

Proactive Stress-Management and Burnout-Prevention Strategies among Public Elementary School Teachers

Daneilo Jr. F. Dela Cruz

City Schools Division of Carmona

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1307000407>

Received: 06 August 2026; Accepted: 11 August 2026; Published: 21 August 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examined the proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies reported by public elementary school teachers. Specifically, it described the respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, position or rank, years of service, and seminars attended; determined the frequency with which teachers reported using proactive strategies; and examined whether strategy-use scores differed according to selected respondent characteristics. The study used a survey questionnaire with a 4-point response scale and included 70 teachers from Calamba Elementary School. Descriptive statistics and one-way analysis of variance were used to summarize and compare strategy-use scores. The results showed that the overall mean for the 15 strategy items was 3.53, interpreted in the original scale as Always. The highest-rated strategies were keeping a flexible attitude and working consistently to maintain a well-disciplined class (WM = 3.71), while avoiding procrastination received the lowest mean (WM = 3.13). No statistically significant differences in strategy-use scores were found by age, sex, educational attainment, position/rank, years of service, or number of seminars attended. These findings describe reported strategy use within the participating school; they do not establish that the strategies reduce or prevent burnout because burnout level was not directly measured. The findings point to practical areas for strengthening teachers' time management, boundary setting, workload planning, stress-management skills, peer support, and instructional pacing.

Keywords: *proactive stress management; burnout prevention; teacher well-being; public elementary school teachers*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching involves sustained instructional, administrative, interpersonal, and classroom-management demands. Teachers are expected to deliver instruction, assess learning, manage learner behavior, collaborate with colleagues and parents, and respond to changing educational requirements. When job demands remain high and available resources are insufficient, teachers may experience sustained stress and become vulnerable to burnout.

Teacher burnout has been associated with emotional exhaustion, work demands, school climate, self-efficacy, social support, and other conditions of teachers' work. The present study therefore focuses specifically on proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies—actions teachers report using to manage demands and protect their well-being before stress becomes excessive. This distinction is important because the study measures strategy use rather than teachers' clinical or psychological level of burnout.

The study was originally anchored on Stress as Stimulus Theory and the Job Demand-Control-Support model. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model provides a more direct conceptual lens for the revised focus because it explains how job demands may contribute to strain while job resources may support well-being and functioning. In the present study, proactive strategies are treated as teacher-reported behaviors that may help teachers manage demands and maintain personal and professional resources. Because burnout itself was not measured, the study does not test the effectiveness of these strategies in reducing burnout.

The study sought to describe the profile of the teacher respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, position or rank, years of service, and seminars attended; determine their reported use of proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies; and examine whether strategy-use scores differed according to their selected characteristics.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the teacher respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, position or rank, years of service, and seminars attended during the last three years?
2. What is the level of reported use of proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies among the teacher respondents?
3. Do teachers' strategy-use scores significantly differ when grouped according to age, sex, educational attainment, position or rank, years of service, and seminars attended?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive-comparative design. The descriptive component summarized the respondents' characteristics and their reported use of proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies. The comparative component examined whether mean strategy-use scores differed across respondent groups. The study did not manipulate variables and did not establish causal or preventive effects.

Participants and Sampling

The study was conducted at Calamba Elementary School (CES), located at Mabini St., Brgy. 5, Calamba City, Laguna. The study included 70 teacher respondents from the school. The sampling procedure is described as total enumeration of the eligible teachers in the school.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire contained 15 strategy items rated on a 4-point scale. questionnaire has been validated by the pupils who were not included in the survey and the researcher's colleagues, and he asked for the help of his former professors: the graduate school in the revision of the survey. Moreover, the last step in the validation is proposal defense where the comments and suggestions of the panel were included in the revision.

Scoring and Interpretation

Each item was rated using a 4-point scale: 4 = Always, 3 = Sometimes, 2 = Seldom, and 1 = Never. Mean scores were interpreted as follows: 3.51–4.00 = Always; 2.51–3.50 = Sometimes; 1.51–2.50 = Seldom; and 1.00–1.50 = Never.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to summarize the respondents' profiles. Weighted means were used to describe the reported frequency of strategy use. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether mean strategy-use scores differed across age, educational attainment, position/rank, years of service, and seminar-attendance groups. Because sex consisted of two groups, an independent-samples t-test is the more direct comparison. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Teacher Respondents

Variable	Category	n	%
Age	Less than 25 years old	5	7.14
	25–35 years old	39	55.71
	36–45 years old	19	27.14
	46–55 years old	5	7.14
	56 years old and above	2	2.86
Sex	Male	6	8.57
	Female	64	91.43
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	9	12.86
	Master's Degree (with units)	45	64.29
	Master's Degree	13	18.57
	Doctorate (with units)	3	4.29
Position/Rank	Teacher I	37	52.86
	Teacher II	8	11.43
	Teacher III	18	25.71
	Master Teacher I	5	7.14
	Master Teacher II	2	2.86
Years in Service	Less than 3 years	7	10
	3–5 years	22	31.43
	5–10 years	27	38.57
	More than 10 years	14	20
Seminars Attended	Less than 5 seminars	19	27.14
	5–10 seminars	15	21.43
	More than 10 seminars	36	51.43

Note. $N = 70$ teacher respondents. Percentages are based on the total number of respondents.

