

University of New England

**DUNE: DigitalUNE**

---

[All Theses And Dissertations](#)

[Theses and Dissertations](#)

---

8-2021

## **Educator Burnout And Coping Styles: A Case Study**

Jennifer Mendicino

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dune.une.edu/theses>



Part of the [Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

© 2021 Jennifer Mendicino

---

# **EDUCATOR BURNOUT AND COPING STYLES: A CASE STUDY**

By

Jennifer Mendicino

Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education/Sociology, Keene State College, 1999  
Master of Education, School Counseling, Keene State College, 2002

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Affiliated Faculty of  
The College of Graduate and Professional Studies  
at the University of New England

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the degree of Doctor of Education

It was presented on  
August 9, 2021  
and reviewed by:

Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D., Lead Advisor  
University of New England

Catherine Stieg, Ed.D., Secondary Advisor  
University of New England

Claire Kohn, Ed.D.  
Affiliate Committee Member

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

c 2021

Jennifer Mendicino



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW ENGLAND

**Portland Campus**  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, ME 04103  
(207) 221-4464 T  
(207) 523-1924 F

---

College of Graduate and Professional Studies

## Doctor of Education Program

---

**This Dissertation was reviewed and approved by:**

Lead Advisor Signature: *Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D.*

Lead Advisor (print name): Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D.

Secondary Advisor Signature: *Catherine Jordan-Stieg, Ed.D.*

Secondary Advisor (print name): Catherine Jordan-Stieg, Ed.D

Date: August 11, 2021

## EDUCATOR BURNOUT AND COPING STYLES: A CASE STUDY

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study is to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout they have experienced and to discover whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. Data was gathered through an anonymous survey composed of short answer and Likert scaled questions and analyzed utilizing Creswell's 5 Steps (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The anticipated outcome would be two-fold: to improve retention of seasoned teachers and increase awareness for teachers, and to inform school leaders on how to reduce workplace burnout. Seven themes emerged thereby providing insight into the study's research questions: (a) uncertainty of expectations, (b) causes and feelings of workplace burnout, (c) coping styles, (d) training to help reduce burnout in the workplace, (e) emotional exhaustion, (f) depersonalization, and (g) personal accomplishment. Not only did results of this study reveal participants experienced workplace burnout and utilized effective coping styles to prevent further burnout and stressors but it aligned significantly with literature on similar topics of study. Findings from this study may be useful for teachers in K-12 school systems, persons in school leadership and school administrators.

**Keywords:** coping skills, coping strategies, coping styles, depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, encouragement, fatigue, mentor, school leadership and workplace burnout.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This journey began in 2018 when I committed to enrolling in the doctoral program at the University of New England. I would like to express gratitude specifically to my dissertation committee, Dr. Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Dr. Catherine Stieg, and Dr. Claire Kohn. Their support and guidance were insurmountable throughout this process. I would also like to thank the peers in our cohort. We have been through the journey from day one when we were in orientation and stayed together the entire way. I am grateful for their support and motivation- we made it! Lastly, I would like to thank the participants who contributed feedback in the anonymous survey. Without your help, I would not have been able to provide the outcomes or data needed to complete this important study to help with burnout and coping styles.

## DEDICATION

*“And once the storm is over you won’t remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won’t even be sure, in fact, if the storm is really over. But one thing is certain, when you come out of the storm, you will not be the same person that walked in” - Haruki Murakami.*

