

Reframing Teacher Burnout in Vietnamese K–12 Education: Teachers’ Adaptation Mechanism as a Process-Oriented Extension of the Maslach and JD–R Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

This study suggests an adaptation mechanism for the teacher burnout issue in Vietnamese K–12 education context. The mechanism uses the Maslach Burnout Framework and Job Demands–Resources model as two main foundations for the theoretical development. The educational environments focusing on K-12 teachers in Vietnam that create more and more pressure on teachers, from pedagogical and administrative burden, examinations, to expectations from multiple subjects, for instance, students and their parents, the Board or the Faculty of the school itself, colleagues, and so on. Particularly, the two bases are useful in explaining the dimensions and context of “burnout” at work. However, the Maslach Burnout Framework and Job Demands–Resources model offer less the details about the process that how teachers make sense of pressure, the way they mobilize their resources, how they respond to burnout matters, and how adaptive patterns emerge over time. The study puts a teachers’ adaptation mechanism as a teacher-centered, context-dependent process, involving teacher responses to conditions in the workplace, and burnout outcomes. The article provides a conceptual theory-development approach and is based on the relevant literature on burnout, job demands and resources, coping, self-regulation and teacher professional support. It affirms that the mechanism supplements the current frameworks with a description of a teacher's adaptive response to the pressures associated with burnout in specific environments, focusing on the K–12 system, Vietnam. Fundamentally, this work further the discussion by offering a process-oriented perspective sharing about how teachers with the same demands and resources to have different burnout results. Also, the paper provides five propositions for research in the future, and presents implications for teacher professional development in Vietnamese K–12 educational settings.

Keywords: teacher burnout; K–12 education; educational psychology, teacher professional development

INTRODUCTION

Teacher burnout is a huge problem in K–12 education nowadays because it affect teachers a lot, from classroom practice, professional commitment, to long-term retention. Burnout is a psychological syndrome that a person develops when they have prolonged work-related stress, particularly in professions sustained interaction with others is a must. In addition, burnout refers to a syndrome involving emotional exhaustion and cynicism that frequently occurs among people working in human-service professions (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). In education, burnout may appear through emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996).

In Vietnam, K–12 settings, teacher burnout is seen with a large set of pressures. For instance, teachers deal with heavy teaching loads, paperworks, and other continued expectations and requirements from a variety of subjects, such as students, their parents, school leaders and so on. Teachers working conditions linked to burnout-related pressure, although not all teachers experience the same pressure (Tran et al., 2024). Duong et al (2023) added that, in Vietnam context, teachers’ occupational well-being and educational leadership in shaping teachers’ professional experiences, are important. The pressure affect the teachers in different ways. In difficult conditions, some teachers keep their professionalism, others may have exhaustion, withdrawal or they lose their confidence.

Because the variety of the results, then burnout should not be explained only by workplace-related pressure. Moreover, examine how teachers recognise, clarify and respond to pressure over time is mandatory.

This paper will present the usefulness of the two foundations in understanding teacher burnout. The Maslach Burnout Framework gives explanations about burnout through three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). In general, this framework shows clarification how burnout is experienced by teachers at three levels: emotional, relational and professional. On the other hand, the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model, provides information how burnout is shaped by job demands – available resources balance (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). From this view, workload, role conflict, emotional labour, which are demands, may increase burnout risk, and leadership support, relationships, autonomy, professional development, may decrease it.

Although these frameworks are crucial foundations, not many studies have been conducted in Vietnam, K–12 context, to show the process which teachers respond to burnout pressures in their working environment, the adaptation mechanism in this research refers to the process in the hope that teachers recognise pressure, appraise the meaning, use the available resources, control responses and develop an adaptive patterns. For further information, the mechanism is not an alternative or replacement of the Maslach Burnout Framework and the JD–R model, it is a conceptual extension that is used to connect workplace conditions, responses from teachers, and burnout outcomes.

The scope of this paper is K–12 education, Vietnam, hence, there is no empirical data collection, or hypothesis testing. The paper helps explaining the way the adaptation mechanism solves burnout issues among teachers who work under same job demands and resources. As a result, the paper aims to add contribution to available teacher burnout theories and provide a foundation for further research and teacher development.

