



**EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS WITH
THEIR KEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS:
BASES FOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aimed to investigate the emotional exhaustion experienced by teachers with their key Department of Education officials focusing on the bases for program recommendation, using a phenomenological approach within a qualitative method. The participants of the study were five (5) district supervisors, five (5) school heads, and five (5) head teachers/Teacher-in-Charge from the selected districts in the Schools Division of Iloilo. Data were gathered through a researcher-made interview guide using in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that teachers' emotional exhaustion was commonly associated with heavy workload, multiple responsibilities, classroom management concerns, learners' behavior, health-related issues, and organizational and leadership concerns. The participants also shared that emotional exhaustion affected teacher's motivations, energy and work performance. To cope with these challenges, support systems such as open communication, recognition, teamwork, wellness activities, and administrative support were identified as helpful in reducing teachers' stress. Overall, the results show to help address teachers' emotional and positive environment.

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Keywords: *Emotional Exhaustion, Key Department of Education Officials, Program Recommendation*

INTRODUCTION

The field of teaching is widely viewed as one of the most demanding careers, requiring not only intellectual competence but also a high level of emotional labor. Teachers are expected to manage classrooms, prepare lessons, assess learners, attend meetings, comply with reports, and respond to the needs of students, parents, and administrators—all while maintaining professionalism and emotional stability. Over time, these demands can lead to emotional exhaustion, a major component of burnout reflected in feelings of emotional exhaustion and depletion, overwhelmed, and fatigued. In the Philippine public-school system, teachers operate within a highly structured and hierarchical environment under the Department of Education (DepEd). While the DepEd aims to promote quality education through policies, monitoring, and supervision, the increasing number of administrative requirements, performance indicators, and compliance-related tasks has significantly added to teachers' workload. Many teachers report that beyond teaching, they are burdened with paperwork, documentation, data gathering, and sudden directives, often with tight deadlines. These conditions contribute to stress and emotional exhaustion.

Emotional exhaustion becomes more pronounced when teachers experience strained relationships or pressure from key DepEd officials, such as school heads, head teachers, and district supervisors. While these officials play essential roles in instructional leadership and

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quality assurance, their approaches to supervision, communication styles, expectations, and decision-making processes can either support or emotionally drain teachers. For instance, lack of recognition, unrealistic expectations, authoritarian leadership styles, and limited opportunities for dialogue can heighten teachers' feelings of frustration, helplessness, and emotional fatigue. Moreover, teachers often feel conflicted because they are expected to comply with directives even when these negatively affect their well-being. Fear of being labeled as uncooperative or inefficient discourages many teachers from voicing concerns. As a result, emotional exhaustion is often internalized, leading to decreased motivation, reduced teaching effectiveness, absenteeism, and in some cases, early resignation from the profession.

The emotional exhaustion experienced by teachers does not only affect them personally but also impacts the quality of learning delivered to learners. Emotionally exhausted teachers may struggle to maintain enthusiasm, patience, and creativity in teaching. This may influence classroom management. Thus, addressing teachers' emotional exhaustion is not just a personal issue but a broader systemic concern that affects all aspects of the educational environment. Despite the growing awareness of teacher burnout, limited local studies focus specifically on teachers' emotional exhaustion arising from their interactions with key DepEd officials. Most studies focus on workload, student behavior, or personal stress management, overlooking the critical role of leadership dynamics and organizational relationships. Understanding these interactions is essential because leadership practices can either mitigate or intensify emotional exhaustion. Teachers use a variety of coping strategies to handle emotional exhaustion. These include seeking peer support, practicing self-care, relying on

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faith and family, developing emotional resilience, or emotionally distancing themselves from work. However, Although these coping strategies provide short-term relief, they fail to resolve the root organizational causes of emotional exhaustion. Without institutional support and responsive leadership, emotional exhaustion is likely to persist. Given this context, there is a pressing need to explore teachers' lived experiences of emotional exhaustion in relation to their interactions with DepEd officials. By listening to teachers' voices and understanding their challenges and coping strategies, this study aims to provide a strong basis for developing program recommendations that promote emotional well-being, supportive leadership, and healthier professional relationships within the education system. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to the creation of a more humane, compassionate, and sustainable educational environment—one where teachers feel valued, supported, and emotionally empowered to perform their vital role in nation-building.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, participants of the study, research instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis. These sections are discussed to clearly explain how the study was conducted in exploring teachers' emotional exhaustion experienced with their key DepEd officials: bases for program recommendation in the selected districts of Division of Iloilo during the school year 2025-2026.

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Research Method

The research method used in this study was descriptive-qualitative using in-depth interviews. The interviewer and the respondents were engaged in a one-on-one setting to elicit thoughtful responses. The interviewer asked few questions about emotional exhaustion experienced by teachers with their key Department of Education officials: bases for program recommendation. The aim was to get their views and experiences through their response to the questions.

Research Design

This study utilized the Phenomenological Approach as suggested by Fura and Negash (2020). Phenomenology was defined by Neubauer et al. (2019) as a science whose purpose is to describe particular phenomena or the appearance of things, as lived experiences. The main goals of this approach are to describe and capture the experiences of the participants of the study (Nicholls, 2019) and to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon (Neubauer et al., 2019). It should be noted that the lived experiences of the participants are the one that will give meaning to each individual's perception of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Participants of the Study

The identified participants of the study were five (5) district supervisors, five (5) school heads and five (5) head teachers/TIC in total of fifteen (15), were all in the Schools Division of Iloilo during the school year 2025-2026. All of these participants were actively working in

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their roles during the school year, representing different levels of leadership within the division.