Within Japanese culture, there is the *ikigai*, which is defined as “well-being” (Shirai et al., 2006, p.1). This term is associated with life’s purpose and reason for being. Over the years, the strength that I found within myself and overcoming many obstacles has helped define my character. My dedication goes to my family, for their motivation, support, and love. My family have been and remain to be my biggest cheerleaders. They believed in me even when I was unsure of myself. My late grandparents who have taught me that with perseverance, hard work, and family, obstacles can be overcome. My friends who were my soundboard and test participants, thank you for always being there. My husband, who has been my rock. Rob, you helped me through the late hours, the tears, and incredibly early mornings when I am on the laptop typing away, thank you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Research Questions .....	4
Conceptual Framework .....	4
Maslach’s Theory of Burnout .....	6
Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory.....	6
Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope.....	7
Assumptions.....	7
Limitations .....	8
Scope.....	9
Rationale and Significance of Study.....	9
Definitions of Key Terms .....	10
Conclusion .....	11
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	13
Organization of the Chapter.....	14
Burnout .....	14
Causes of burnout. ....	15
Emotional exhaustion. ....	16



Diminished personal accomplishment. ....	16
Depersonalization. ....	16
Effects of burnout. ....	17
Attrition and Retention .....	18
Reasons for leaving.....	20
Administrative support. ....	21
Workplace Burnout Coping Styles .....	22
Psychoeducational groups.....	22
Peer support groups. ....	23
Mindful practices. ....	23
Mindful practices teachers can use in school.....	24
School district support. ....	25
Employee assistance programs. ....	26
Social emotional learning teams. ....	26
Conceptual Framework.....	27
Theoretical Framework.....	28
Maslach’s Burnout Theory .....	29
Weaknesses of burnout theory.....	30
Strengths of burnout theory. ....	30
Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory.....	31
Weaknesses of social cognitive theory. ....	32

Strengths of social cognitive theory.....	32
Conclusion .....	32
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	34
Purpose of the Proposed Study .....	35
Research Questions and Design.....	35
Research Design .....	36
Site Information and Population .....	37
Sampling Method.....	38
Instrumentation .....	40
MBI-ES Survey.....	41
Field Test .....	41
Data Collection Procedures.....	42
Data Analysis .....	42
Limitations of the Research Design.....	43
Credibility .....	44
Dependability .....	45
Confirmability.....	45
Transferability.....	45
Ethical Issues and Conflict of Interest in the Proposed Study .....	46
Ethical Issues .....	46
Conflict of Interest .....	47
Conclusion and Summary .....	47
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS .....	49

Analysis Method .....	50
Coding.....	54
Presentation of Results.....	55
Survey Questions Emergent Themes .....	55
Unexpected Responses .....	60
Likert Scale Emergent Themes .....	60
Summary .....	63
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION .....	65
Interpretation of Findings .....	65
Survey Short Answer Responses .....	66
Uncertainty of expectations. ....	66
Causes and feelings of workplace burnout. ....	67
Coping styles.....	68
Training to help reduce burnout in the workplace. ....	68
Likert Scale Responses .....	69
Implications.....	69
Recommendations for Action .....	71
Recommendations for Further Study .....	72
Conclusion .....	73
References.....	75
APPENDIX A: Request to Conduct Research.....	94
APPENDIX B: Invitation to Participate .....	96
APPENDIX C: Consent to Participate in Anonymous Survey.....	98

APPENDIX D: Teacher Perception Survey .....	101
APPENDIX E: CITI Certification .....	103
APPENDIX F: IRB Approval.....	104

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1.</b> <i>Numeric Participant Pseudonyms</i> .....	52
<b>Table 2.</b> <i>MBI-Educator Survey Likert Scale Point Values</i> .....	53
<b>Table 3.</b> <i>Uncertainty of Expectations</i> .....	56
<b>Table 4.</b> <i>Causes and Feelings of Workplace Burnout</i> .....	57
<b>Table 5.</b> <i>Coping Styles</i> .....	59
<b>Table 6.</b> <i>Training to Help Reudce Burnout in the Workplace</i> .....	60

## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1.</i> Delineates the Interrelationship/Interconnectedness between the Perception Survey and the Theoretical Perspectives. ....	29
<i>Figure 2.</i> MBI-Educator Survey Scale Three Emergent Themes .....	61
<i>Figure 3.</i> Averages of Each Participants' Responses per the Likert Questions .....	63

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession can be amongst the most rewarding careers and can impact many children within the classroom. Not only are teachers vital sources of information and knowledge, but they are also springboards for children to discuss problems, plan for their future, and teach life skills (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Many teachers model strong work ethics, provide guidance with personal issues, and demonstrate appropriate problem-solving skills (Livingston, 2016).