The paper will answer the following research questions:

RQ1. What process-oriented gap remains in the Maslach Burnout Framework and the JD–R model when they are applied to teacher burnout?

RQ2. How can teachers' adaptation mechanism be conceptualised as a teacher-centred but context-dependent process linking workplace conditions, teacher responses, and burnout outcomes in Vietnamese K–12 education?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Maslach Burnout Framework

The Maslach Burnout Framework conceptualises burnout as a multidimensional syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). In teacher burnout research field, recent studies prove its relevance. According to Bing et al. (2022), self-efficacy and emotion regulation were correlated with burnout within EFL teachers, which indicates that teachers' perceptions and capacities of emotional regulation might affect the experiencing of burnout. Mahdian Rad and Baleghizadeh (2025) stated that emotional intelligence, teacher self-concept, and self-efficacy were related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment. Ntouka et al (2026) also states that employment conditions may create exhaustion in emotions through validating the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators Survey among Greek primary teachers.

Together, these studies indicate that the Maslach Burnout Framework plays a very important role in identifying three main dimensions and correlates of teacher burnout in various educational contexts.

However, there is a shortage of studies in Vietnam with the subject of K-12 teachers to show how teachers respond emotionally, relationally and professionally. Let's take an example, the framework does its job really well in pointing out emotional exhaustion as a burnout outcome, but explaining the ways educators make sense of repeated pressure, decide usable support, and develop maladaptive responses, raises a concern. Mentioning

about the limitation does not weaken the framework's values, nevertheless, it proposes the need for an extension that how responses are formed slowly in teachers' lives.

Job Demands–Resources Model

The Job Demands–Resources Model (JD–R) contributes significantly to the theoretical foundation. It is a clear explanation about the role of burnout in the relationship between job demands and job resources (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Job demands are aspects of work, in which, require continuous physical, cognitive, emotional effort. When they exceed teachers' current capacity, they might become stressful. In educational contexts, such as schools, centers, classes et cetera, the mentioned aspects may be workload, duties of administration, exam pressure, expectations. When it comes to job resources, they are aspects of the work environment which help teachers fulfill their goals, reduce the impact of job demands, support the growth. The job resources can be leadership support, autonomy, feedbacks, recognition at work, and the like.

Huo (2025) reported that stress about workload was related to burnout, when they picked rural English teachers in China, to use for the study. For a better depiction, Rosinta et al (2026) highlighted workload, role conflict and role ambiguity were related to teacher burnout, and job resources help reducing burnout, which depends on specific context. In another study, educational innovation may create further demands when support for teachers are not considered sufficiently (Gubaten and Aclao, 2026). These findings indicate that burnout is not someone weakness, a personal matter, but it is shaped by the balance of professional demands and available resources.

The JD–R model describe more than just the values of resources in practice, on the other hand, the availability of resources does not mean teachers use it with usefulness; The same job demand may be different with different teachers, depending on the rating of each teacher about the demand itself. In general, the JD–R model detailizes the structural relationship between demands, resources, and the risk of burnout.

The Process-Oriented Extension

Addressing the limitation, this paper contributes to the theory in the field of teacher burnout by sharing an extension that focuses on the process (process-oriented). While the Maslach Burnout Framework the three dimensions of burnout, the JD–R model describes how job demands and job resources create burnout (Maslach et al., 1996; Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Still, the process which teachers clarify pressure, use resources effectively, respond, and establish adaptive patterns over time, gains less attention.

The research of Duong et al (2023) and Tran et al (2024) claimed that teachers may experienced burnout pressures linked to workload, institutional requirements, leadership conditions, quality assurance expectations, classroom demands, and professional well-being. Teacher burnout in Vietnam is suggested not only a condition of psychology of any individual (teacher), but also a context-based process created by demands, support, expectations and teachers' responding.

