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Burnout

The sources of teacher burnout have been theorized and studied at three different levels, namely, organizational, individual, and transactional (Chang, 2009; Durr et al., 2014). Organizational factors that influence teacher burnout include poor classroom climate, role conflict, low salary, large class size, students' misbehaviour, inadequate administrative support, work overload, job mobility, demanding paperwork, excessive testing, and role- ambiguity (Larrivee, 2012; Gold & Roth, 2013; Xu, 2013; Durr et al., 2014; Marek et al., 2017). Individual components that contribute to teacher burnout include age, experience, education level, language, gender, or socio-economic status (Chang, 2009; Gold & Roth, 2013). Finally, Chang (2009) asserted that transactional factors also provoke burnout. Transactional factors consist of interactions between individual factors and organizational and/or social factors.

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The present study draws on the job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti, Nachreiner, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2001), which proposes that teacher stress and burnout are predicted by their perceptions of two factors, namely, job demands and resources (Hakanen et al., 2006). The central assumption of this model is that job stress arises when a person's resources have been exceeded (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). School is a complex environment where job demands include several individual- and school-level aspects, such as work overload, role conflict, school climate, conflicts with colleagues, and students' behavioural problems (Hakanen et al., 2006; Pyhältö, Pietarinen, & Salmela-Aro, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Job resources consist of, among others, teacher efficacy, support from one's colleagues and Principal, participation in decision-making, public recognition, and professional development (Rudow, 1999). The literature has provided consistent support for the JD-R model and the primary role of job demands and resources in burnout (see Fernet, Austin, Trepanier, & Dussault, 2013, for a review; Hakanen et al., 2006). Job demands and resources can arise from the individual teacher-, student-, and organisational levels. Thus, the present focus on the extent to administrative support and workload could lead to tutor burnout.

Teacher Burnout and Administrative Support

Pickering (2008) observed that administration is a major determinant of a teacher's perception of stress in the school. If backed by administrative support, it is believed that teachers will not only survive creatively in their profession, but thrive as well (McGrath, 1995). Administrative support will refer to "the collection of affirming actions by the school administrators that assist teachers in performing their responsibilities and withstanding the stress of their positions" (Weiss, 2001).

Meanwhile, Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) found out that lack of administrative support to teachers, increased workload, minimal or lack of professional development, student discipline, delayed salary payment, limited school facilities and unfulfilled role expectation trigger burnout and reduce teacher productivity.

Tickle (2011) also found that administrative support was the most significant predictor of job satisfaction amongst teachers. It was also found that administrative support sets the stage for a great teaching experience. Tickle added that a teacher can be more satisfied with his/her salary if the administrative support is positive. According to Walker and Slear (2011) strong lines of communication are critical, compassion in the form of genuine concern for the welfare of teachers is vital and empowerment, where teachers make decisions about their work and school-wide decisions is needed.

Similarly, Crosby (2015) assessed the relationship between administrative support and teacher burnout and found that the administrative support played a significant role in predicting teacher burnout. In a study conducted to determine why special education teachers left their jobs, Berry (2011) found that 21% left their positions due to variables related to administrative support.

Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) investigated teacher perception on school factors affecting their work. The researchers explored administrative support, workload, staff development, student discipline, salary, school facilities, and role expectation as factors considered to influence teachers' psychological burnout. The results revealed that generally there was minimal administrative support from the administration of the school. Specifically, it was found out that the Principal often did not tell teachers what was going on in the College (mean = 2.1818, SD= 1.19995). The study also found out that most Principals did not involve their teachers in decision making and planning school activities and functions (mean = 2.4920). SD= 1.15642).

On the climate set by the Principals in their schools, more than a half of the respondents agreed that their schools had positive environment to work in (mean= 2.8075). They also tended to agree (mean = 2.7219) that administrative roles in their schools enabled authentic communication and that the rules were a guide to solutions rather than rigid procedures (mean = 2.8065). The study found out that the Principals communicated important information to the teachers in time (mean = 2.9027).

Teacher Burnout and Workload

According to Ganster and Rosen (2013), workload is interconnected with many psychological problems; burnout is among one of them. One of the major aspects of workload is job burnout. When workload exceeds normal limits and a person finds himself helpless to deal with workload, job burnout develops. Burnout is characterized by three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Emotional exhaustion deals with the feeling of being emotionally drained and exhausted by one's work. Depersonalization refers to detachment from the job and being indifferent from work place. Also, lack of feelings of personal accomplishment is when goals are not being achieved and job becomes difficult to manage due to work overload.