However, during the last twenty years the number of seasoned teachers remaining in the profession has declined (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2019). According to the 2019-2020 statistics from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE), there was a total of 76,572 teachers working throughout the state (MADESE, 2020). By the end of the school year there were 69,560 teachers retained (MADESE, 2020). This signifies that 1.1% of the teachers left the teaching profession. This percentage is significant because not only are teachers leaving the education field but finding experienced teachers to replace them has become difficult (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Teachers have become frustrated and experience burnout in the workplace for a number of reasons. Some of the reasons teacher burnout occurs includes, but not exclusively, are the demands of the job, decrease in compensatory measures, and lack of being recognized by school administration for their efforts (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2019).

Burnout is a concept that was first researched by Freudenberger (1974). He classified the term in relationship to a caring professional, or the overly committed person, who experiences what he coined as workplace burnout (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017). Caring professionals can be described as persons who are in the human services profession such as social workers, counselors, medical professionals, and teachers (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Freudenberger

(1974) defines burnout as “becoming exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources in the workplace” (p. 159). Requirements of the teaching profession includes being enthusiastic about the job as well as the teacher’s willingness to care for the students in the classroom (Hargreaves, 1998). Therefore, teachers’ burnout could negatively affect their job performance.

Teachers are usually passionate about the lessons they create and the work that takes place for the students (Hargreaves, 1998). “Emotions are at the heart of teaching. Emotions are a dynamic part of ourselves, and whether they are positive or negative, all organizations, including schools, are full of them” (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 835). Since teaching is a balance of relationship building and educational practice, “teaching ... involves and depends upon degrees of emotional understanding” (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 838). Thus, having highly emotive and caring professionals who experience continuous stress, could in turn lead to burnout (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017).

Szigeti, Balázs, Bikfalvi and Urbán (2017) likewise defined burnout as a “psychological response to chronic, work-related stress” (p. 530), which has many negative symptomatic effects on a person such as fatigue, sleep issues, trouble concentrating, depression and anxiety, appetite, and weight issues. The negative effects for teachers might also include, but are not limited to, frequent absenteeism, decline in positive peer and student relationships, and less tolerance for behavioral disruptions or incidents in the classroom (Lynch, 2016). According to Yildirim (2017), burnout is prevalent amongst teachers because they might not utilize the appropriate coping styles to manage their stress and conduct their teaching in the classroom. To avoid experiencing burnout in the workplace, it would be beneficial for persons to improve their emotional understanding (Hargreaves, 1998).



### **Statement of the Problem**

The goal of being an effective educator is to provide the best educational practices to help students succeed inside and outside of the classroom (Kalker, 1984). Best practices can be defined as methods used by educators to enhance educational practices (Arendale, 2010). Arendale (2010) defines educational best practices as a “wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches to achieve positive changes in student attitudes or academic behaviors” (p. 2). Included in educational best practices is social or emotional learning (SEL) (Kalker, 1984). Teachers who are competent in identifying their own social emotional learning are often able to help their students flourish (Schonert-Reichel, 2017). Teachers who are struggling to identify their own stress and emotional well-being can have wavering effects in the classroom (Schonert-Reichel, 2017). This could mean that the teacher is not able to provide the educational or emotional support to their students (Schonert-Reichel, 2017). Burnout has become recognized as a social emotional issue within human service careers such as education (Kalker, 1984). Burnout not only negatively affects persons new to education, but seasoned teachers as well. This is further supported by Kalker (1984) who stated, “Burnout appears to be a more prevalent problem in the helping and service professions such as teaching” (p. 16).