Within the context of Vietnamese K–12 education, the paper provides an adaptation mechanism for teachers, considered as a process-based extension of the Maslach Burnout Framework and the JD–R model. The mechanism connects the two foundations by giving knowledge about the way that creates burnout outcomes from workplace conditions. The mechanism also provides a basis of concept for the understanding that how burnout is reduced over time, which depends on teacher and the support in each context.

Conceptual Approach

The conceptual theory-development approach was used in this paper because it was appropriate for examining teacher burnout in Vietnam, K–12 education. There was no empirical data or hypothesis test has ever been conducted. By integrating existing theories and relevant literature, I develop a conceptual argument. The reason why the author chose this approach was that the aim of this paper is not about measuring burnout levels, it is about clarifying how teachers' adaptation mechanism can be theorised as a process which links the three things: workplace conditions, teacher responses, and burnout outcomes.

In detail, Whetten's (1989) logic of theoretical contribution and Wacker's (1998) criteria for theory building were used in developing process for the approach of this work. According to Whetten (1989), a theoretical contribution clarifies the main concepts, how they are related, and reasons why the relationships matter. This logic is truthfully meaningful when applying it into the argument organisation around three concepts: teacher burnout, job demands and job resources, and teachers' adaptation mechanism. Wacker's (1998) also suggested that the building of theory needs clear definitions, specific scope, relationships among concepts, and proposition for future research guidance. The criteria strengthen the idea, make the adaptation mechanism in this paper more logical, and shown as a firm, structured conceptual extension.

At the beginning, the paper identifies the two theoretical foundations of the argument. The Maslach Burnout Framework gives a structure of burnout understanding via emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model explains how burnout risk is shaped by job demands and job resources (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The methodological basis of the conceptual approach is presented as Figure 1 belows, named “Methodological Basis of the Conceptual Approach”. The Figure 1 shows how the logic of theoretical contribution, Whetten's (1989), and theory-building criteria of Wacker's (1998), guide this paper's development. In particular, the figure is the vital illustration how the paper moves from identifying core concepts and their relationships, specifying the Vietnamese K–12 context, and developing the five propositions for later-on research.