Sampling Design

This study employed a purposive sampling design. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are deliberately selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the study. According to Nikolopoulou (2023), purposive sampling involves selecting participants “on purpose” based on their relevance to the research objectives. Purposive sampling was utilized to identify respondents who include the key Department of Education officials such as school heads, supervisors, and other education leaders who directly work with teachers. These respondents were selected because they can provide relevant and meaningful information regarding the emotional exhaustion experienced by teachers in their professional interactions with department officials. The selection of participants relied on the researcher’s judgment to confirm that the respondents are well-experienced and familiar with the situations being examined in the study. This sampling method is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect data from both teachers and department officials, which will help explain the factors contributing to teachers’ emotional exhaustion and serve as a basis for developing appropriate program recommendations.

Research Instrument

The research-made interview schedule that I personally created as the main tool for collecting information was used in this study. To make sure it was effective and trustworthy, I had a panel of experts review and validate & the interview guide. They looked at the

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questions and the overall structure to ensure everything was clear, relevant, and suitable for the study. *In-person interviews were used to conduct the in-depth interviews. Video recording devices were utilized to document all proceedings during the interview sessions.*

Validity of the Research Instrument

A group of experts carefully reviewed and validated the questionnaires created by the researcher. They thoughtfully considered all comments and suggestions related to the tool, making sure to incorporate them. Their validation process helped guarantee that the questions were effective in collecting data needed to answer the research questions.

In-person interview was employed to carry out the in-depth interviews. Video recording devices were used to document all proceedings during the interview sessions.

Data Gathering Procedures

This study applied a qualitative data gathering approach using a research-made interview guide to collect the teachers' emotional exhaustion experienced with their key Department of Education officials in the selected districts in the Division of Iloilo during the school year 2025-2026. Permits from the Assistant Division Superintendent, adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, , Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants will be selected to enable the researcher to carry out the study. The researcher will personally visit the schools or community locations that are convenient for the participants to conduct the interviews.

In the in-depth interview, a voice and video recorder were used to fully capture the participants' responses. After a series of interviews, the researcher organized and consolidated

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all the collected data.

Data Analyses

The collected information was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This method involves carefully examining qualitative data, such as interview transcripts, to identify common themes and patterns. The researcher carefully reviewed the data to spot recurring topics, ideas, and shared meanings that emerged throughout the responses. This process helped uncover meaningful insights and connections within the information gathered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to determine the emotional exhaustion experienced by teachers in relation to their key Department of Education officials in selected districts in the Schools Division of Iloilo during the school year 2025–2026. The findings of the study served as the basis for a proposed program recommendation that may help improve teachers' emotional well-being and work performance.

The study used a qualitative research design through a phenomenological approach. This approach was appropriate because it focused on the lived experiences, feelings, and observations of the participants regarding emotional exhaustion in the workplace.

The participants of the study were composed of five district supervisors, five school heads, and five head teachers or Teachers-in-Charge (TICs) from selected districts in the Schools Division of Iloilo. The respondents were chosen because of their direct involvement in supervising, observing, and working closely with teachers.

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A researcher-made interview guide was used to gather the needed information. The interview guide was validated by a panel of experts to ensure that the questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the objectives of the study. Interviews were conducted personally by the researcher in places convenient for the participants. With their permission, a mobile phone with an audio recorder was used to document the interview responses.

The gathered data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Through this process, common ideas, experiences, and observations were grouped into themes.

The findings of the study revealed that teachers experience emotional exhaustion because of several work-related factors. The major themes identified were teachers' workload and responsibilities, classroom management and student behavior, health concerns, and organizational and leadership issues. Teachers were often overwhelmed by paperwork, reports, deadlines, classroom concerns, student discipline, and additional tasks assigned to them. Some participants also shared that poor communication, lack of support, unclear expectations, and leadership issues contributed to emotional stress.

Despite these challenges, the participants also identified several ways to help teachers cope with emotional exhaustion. These include supportive leadership, open communication, recognition of teachers' efforts, wellness activities, teamwork, and proper planning of school responsibilities. Based on these findings, the study recommends the creation of a school-based wellness and support program for teachers.

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Conclusion

The findings of the study showed that emotional exhaustion among teachers is not caused by only one factor. Instead, it develops because of the combination of heavy workload, classroom demands, health concerns, and organizational issues within the school environment. Teachers are expected to perform many responsibilities beyond teaching, which often leaves them physically tired and emotionally drained.

The study also shows that emotional exhaustion becomes more serious when teachers feel unsupported by school leaders or when communication is poor. Teachers need encouragement, understanding, and recognition from school heads and district officials. When these are absent, teachers may feel unappreciated, stressed, and less motivated in their work.

Another important insight from the study is that emotional exhaustion does not only affect teachers' work performance but also their personal well-being. Stress, fatigue, anxiety, and other health concerns may affect teachers' relationships, confidence, and overall quality of life.

Despite these challenges, the study highlights that teachers are more likely to cope effectively when they have supportive colleagues, open communication, and opportunities to participate in wellness activities. A positive school environment, strong leadership, and proper workload distribution can help teachers become more resilient and productive.

The findings further suggest that addressing emotional exhaustion should not be the responsibility of teachers alone. School leaders, district officials, and the Department of

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Education also have an important role in creating programs and policies that support teachers' emotional health and well-being.

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