The 2017 Quality of Educator Work-Life Survey, conducted by the American Federation of Teachers, reported that educator stress is at 58% (American Federation of Teachers, 2017). This stress, in the form of burnout can be detrimental to the teachers not only in the workplace but in their personal life as well because of the symptomatic feelings they may be experiencing (Yildirim, 2017). There are, however, a variety of coping styles that individuals may utilize to cope with workplace stress in order to reduce burnout (Jacobson, 2016). As indicated by

Jacobson (2016), it is not known whether or not teachers use coping styles in the workplace to prevent burnout. Therefore, the problem is a gap in literature on identifying those coping styles that educators may utilize to prevent burnout in the workplace (Jacobson, 2016).

### **Purpose of the Study**

Being a teacher is one of the most stressful careers (Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, Bonus, & Davidson, 2013). Coping styles for meeting the challenges of stress that may lead to burnout vary from teacher to teacher. Understanding coping techniques and developing those styles through multiple effective practices, such as but not limited to meditation, yoga, counseling, mindfulness exercises, and social emotional understanding could help reduce the level of burnout of individual teachers (Alhija, 2015). Hence, the purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study is to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions, which will guide this study, were developed after reviewing literature relative to educator burnout and coping styles:

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?

RQ 2: What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?

### **Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual frameworks can be defined as an outline of ideas that will be used within a study. The conceptual framework identifies the relationship between the theories associated with

the study as well as the data that will be obtained from conducting the research. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2016), the conceptual framework is “like the frame of the house” where it supports the purpose of the study (p. 127). The conceptual framework for this researcher’s study is built upon Maslach’s (1982) theory of burnout and Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory.

Theories relative to burnout describe the overarching relationships among factors associated with why someone would experience burnout (Rippon, McDonnell, Smith, McCreddie, & Wetherell, 2020). How people cope with stress is also important in reducing burnout (Jacobson, 2016). The theory of stress and coping developed by Lazarus & Folkman in 1984, (as cited in Cooper & Quick, 2017) describes how people relate stress to their environment and how to cope with those stressors (Cooper & Quick, 2017). Usually, when a person feels stressed, their inherent reaction is to manage that stress. Coping styles relates to how stress is managed, thus how those negative feelings are often resolved. “Coping processes produce an outcome...which is reappraised as favorable, unfavorable, or unresolved” (Cooper & Quick, 2017, p. 352). Stress response affects how people make decisions in the moment when faced with certain pressures. When a teacher feels a high level of stress or burnout, their coping styles could be effective or ineffective, thus leading to leaving their job or other unhealthy methods of coping (Cooper & Quick, 2017).

Other theories that were reviewed but not applied for the purpose of this study include Herzberg’s Motivational Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1993) and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1954). Herzberg's motivational theory examines worker recognition, advancement, responsibility, and output (Herzberg et al., 1993). Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs centers around a pyramid of hierarchal needs that once met, would lead a person to feel fulfilled or happier with themselves (Maslow, 1954).

### **Maslach's Theory of Burnout**

Maslach's (1982) theory of burnout was chosen for this study when measuring the emotional and physical well-being of an educator. Maslach's theory of burnout could also be used to examine the seriousness of fatigue and how this fatigue is affecting the educator's job performance (Maslach, 1982, as cited in Szigeti et al., 2017). According to Maslach and Leiter (2016), this burnout theory developed as a person's reaction to stress became more clearly defined in the workplace. The reactions that were demonstrated by those persons in the workplace included exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of self-accomplishments (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Bandura's social cognitive theory can be used in conjunction with Maslach's burnout theory because of its congruity to behavioral influence (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

### **Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**

This particular social cognitive theory was likewise chosen for this study because of its theoretical perspective that human intrinsic behavior is based on a triangular system Bandura (1986) developed indicating that a person's motivation is impacted by its environment, personalization of the event, and behavior (Davidson, 2003). For the premise of this research, it is important to delineate how the participant is affected by workplace burnout (environment) relative to the stress (behavior) endured, and if appropriate coping styles that are being used (personalization).