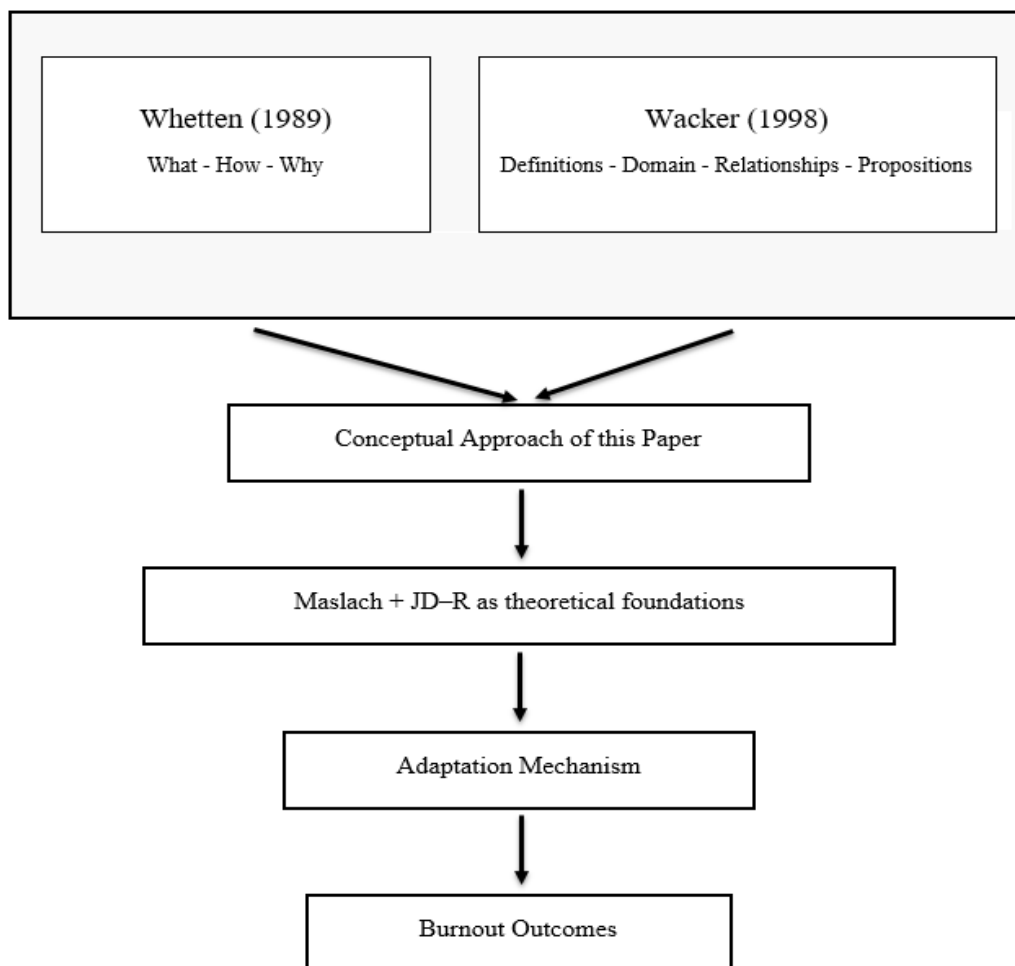


Figure 1. Methodological Basis of the Conceptual Approach

Overall, the approach allows the paper to position teachers' adaptation mechanism as an extension of process-orientation of existing burnout theories. Moreover, the approach is also provide a basis for further sections – where the mechanism is differentiated from coping strategies, put in the two foundations and set up for further empirical research.

The Adaptation Mechanism in Teacher Burnout

As mentioned earlier, teachers' adaptation mechanism refers to multiple-factor process and is not considered as a single coping action or an individual personality trait. The mechanism create a process that teachers respond to repeated burden in specific conditions.

In this adaptation mechanism, teachers are considered as active agents in the total burnout process, and teachers' capacity to adapt depends on a variety of factors: accessibility, credibility, professional support and more. Hence, the mechanism depends on the context and focuses on teachers. The mechanism consists of six elements: pressure recognition, cognitive appraisal, mobilisation of resources, self-regulation, and adaptive response.

The first element is **pressure recognition**. Basically, before teachers respond to burnout pressure with intention, they need to recognise a demand that creates burnout. Without the recognition, the burden becomes bigger and bigger, and contribute to emotional exhaustion. By contrast, when teachers recognise early, they may have proper responses.

The second element, **cognitive appraisal**. It is the way teachers clarify occupational pressure and evaluate its significance. A demand can be seen as different things: a challenge, a burden without fair, an uncontrollable threat. The pressure appraise is varied, when teachers see pressure as meaningful or manageable, they may enengage in constructive responses; or when they see pressure as unfair, it is likely that they lose their control. The main idea is that stress shaped by external demands and how each individual evaluates those demands, cited from Lazarus & Folkman (1984)

Resource mobilisation is the third. Job and personal resources can reduce negative impacts of demands, but do not happen by themselves, from the JD–R point of view. Teachers must acknowledge the resources that are available, assess their usefulness and determine their ability to activate the resources. These may be leadership support, professional knowledge, teaching strategies, autonomy, feedback, and a lot of things. In this sense, resource mobilisation helps to make sense of the way resources become materialized in teachers' professional lives as opposed to being abstract conditions in the workplace (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Then comes the fourth, **self-regulation**, it includes emotional regulation, energy management, boundary and priority settings, and adjustment of professional expectations. With effective self-regulation, teachers can save their emotional reserves and commitment to the profession. As it's used up, emotional exhaustion and emotional distancing can increase. This is in line with the perspective that emotion regulation influences emotional coping during stressful situations (Gross, 1998).