Research revealed class size and composition as a significant area of stress (Naylor & White 2010). Large class sizes increase the workload demands on teachers and make it challenging to meet the needs of all students. Large classes are characterised by spending more time on preparation, grading and discipline rather than connecting with individual students or using innovative instructional approaches, and these are problems frequently identified with large classes (Pickering, 2008).

The researchers, Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) explore how administrative support, workload, staff development, student discipline, salary, school facilities, and role expectation

as factors are considered to influence teachers' psychological burnout. The study revealed that teachers are overloaded (mean =3.3209), teachers also feel exhausted and worked up at the end of their work day (mean = 2.9679). The study also notes that a majority of teachers (mean = 2.7487) did not have enough time to plan their lessons due to heavy workload. Respondents with a mean of 2.9679 felt weary and worked up at the end of their work day. Others felt that their jobs interfered with their family life (mean = 2.5134) and yet others (mean = 2.4118) feared going to school due to their heavy workload. A majority of the teachers indicated that they were not tired with their students (mean = 1.6043). The researchers also found that the teachers were contemplating to leave their stations due to the heavy work load (mean = 1.9465) and felt tired with their jobs (mean = 1.9144).

Littrell, Billingsley, and Cross (1994) explored the effects Principals had on teachers' level of stress, their job satisfaction, their school commitment, their own personal health, and their intent to stay in the teaching profession for 1,226 teachers randomly sampled. The results of the study revealed that Principals provided an atmosphere of optimism and interacted frequently with teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. This type of design would assist to describe the characteristics that existed in the population but not to determine the cause-and-effect relationship. The justification for the use of the design was that it provided detailed description of the influence of administrative support and workload on tutor burnout in Colleges of Education in Ghana.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The accessible population was all (52) tutors teaching at Akatsi College of Education. Purposive sampling method was used to obtain the representative sample of this study. Purposive sampling is appropriate on occasions where investigators need to select participants who have particular characteristics needed for the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). With the purposive sampling method, the researcher selected tutors who were teaching Bachelor of Education students. Therefore, thirty-five tutors who were teaching levels 100, 200, 300 and 400 were purposively selected for the study.

Instrument

A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was structured into two main sections: Administrative Support, and workload. Respondents were asked to indicate their levels of agreement with the various items under each section on a four-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 =agree, 4 = strongly agree). On the scale of 1 to 4, 2.5 being the median, when the mean is above 2.5, it implies the problem existed, but when the mean was below 2.5 the problem did not exist.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher administered the questionnaire to tutors after the purpose of the study and the sampling techniques were explained. The respondents were given enough time to complete the questionnaire. A total of thirty-five questionnaire was given out and retrieved. All retrieved questionnaire were adequately completed and were found usable for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: To what extent does administrative support affect tutor burnout?

Table 1

Tutors' Response on Administrative Support in the College

Administrative Support	Mean	Standard Deviation
College administration often interferes with my work	1.66	0.639
Tutors in the College trust the Principal	3.17	0.618
Tutors are suspicious of most of the Principal's actions	1.71	0.618
The Principal typically acts in the best interest of the Tutors	3.29	0.622
The Principal shows concern for the tutors	3.23	0.690
I can strongly rely on the Principal	3.26	0.611
The Principal often tells teachers what is going on in the College	3.46	0.505
Tutors in the College are not involved in decision making and planning school activities.	3.49	0.612
My College has a positive environment and a conducive climate for me to work	3.37	0.547
Administrative rules in this school enable authentic communication	1.60	0.651
Administrators in my school do set a good example by working hard.	3.26	0.780
The Principal communicates important information to the staff in time	3.31	0.471
Administrative rules in this school are used to punish teachers.	2.46	0.780
Administrative rules in this school are a guide to solution rather than rigid procedures.	3.14	0.772
The authority of the Principal is used to undermine teachers.	2.11	0.676
Tutors in my school are assigned responsibilities with no strings attached.	3.00	0.485

As far as administrative support is concerned in tutors' burnout, Table 1 shows that a majority of tutors in the College agreed that they were not involved in planning school activities (mean= 3.49, SD = 0.612). The finding is consistent with the study conducted by Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) which reported that most Principals do not involve their teachers in planning school activities and functions.

The study also found that the Principal often explained to tutors what was going on in the College (mean=3.46, SD=0.505). The finding was also in line with the study of Littrell, Billingsley, and Cross (1994) which indicated that principals provided an atmosphere of optimism and interact frequently with teachers. However, the finding was not in line with the Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) research conducted which reported that the Principal often did not tell teachers what was going on in the College.

A majority of tutors agreed that the College created a positive environment and a conducive climate for them to work (mean = 3.37, SD=0.547). The finding was in line with the study of Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) conducted which reported that more than a half of the respondents agreed that their schools had positive environment to work in.

Research Question 2: To what extent does workload in the College contribute to tutors' burn out?