Social cognitive theory was initially developed in the early 1960s as a social learning theory. At that time, Bandura (1986) explained that a person's behavior was influenced by modeling, which was defined as learned behavior from observing others. By observing others and talking with others, behaviors are inherited. In 1986, Bandura expanded his theory to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986 as cited in Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). This expansion of

the theory occurred based upon new knowledge and findings that people can influence others as well as be influenced by environmental factors (Vinney, 2019).

Within Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, personalization of events, also referred to as social empathy, can affect how an individual feels towards a situation (Bandura, 2002). Empathy is defined by the American Psychological Association as, "vicariously experiencing that person's feelings, perceptions, and thoughts" (2020, p. 1). Relative to Bandura's (1986) theory, a learned or modeled behavior can influence another. Eventually, teachers who may encounter feelings of burnout in the workplace, can affect other teachers (Bandura, 2002). From a sociological perspective, roles are defined as a person's place in a group or setting (McLeod, 2008). The groups or settings can be amongst peers, family, and co-workers. The environmental factors include how their environment affects their behavior in the workplace. If there is educator burnout due to workplace stress, motivation could be decreased and self-regulation be deficient, causing a lack of desire to work (Schunk, 2019). Additionally, there are other stressors, personal or professional, that may lead to burnout (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope**

Within this qualitative instrumental case study there will be assumptions, limitations, and scope that could affect the results of this study. Researchers have an "obligation to the academic community to present complete and honest limitations of a presented study" (Ross & Zaidi, 2019, p. 1). The purpose of this section is to explain the biases and limitations that could occur during the research process.

#### **Assumptions**

Assumptions are defined as predetermined judgments made by the researcher prior to the study taking place (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Likewise, assumptions are "based on certain

premises that may either hold up or be shown to be unwarranted” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 94). The first assumption for this qualitative instrumental case study is that the participants will be honest when answering questions during the perception survey. A second assumption is that seasoned teachers experience workplace stressors different from novice teachers, those new to the teaching profession. Using seasoned teachers are important to this study because of their time employed within the schools and experiences that they have encountered throughout their career. Finally, an assumption is made that some teachers are not using appropriate coping styles to manage their stress.

### **Limitations**

Limitations, defined as the weaknesses of the study, are part of every research design (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The conditions of this study can potentially be affected by numerous external factors. Per Bloomberg and Volpe (2016), external factors could include but not limited to the selection of study participants, school setting or study site, and persuasion by administration. Participants’ providing responses to survey questions is a limitation that might affect the outcome of the study. Participants could potentially not follow through and, or not cooperate with the survey process. Additionally, within this study, participants will be self-reporting. Self-reporting is considered a limitation because the participant “may not be able to assess themselves accurately” (Salters-Pedneault, 2020) which can affect how the questions are answered. Another limitation that could affect the research is the relationship between the researcher and participants. This is based upon the researcher’s employment at the study site.

Lastly, bracketing is a limitation that can occur in qualitative research if the researcher is not aware of the assumptions made going into the research/interview (Tufford & Newman, 2010) and can affect the outcome of the study. There are ways in which the researcher can minimize

bracketing; by journaling this researcher can document what worked well and what did not throughout the process (Tufford & Newman, 2010). Additionally, by keeping a journal, this researcher will be able to log her feelings that may be endured in an emotionally charged subject matter (Tufford & Newman, 2010). The hope of this researcher is to create a transparent study in which all steps were followed and adhered to.

### **Scope**

The scope of the study can be defined as the boundaries of the study and describes the setting where the research will be conducted (Simon & Goes, 2010). The focus of this study is workplace burnout and coping styles among teachers and more specifically, the causes of workplace burnout. The scope of this qualitative instrumental case study will include high school and middle teachers who have been employed for three or more years. The school will be located at a public school district located in the south shore of Massachusetts.