The respondents were predominantly 25–35 years old (39 or 55.71%), female (64 or 91.43%), holders of master's degree units (45 or 64.29%), Teacher I (37 or 52.86%), with 5–10 years of service (27 or 38.57%), and with more than 10 seminars attended during the last three years (36 or 51.43%). These characteristics describe the composition of the participating school and should not be generalized beyond the study context.

Reported Proactive Stress-Management and Burnout-Prevention Strategies

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. Place great value on my personal time.	3.5	Sometimes
2. Allow myself to make effective transitions from one class to another.	3.57	Always
3. Keep a flexible attitude.	3.71	Always
4. Plan ahead.	3.47	Sometimes
5. Do not procrastinate.	3.13	Sometimes
6. Change my thinking as the need arises.	3.47	Sometimes
7. Plan how I will cope with stress.	3.54	Always
8. Plan activities that my pupils and I can anticipate with pleasure.	3.6	Always

9. Learn to pace my instruction to allow for some intense teaching periods.	3.5	Sometimes
10. Work consistently to have a well-disciplined class.	3.71	Always
11. Add structure to my life.	3.53	Always
12. Establish a network of supportive and positive people who can help me.	3.61	Always
13. Take command of my school life.	3.4	Sometimes
14. Keep up with grading papers.	3.56	Always
15. Think before I act.	3.66	Always
General Assessment	3.53	Always

Legend: 3:51-4:00 Always; 2:51-3:50 Sometimes; 1:51-2:50 Seldom; 1.00 – 1.50 Never

The overall mean of 3.53 indicates that respondents reported frequent use of the listed proactive strategies. The highest-rated strategies were keeping a flexible attitude and working consistently to maintain a well-disciplined class (WM = 3.71), followed by thinking before acting (WM = 3.66) and establishing a network of supportive and positive people (WM = 3.61). These results suggest that teachers most consistently reported behaviors related to adaptability, classroom organization, reflective decision-making, and social support.

The lowest-rated areas were avoiding procrastination (WM = 3.13), taking command of school life (WM = 3.40), planning ahead (WM = 3.47), changing thinking as needed (WM = 3.47), valuing personal time (WM = 3.50), and pacing instruction to allow for periods of intensive teaching (WM = 3.50). These areas identify practical targets for school-level support, particularly time management, boundary setting, workload planning, cognitive flexibility, and realistic instructional pacing.

Importantly, these findings describe reported strategy frequency only. Because the study did not include a validated direct measure of burnout, the results cannot be interpreted as evidence that the strategies prevented, reduced, or caused lower burnout.

Differences in Strategy-Use Scores by Respondent Profile

Profile	Test	Statistic	p	Interpretation	Decision
Age	One-way ANOVA	F(4,65)=0.447	0.774	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis
Sex	One-way ANOVA	F(1,68)=0.000	0.992	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis
Educational Attainment	One-way ANOVA	F(3,66)=0.379	0.769	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis
Rank/Status	One-way ANOVA	F(4,65)=0.397	0.81	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis
Years in Service	One-way ANOVA	F(3,66)=1.284	0.287	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis
Seminars Attended	One-way ANOVA	F(2,67)=2.169	0.122	Without Significant Difference	fail to reject the null hypothesis

At the .05 significance level, none of the reported comparisons was statistically significant. The results therefore fail to reject the null hypotheses of no difference in mean strategy-use scores across the examined profile groups. For age, $F(4,65)=0.447$, $p=.774$; for sex, $F(1,68)=0.000$, $p=.992$; for educational attainment, $F(3,66)=0.379$, $p=.769$; for rank/status, $F(4,65)=0.397$, $p=.810$; for years in service, $F(3,66)=1.284$, $p=.287$; and for seminars attended, $F(2,67)=2.169$, $p=.122$.

The finding for seminar attendance is especially relevant to program planning. Although more than half of the respondents reported attending more than ten seminars during the last three years, seminar attendance did not

significantly differentiate strategy-use scores. This suggests that additional seminar volume alone may not be sufficient to strengthen proactive stress-management behaviors. The quality, relevance, transfer, follow-through, and workplace support associated with professional learning may deserve greater attention.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that the participating public elementary school teachers generally reported frequent use of proactive stress-management and burnout-prevention strategies. The overall strategy-use mean was 3.53, with the strongest reported practices involving flexibility, classroom discipline, reflective decision-making, and supportive relationships. The lowest-rated areas involved procrastination management, taking command of school life, advance planning, cognitive flexibility, valuing personal time, and instructional pacing.

No statistically significant differences in reported strategy use were found according to age, sex, educational attainment, position/rank, years of service, or seminar attendance. Accordingly, the study fails to reject the null hypotheses for these comparisons. However, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence of burnout prevention effectiveness because the study did not directly measure burnout and used a cross-sectional self-report design.