Last but not least, **adaptive response**. Examples of this element can be seeking for assistance, working together, problem solving, creating work routines that can be sustained. The reactions in response to these demands do not eliminate the demands but may serve to keep teachers safe from harm in their interactions with the demands. Responses can be adaptive such as avoidance, emotional distancing, disengagement, decreased effort or cynicism. These responses can help alleviate emotional burden in the short term, but in the long term may lead to depersonalisation, diminished personal achievement and more burnout. All of these five elements demonstrate that the concept of adaptation mechanism is not synonymous with coping. Coping typically describes specific coping strategies employed to deal with stressful episodes, while coping mechanism is a more general term that describes how coping occurs as teachers recognise, explain, engage and respond to demands and activate and regulate resources, developing longer-term patterns of professional adaptation. This is considerable because burnout is a process that repeats and repeats time by time. While a teacher might adapt to one event, it is an adaptation mechanism that describes how repeated responses can become protective or harmful over time.

Conceptual Contribution: Adaptation Mechanism as an Extension of Maslach and JD–R

The Adaptation Mechanism and the Coping Strategies are Different

In this section, the author will clarify the difference between adaptation machanism and coping strategies. Although the two concepts both care about the way teachers respond to occupational pressure, they are not the same. In essence, coping strategies mention cognitive or behavioral efforts, these efforts are used to control

stressful situations, as stated by Lazarus & Folkman (1984). Meanwhile, the aim of the adaptation mechanism is a broader and more intergrated process of which educators recognise pressure, appraise the demands, do lots of things, and at the end, succeed in developing adaptive patterns in the long run.

It is obvious that with the given information, coping strategies can be understood as representing not-for-the-whole mechanism. Teachers, especially K–12 ones, take advantage of coping strategies to manage a rough event, for example, the avoidance of a difficult task. The following Table 1. Conceptual Distinction between Coping Strategies and Adaptation Mechanism, is a summary of conceptual differences between the two terms.

Table 1. Conceptual Distinction between Coping Strategies and Adaptation Mechanism

Dimension	Coping Strategies	Adaptation Mechanism
Nature	Specific responses to stress	Broader integrated process
Scope	Narrower and situation-specific	Broader and process-oriented
Timing	Respond to immediate stress	Develops through repeated pressure over time
Function	Helps manage a stressful event or episode	Explains how teachers recognise, interpret, regulate, and respond to pressure
Main components	Cognitive or behavioural efforts	Pressure recognition, cognitive appraisal, resource mobilisation, self-regulation, and adaptive or maladaptive response
Relation to burnout	May reduce or intensify stress in a specific situation	Helps explain how burnout may be mitigated or intensified over time
Position in this paper	One possible element within teacher response	Central conceptual contribution

Table 1 creates a strong firm about the difference between the term Coping Strategies and the term Adaptation Mechanism, and the mechanism is not a new label for coping.

The Formation of the Adaptation Mechanism

The following Figure 2 explores the process and its entire formation, which plays the role of the extension of the two existing theoretical foundations.

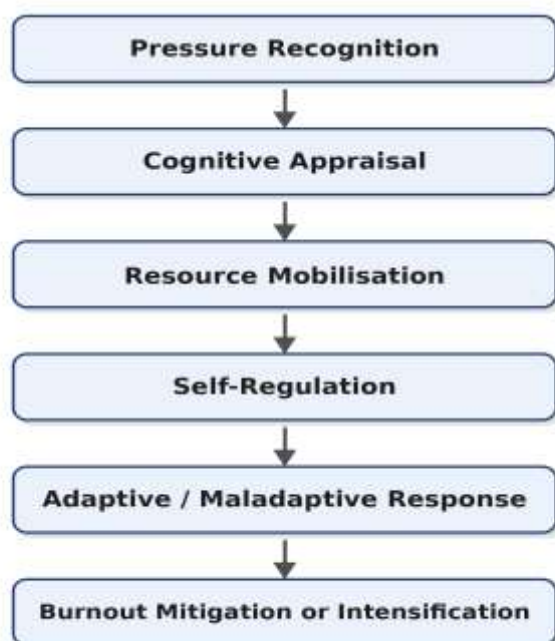


Figure 2. Step-by-Step Formation of Teachers' Adaptation Mechanism

There are six steps in the formation of the mechanism: pressure recognition, cognitive appraisal, resource mobilisation, self-regulation, adaptive/maladaptive response, and burnout mitigation/intensification. The section “The Adaptation Mechanism in Teacher Burnout” detailed about the five elements, matching with the first five steps in this Figure 2. Besides, this section presents the assumed findings for each step in the formation of the mechanism.