### **Rationale and Significance of Study**

The rationale of the study is defined as the reasoning behind the study and why the researcher conducted the study as well as its importance (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The significance of the study is defined as the “benefits that are derived from the study” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 93). The significance of this study is related to how seasoned teachers cope with workplace burnout. This will also be an opportunity to study the resources that are available to the teachers to effectively cope with workplace burnout. Conceivably, this could help schools to be places where staff and students enjoy learning and being in the classroom every day. This researcher chose to conduct this study of workplace burnout to determine if effective coping styles are being used by teachers. It is also an opportunity to bring awareness of programs and resources that are available to staff members.

As school districts' leadership continue to hire new staff, school administrators should become more aware of the job satisfaction of their employees because of the difficulty in filling positions once teachers leave (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Between the years of 2011–2016, the annual turnover rate for teachers is 25% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Teacher turnover was higher in schools where school climate was low (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). School climate can be defined as the character and quality of the school (National School Climate Center, 2021). In schools with low climate, new staff might observe the negativity and potentially decide to leave the particular school for another. Teacher burnout is also a significant concern for administrators as it affects the climate of the school and the productivity of the staff. Teachers who are less motivated or feeling burnout might exhibit negative feelings as well as dissatisfaction with their jobs (Ellis, Skidmore, & Combs, 2017). Therefore, the significance of this study is to identify coping styles that teachers could potentially utilize to prevent them from leaving the field of education.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

Definitions are provided for key terms that will be used throughout this study and that may not be recognized by the reader (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Key terms may have varied meanings, so providing definitions will likewise assist the reader to understand how the words will be used in the context of this study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

*Burnout:* Exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation, usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration on the job (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

*Coping Skills:* The use of coping strategies to reduce unfavorable emotions. (American Psychological Association, 2020).

*Coping Strategies:* Methods in which people learn to accept, reduce, or eliminate.



stressful encounters (Auduly, Packer, Hutchinson, Roger, & Kephart 2016).

*Coping Styles:* The use of cognitive and behavioral strategies to reduce the negative feelings caused from stress (American Psychological Association, 2020).

*Depersonalization:* Removal from socially interacting with others. A sense of being guarded (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

*Encourage:* To inspire with courage, spirit, or hope (Bandura, 1986).

*Fatigue:* A state of exhaustion. It is a feeling exhibited from stress or not enough sleep. (American Psychological Association, 2020).

*Leadership:* Centralized person or one who has influence over a group. (Northouse, 2019).

*Mentor:* A seasoned person who guides someone in similar careers. A person who can offer advice on various workplace situations (McIntyre, McIntyre, & Francis, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

Teacher stress and burnout continues to be an ongoing challenge for schools causing teachers to leave the field (Flook et al., 2013). Providing resources for teachers and learning new styles to cope with workplace burnout may provide a “formula for promoting a healthy classroom environment” (Flook et al., 2013, p. 2). Teaching can be an emotional profession because of the labor that goes into creating lessons, forming student-teacher relationships, connecting with parents, and completing the additional requirements of the job (Hargreaves, 1998). The art of teaching is cultivated over time (Hargreaves, 1998). Teachers are “emotional, passionate beings, who connect with their students who fill their work with pleasure, creativity, challenge, and joy” (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 835). However, as burnout increases for teachers, it can cause a decrease in feeling the positivity within the classroom (Flook et al., 2013).