The high level of seminar attendance together with the absence of significant differences by seminar attendance further suggests that professional development quality and application may be more important than the number of seminars attended alone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools should strengthen practical time-management and anti-procrastination supports, including workload prioritization, advance planning, task scheduling, and protected time for completion of essential responsibilities.
2. School leaders and teachers should establish realistic boundaries that protect personal time and support work-life balance, particularly during periods of intensive school requirements.
3. Workload planning should be strengthened through coordinated calendars, realistic timelines, task distribution, and early identification of peak-demand periods.
4. Stress-management initiatives should emphasize practical skills such as coping planning, self-regulation, recovery, and help-seeking rather than relying on additional seminar volume alone.
5. Peer-support mechanisms should be strengthened through supportive professional networks, collaborative problem-solving, and accessible school-based wellness support.
6. Teachers and school leaders should consider realistic instructional pacing, especially during periods with multiple simultaneous demands, to reduce avoidable workload pressure.
7. Professional development should prioritize quality, relevance, application, and follow-up. Because seminar attendance did not significantly differentiate strategy-use scores in this sample, schools should avoid assuming that increasing the number of seminars alone will improve teachers' stress-management practices.
8. Future studies should include a recognized validated burnout instrument together with the proactive strategy scale so that researchers can examine whether greater strategy use is associated with lower burnout.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

This study will be conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for research involving human participants and will undergo review and approval by the Western Colleges Inc. Ethics Committee before data collection, and that participation would be voluntary with informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and secure data storage. Before participation, the teachers were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and their rights, and informed consent was obtained. Participants were informed that they could

decline to answer any question or withdraw without penalty. Identifying information was coded, access to the research data was restricted to the researcher, and the data were stored securely. The study was conducted with attention to confidentiality, privacy, and academic integrity.

LIMITATIONS

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study was conducted in a single public elementary school, which limits the transferability of the findings to other schools and divisions. Second, the sample consisted of 70 teachers, with substantially unequal demographic group sizes, particularly by sex. Third, the study relied on self-reported responses, which may be affected by recall and social-desirability bias. Fourth, the manuscript does not provide evidence of current-sample reliability for the 15-item scale or sufficient documentation of specialist expert validation. Fifth, the study did not directly measure teachers' burnout level using a recognized validated instrument; consequently, the study cannot determine whether strategy use is associated with lower burnout or demonstrate preventive effectiveness. Sixth, the cross-sectional design captures responses at one point in time and cannot establish causal relationships. Finally, the results should be understood as describing reported strategy use within the participating school rather than providing evidence of effectiveness across public elementary school teachers generally.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher acknowledges Dr. Randy Punzalan, thesis adviser, for guidance and advice throughout the development of the study. Appreciation is also extended to Western Colleges Inc., its director Dr. Pineda, and the committee members for their support and constructive comments. The researcher likewise expresses gratitude to family and other individuals who provided encouragement throughout the completion of the study.

REFERENCES

1. Chang, M.-L. (2009). An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21(3), 193–218. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-009-9106-y>
2. Grayson, J. L., & Alvarez, H. K. (2008). School climate factors relating to teacher burnout: A mediator model. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(5), 1349–1363. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2007.06.005>
3. Hakanen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *Journal of School Psychology*, 43(6), 495–513. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2005.11.001>
4. Herman, K. C., Hickmon-Rosa, J., & Reinke, W. M. (2018). Empirically derived profiles of teacher stress, burnout, self-efficacy, and coping and associated student outcomes. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 20(2), 90–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300717732066>
5. Klassen, R. M., Usher, E. L., & Bong, M. (2010). Teachers' collective efficacy, job satisfaction, and job stress in cross-cultural context. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 78(4), 464–486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220970903292975>
6. Klusmann, U., Kunter, M., Trautwein, U., Lüdtke, O., & Baumert, J. (2008). Engagement and emotional exhaustion in teachers: Does the school context make a difference? *Applied Psychology*, 57(2), 127–151. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00358.x>
7. Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, 53(1), 27–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131910120033628>
8. Laybourn, S., Frenzel, A. C., & Fenzl, T. (2019). Teacher procrastination, emotions, and stress: A qualitative study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 2325. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02325>
9. Lazarus, R. S. (2000). Toward better research on stress and coping. *American Psychologist*, 55(6), 665–673. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.6.665>
10. McCarthy, C. J., Lineback, S., & Reiser, J. (2015). Teacher stress, emotion, and classroom management. In E. T. Emmer & E. J. Sabornie (Eds.), *Handbook of classroom management* (2nd ed., pp. 301–321). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203074114>
11. Pyhältö, K., Pietarinen, J., Haverinen, K., Tikkanen, L., & Soini, T. (2021). Teacher burnout profiles and proactive strategies. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 36(1), 219–242. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-020-00465-6>

12. Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(4), 1059–1069. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.11.001>
13. Van Eerde, W., & Klingsieck, K. B. (2018). Overcoming procrastination? A meta-analysis of intervention studies. *Educational Research Review*, 25, 73–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.09.002>
14. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>