In the first step, without the **pressure recognition**, pressure may increase in silence and contribute to emotional exhaustion before teachers can respond with intention.

The second step, **cognitive appraisal**. In this step, teachers evaluate the pressure. They also question about the demand, whether it is controllable, fair, or maybe aligned with their values. The cognitive appraisal shapes the pressure and defines if it is a manageable challenge or overwhelming threat.

Resource mobilisation is the third one. Finishing the cognitive appraisal, teachers continue to consider about the usage and availability of the resources. Resources become extremely meaningful.

Then, the **self-regulation**. The self-regulation might involve frustration, boundaries, essential tasks or how to maintain professional composure under pressure.

The second to last is **adaptive / maladaptive response**. Adaptive responses may include help-seeking, collaboration, problem-solving, cognitive reframing, reflective practice, and sustainable work routines. Maladaptive responses may include avoidance, emotional distancing, disengagement, reduced effort, or cynicism.

In closing, the **burnout mitigation**. Imagine that the responses from teachers are supported by the work environment, burnout may be reduced, or deescalated. This shows a truth that the mechanism is more than a single coping action, it is a way in which, teachers form the responding gradually.

Remember that the findings above are in the conceptual illustration, and are not presented as empirical evidence, just the clarification how the mechanism operates conceptually.

The Mechanism Extends the Maslach Burnout Framework

By bringing this mechanism into life, teachers may move towards or away from the three core dimensions of burnout. In the Maslach theory, they are emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). The mechanism adds the process which clearly shows the way the three dimensions may develop, worsen, or be mitigated through teachers' responses over time.

If the assessment of demands is repeatedly experienced as beyond control, teachers are unlikely to get help and they are not able to control the emotional energy, this can increase the risk of emotional exhaustion. If teachers have the ability to identify the signs of stress early, place a priority on work, seek support, and alter expectations, the likelihood of reaching the extent of emotional exhaustion is minimized or avoided.

There may be cases of depersonalisation or cynicism if teachers respond to circle-looping pressure by emotionally distancing themselves, withdrawing and/or being disengaged. Relational withdrawal, on the other hand, may be minimised when teachers have supportive professional relationships, manage their own frustration and are supported by credible people within their organisation.

Decreased personal accomplishment can happen when teachers see their students having repeated difficulties as personal or professional failures. It can be counteracted if teachers pose problems in a different way, acknowledge accomplishments in reaching goals, are given clear feedback, and experience a restored sense of professional competence.

In this particular context, adaptation mechanisms does not affect the three dimensions of the Maslach Burnout

Framework. Rather, it describes the teacher-level process in which might these dimensions arise, become more intense, or be diminished.

The Mechanism Extends the JD–R Model

Clarifying the activation process of job demands, job resources, and personal resources in teachers' professional lives in the JD–R model, . The JD–R model views burnout as a result of the ratio of demands to resources. But requirements and resources are not enough to account for the varying ways in which teachers who work in similar circumstances might burn out.

Regarding adaptation mechanism, job demands affect burnout in part via teachers' appraisal of job demands. Heavy workload may be felt as controllable if teachers have clear priorities, supportive colleagues and a sense of control. It can be a strain if it is perceived as unfair, never-ending, unsupported, or not aligned with teachers' values.

Job resources do not prevent burn-out. Leadership support, collegial relationships, autonomy and professional development are protective when teachers believe that they are available, believable and helpful. One can also view these as capacities that require teachers to evaluate pressure, manage their reactions and choose coping strategies, which can be considered personal resources like self-efficacy, resilience, and professional confidence.

Adaptation mechanism is a process bridge between the JD–R conditions and the outcomes of burnout. It provides a way of understanding what demands and resources mean, how they are activated or ignored in the day to day work of teachers.

Relevance for Vietnamese K–12 Teachers

The paper is relevant to K–12 education in Vietnam because the teachers here face looped pressures. Only identifying job demands and job resources can not address the issue. Further more, it needs the teachers recognition, appraisal, support and the choosing of strategies.