This researcher seeks to describe the overarching relations among factors associated with why a teacher may experience burnout in the workplace and if effective coping styles are being used to reduce workplace burnout. Maslach's (1982) burnout theory and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive social theory will be utilized as the frameworks for this qualitative instrumental case study. Teacher's perceptions of workplace burnout and their experiences with burnout will also be studied. In Chapter 2, a review of the literature will be provided. Chapter 3 will describe this study's methodology and research design. In Chapter 4, an analysis and discussion of data collected will be presented. Findings will be presented in Chapter 5 with the study's conclusion and summary.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Education is a vital source of information for any person (Idris, Ya'Acob, Gill, & Hassan 2010). Teachers, in particular, have a strong relationship with academia as education is an integral part of their life (Sproles, 2018). Within each level of primary or secondary education, teachers are in the classroom creating a space designed to educate students (Livingston, 2016). Teachers have many responsibilities such as creating lesson plans, providing a safe classroom, being a mentor for the students, building relationships with student families, grading assignments, and calculating report cards at the end of each quarter. In addition to their everyday responsibilities, teachers are required to complete other duties as assigned by administrators (Livingston, 2016). Examples of the additional duties include, but are not limited to, bathroom monitoring, additional student data/record keeping as requested, review of lesson plans by an administrator, lunchroom duty, and bus duty (Ledesma, 2011). Along with regular teaching responsibilities, additional responsibilities and duties assigned to the teacher can lead to burnout in the workplace (Rankin, 2016). Lack of staff recognition and compensatory means also affects burnout in the workplace (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2019).

Burnout is a term used that describes the condition of people who are overworked (Rankin, 2016). Teachers who experience burnout might demonstrate actions that can affect the learning environment as well as relationships with family and peers (Schwarzer, 2008). Background information on the causes of employment burnout and more specifically, the symptomatic feelings demonstrated when teachers are experiencing workplace burnout will be provided in this chapter.

### **Organization of the Chapter**

This chapter will be organized into three sections. The first section will be a review of the literature on the causes and effects of burnout. In the second section, research associated with the correlation between teacher attrition, retention, and burnout will be presented. This section will also include research data on why teachers are leaving the field. Lastly, the third section will be a literature review on the use of coping styles to combat burnout in the workplace.

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study is to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. When encountering workplace burnout, finding the right coping styles can be difficult (Van den Brande et al., 2017). “Coping strategies are either oriented at tackling the problem or at managing emotions associated with the stressors” (Van den Brande et al., 2017, p. 2).

Determining if teachers perceive they are utilizing effective coping styles is an important factor of this study. Research on coping styles that can be utilized in the workplace will be highlighted, as well as the literature on educator attrition and retention. Workplace coping styles can include psychoeducational groups, peer support, mindful practices, school district support, employee assistance programs, and social emotional learning teams (Ahola, Toppinen-Tanner, & Sappanen, 2018). Further discussion of this will include burnout, attrition and retention, and workplace coping styles.

### **Burnout**

Burnout is defined as, “a psychological syndrome emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur in individuals who work

with other people in some capacity” (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1986, p. 192). Teaching can be challenging and draining (Flook et al., 2013). Within the teaching profession, the increase in the turnover rate has been associated with workplace burnout leading teachers to leave the profession (Flook et al., 2013). “Approximately 50% of teachers leave the classroom within the first three years. Almost 20% of those that remain in the profession report experiencing significant stress because of work overload and student demands” (Garner, Bender, & Fedor, 2018, p. 1). Trying to achieve professional goals, meeting the demands of the school district’s administration, and creating a learning environment to meet the needs of the students can add to educator burnout.

Additionally, an educator can create their burnout based on the pressures that they place upon themselves. This could include working long hours, taking on more projects, and striving to be the best to move ahead in their career (Szigeti et al., 2017). A focus on upward career trajectory often places additional demands on the educators due to the continuous pressure of completing daily tasks and managing personal matters while always driven toward promotion (Szigeti et al., 2017). An educator can feel pressured to have the highest number of successful students pass exams, standardized tests, and graduation completion, in addition to the other demands of the job (Cody, 2014).

**Causes of burnout.** Maslach (1982) identified the three main causes of burnout as (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) diminished personal accomplishments, and (c) depersonalization. Emotional exhaustion has been defined as a person feeling overtired and drained (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003). Diminished personal accomplishments has been described as having low self-morale while depersonalization, detaching from oneself, is an element of disassociation which may include detachment from work peers (Cropanzano et al., 2003).