Table 2

Tutors' Response on Workload in the College.

Workload	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fear going to school due to workload	1.77	0.598
Seriously feel like leaving school due to workload	1.91	0.562
My workload is unevenly distributed so it piles up.	3.06	0.684
My job interferes with my family life	3.31	0.471

I don't have enough time to plan my lesson	3.63	0.490
I feel am tired with my job	2.03	0.822
My department needs more teachers to ease the workload	1.71	0.622
I am tired with some of my students	1.77	0.731
I feel exhausted and worked up at the end of my work day.	1.94	0.765
Large classes increase my workload demands	3.54	0.505

Table 2 shows that a majority of tutors agreed that they didn't have enough time to plan their lessons (mean= 3.63, SD=0.490). The finding is consistent with the study conducted by Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) which indicated that a majority of teachers did not have enough time to plan their lessons due to heavy work load. The result was an indicator that most teachers were going to school to teach unprepared.

A majority of tutors agreed that their lessons interfered with their family life (mean=3.31, SD=0.471). The finding was in line with the study of Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) which reported their jobs interfered with their family life.

Moreover, the study also revealed that large classes increased their workload demands (mean= 3.54, SD=0.505). The finding was in line with the findings of (Naylor & White 2010) and (Pickering, 2008) which identified that large classes increased the workload demands on teachers and made it challenging to meet students' needs. However, tutors disagreed that they were tired with some of their students (mean =1.77, SD=0.731). The finding of the study was consistent with the finding of Matiang'i, Makewa and Role (2016) which reported that a majority of the teachers indicated that they were not tired with their students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The study examined the extent to which administrative support and workload contributed to teacher burnout in Akatsi College of Education. The evidence available from the findings of the study provided the basis for a number of conclusions to be made.

As far as administrative support and burnout was concerned tutors were well involved in planning school activities and functions. The Principal often explained to teachers what was going on in the College and the College created a positive environment and a conducive climate for them to work.

Concerning workload and burnout, tutors did not have enough time to plan their lessons. That indicated that most tutors were going to class to teach unprepared. A majority of tutors accepted that large class sizes increased their workload demands and made it difficult for them to meet the needs of all students, which implied that the needs of students were not met satisfactorily. More time spent on preparation, grading and discipline rather than connecting with individual students or using innovative instructional approaches, were problems frequently identified with large classes. A majority of tutors acknowledged that their workload interfered with their family life, which could cause tension at home to increase stress. Moreover, stress can cause complicated health problems. However, tutors disagreed that they were tired with some of their students. There was evidence therefore that burnout existed among tutors of Akatsi College of Education, which if not prevented, could develop beyond correctable limits.

Recommendations

Brock and Grady (2000) observed that the first step to eradicating teacher stress and burnout was acknowledging that it exists in schools and that it is correctable and preventable.

Leithwood and Beatty (2008) explained that many factors contributed to growing teacher stress but more importantly many leadership approaches and methods are said to reduce teacher stress. Moreover, what administrators said and did could make a tremendous difference.

The underlisted recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. College management should organise retreats or seminars to discuss issues and intervention plans on burnout with tutors to show concern instead of being silent on the issue.
2. The Principal should involve tutors in decision making and planning college activities.
3. Administrators should have frequent fora with tutors to know the administrative challenges they encounter to device strategies of support.
4. It is recommended that college management should put measures in place to reduce number of classes taught by tutors.
5. The Time Table of the College should make room for each tutor to teach a particular level or only two levels that could be on campus at same periods so that tutors can rest when the levels they teach are not on campus.
6. Government should consider lifting the ban on employment to enable more tutors to be recruited to reduce the workload on tutors.

Implications for Research

According to Desouky and Allam (2017), teachers experience stress because of their workload. Besides, Pickering (2008) observed that administrative support is a major determinant of a teacher's perception of stress in the school. The study on tutor burnout was conducted to inform Ghana Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Education on the antecedents of burnout being experienced by tutors as a result of the new academic calendar prepared which has no break for tutors in order to end the blended learning approach of teaching and learning introduced in the Colleges of Education due to outbreak of Covid-19 coupled with limited accommodation space.

The study is aimed at informing College Management on the antecedents of administrative support and workload that are contributing to tutor burnout to enable College Management to identify results of the antecedents and put interventions in place to reduce the burnout among tutors. Moreover, it is important for tutors to acknowledge the existence of antecedents of burnout in the College so that they could put strategies in place to reduce them since burnout negatively affects tutors' self- efficacy, self-confidence, motivation, self- esteem, productivity, professional engagement, and job satisfaction (Herman et al., 2018).

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Conflict of Interest Statement

No conflict of interest exists.