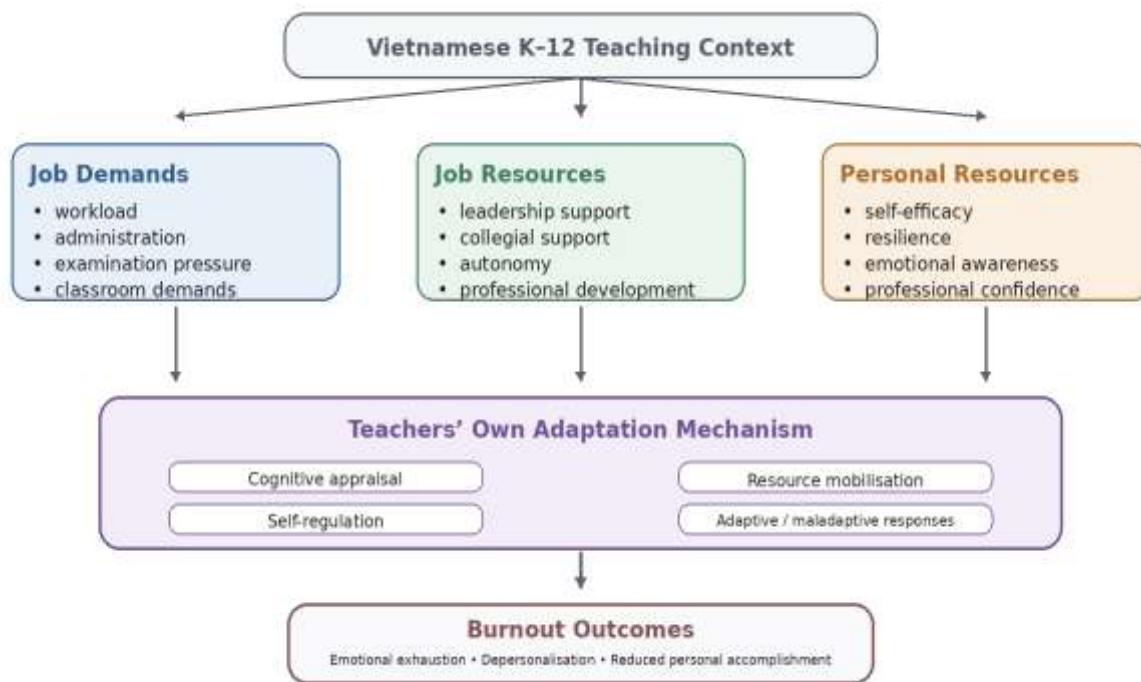
In the context, Vietnamese K–12 teachers are viewed as active participants in addressing burnout, parallel with recognising the importance of educational support. Teacher professional development should focus on teaching skills, teachers' capacity in understanding burnout pressure, seeking resources, develop work routines. The development should also be supported by leadership, collaboration, realistic expectations, and conditions which make adaptation remain possible.

Conceptual Propositions

There are five propositions developed to guide future research on teacher burnout as well as adaptation mechanism in Vietnam, K–12 context. The propositions make clear of theoretical relationships implied by the extension, and offer a foundation for following empirical investigation.

Figure 3 presents the mapping of the relationships of K–12 teaching conditions, job demands, job resources, personal resources, adaptation mechanism, and burnout outcomes, all together, in Vietnam. Figure 3 is recommended being read as a proposition map, which locates the mechanism in the wider relationship of workplace conditions – teacher burnout.

Figure 3. Conceptual Mapping of Teachers' Adaptation Mechanism in Teacher Burnout



Proposition 1: Teachers' cognitive appraisal mediates the relationship between job demands and burnout outcomes.

Interpretation in burnout is highlighted in proposition 1. Particularly, job demands may not affect all teachers in the same way. As mentioned in previous sections, with different appraisals, different results.

Proposition 2: Job resources mitigate teacher burnout when teachers perceive them as accessible, credible, and relevant to their professional needs.

Job resources do not operate automatically. Factors such as leadership support, autonomy, professional development, reduce burnout if only teachers value them usable. In contrast, the value may be limited. Job resources' effectiveness depends on existence, teachers' perception and their mobilisation.

Proposition 3: Personal resources strengthen teachers' adaptation mechanism by supporting appraisal, self-regulation, and adaptive response.

The factors like self-efficacy, resilience, reflective capacity do not remove job demands, but influence teachers manage and respond to the demands. In this sense, personal resources are not only protective factors against burnout; they are also capacities that enable the adaptation mechanism to operate more effectively.

Proposition 4: Maladaptive responses link sustained occupational pressure to depersonalisation, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Maladaptive responses may temporarily reduce emotional overload, they weaken teacher-student relationships, reduce professionalism, intensify burnout over time. The proposition explains the repeated maladaptive responses, it may become a pathway from occupational pressure to the relational and professional dimensions of burnout.

Proposition 5: Teachers' adaptation mechanism explains variation in burnout outcomes among teachers working under similar job demands and resources.

The central argument of this paper is captured in this proposition. The mechanism provides a process-focused bridge between workplace conditions (emphasised by the JD-R model) and burnout dimensions (described by

the Maslach Burnout Framework). In Vietnam, this mechanism explains the reasons why some K–12 teachers remain their professional values despite pressure, while others feel exhausted, or want to withdraw, or even reduce efficacy.

At once, the five proposition suggest that future research should examine the presence of job demands and resources and the way teachers respond to conditions in specific contexts. Those propositions may be tested through qualitative interviews, long-term designs, mixed-methods research, or structural models.

Implications for Future Research and Teacher Professional Development

There are several implications for upcoming research on teacher burnout. First, research in the future should investigate how teachers recognise pressure, appraise demands, mobilise resources, regulate emotional and professional responses, and form longer-term patterns of adjustment.

Second, use qualitative studies to figure teachers' description of pressure experiences, support, regulation and responses; Long-term studies could examine the mechanism development. Mixed-method may combine survey measure of such factors, and interviews explain the relationships' operation in education. Structural models are used for testing the relationship between job demands, job resources, and burnout outcomes.

Third, this conceptual framework may be especially useful for future research in Vietnamese K–12 education. Such research is warranted in the future, focused on how Vietnam teachers understand these forces, what sorts of resources they see as being truly helpful, and what patterns of adaptation or maladaptation arise from this under various education circumstances. This research may be used to shift the teacher burnout discussion from workload and stress to a more refined discussion of teacher response processes.

The mechanism also has implications for teacher professional development. Professional learning should not be about teaching techniques, how to deliver the curriculum, or how to assess skills and products. It should also enable teachers to become better able to identify symptoms of pressure at the early stages and to objectively evaluate pressures in a realistic manner, understand available resources, manage emotional pressure and establish sustainable routines.

The mechanism is a teacher-centred but it is also context-dependent. When teachers have realistic workload expectations, credible school leadership, collegial support, relevant professional development and institutional policies based on teacher well-being, they are more likely to continue with their adaptive responses. So, teacher professional learning needs to be linked to wider organisation support and not as a single, separate intervention. In general, the adaptation mechanism proposed here provides a valuable research and practice tool. It offers researchers a process-based approach to studying the progression of burnout over time, as well as its prevention. It calls on schools and professional development providers to be as supportive as possible of teachers in recognising, interpreting, activating, and using the teaching resources in ways that make a difference.

CONCLUSION

The conceptual study has argued that teacher burnout in Vietnamese K–12 education can be better understood by viewing teachers' adaptation mechanism as a process-focused extension of the Maslach Burnout Framework and the Job Demands–Resources model. This is not an excuse for teachers to attempt to fix burn-out without help. Instead, it brings to the fore the importance of considering teacher agency and contextual support as co-constructive. Adaptation mechanism is developed by the active awareness and active response of teachers, but is shaped by a variety of conditions in the organisation. This conceptual expansion makes a contribution to teacher burnout theory and provides the basis for future research in the empirical realm and teacher professional development in the context of Vietnamese K–12 education.

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