**Emotional exhaustion.** Emotional exhaustion is defined when an individual's "emotional resources are depleted, workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves psychologically" (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1986, p. 192). Another definition of emotional exhaustion can be defined as "a state of feeling emotionally worn out and drained as a result of accumulated stress from your personal or work lives" (Cafasso, 2019, p. 1). A teacher experiencing emotional exhaustion may feel cornered within their job and lacking the motivation to be effective in the classroom (Cafasso, 2019).

**Diminished personal accomplishment.** The second phase in Maslach's (1982) burnout theory is diminished personal accomplishment. Diminished, or reduced personal accomplishment is defined as a condition in which an individual negatively describes their overall work performance (Maslach, 1982). As an individual suffers from burnout, their feeling of self-worth in the workplace deteriorates (Maslach, 1982). Diminished personal accomplishment is also expressed as an individual who is feeling unaccomplished or inadequate while at work (Maslach, 1982). If a teacher is experiencing diminished personal accomplishment, their effectiveness in the classroom is also impacted whereby participation by the students decreases due to the lack of motivation from the teacher (Chang, 2009).

**Depersonalization.** Depersonalization can be defined as a degraded view of another, or a dissociative feeling towards themselves (Maslach, 1982). Depersonalization can be encountered through stressful situations, during which the individual has distorted thinking and becomes isolated (Thompson & Jaque, 2017). Depersonalization includes "teacher's attribution/judgments of student misbehaviors, perceptions of organizational leadership style, perceived principal support, peer support, teacher efficacy/socially reflected self-concept, internal rewards/professional satisfaction" (Chang, 2009, p. 199). The blending of what takes

place individually as a professional as well as the organizational structure may causes the staff to have perceptions that can lead to burnout and frustration (Chang, 2009). People who encounter higher levels of depersonalization might use negative coping styles such as, “isolation, self - blame, and rumination” (Thompson & Jaque, 2017, p. 3).

**Effects of burnout.** Charles (2019) studied job burnout and concluded that those persons who experience burnout have less energy to participate in events. Such persons feel depleted and tired more frequently. Examples of effects due to emotional exhaustion are teacher's negative attitude, or feeling of apathy, causing unhealthy work practices (Cooper & Quick, 2017). Carter (2013) lists symptoms connected to the effects of burnout from physical to mental occurrences that can impact someone's life, such as insomnia, chest pain, depression, increased illness, loss of appetite, anxiety, and anger. Teachers who are disconnected from their job or feeling unsatisfied, may also become less productive and unwilling to complete tasks as hand. Those facing burnout in the workplace are less motivated rather than productive and constructive (Charles, 2019).

Burnout can also affect an individual personally (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Balancing work and personal responsibilities can be exceedingly difficult. People who have high-stress jobs can face many risks of burnout and unhealthy lifestyles (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Lifestyles can be referred to “day to day behaviors and functions of individuals in job, activities, fun and diet” (Farhud, 2015, p. 1442). Studies have been conducted on people whose lifestyle choices due to stress can be unhealthy (Farhud, 2015). Examples of unhealthy lifestyles include but not limited to poor eating habits, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, and poor sleep patterns (Farhud, 2015).

People with many responsibilities outside of work can also become overly stressed and not function on the job (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Examples of responsibilities outside of work that can cause stress include but are not limited to death of a loved one, divorce, buying a home, caring for family members, childcare issues, chronic illness, and increase in bills (Watson, 2020). Trying to balance family life while managing lesson plans and curriculum design outside of work hours impacts an employee's personal time at home (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). According to Maeran, Pitarelli and Cangiano, (2013) "this construct assumes that a person's time and energy are necessarily limited and, for this reason, individuals who are simultaneously involved in multiple roles inevitably experience a form of conflict" or added stress (p. 53).

Wanting to be alone and to not engage with others can be another effect of burnout. Activities that were once enjoyable such as spending time with friends, being social with others, and other activities becoming less enjoyable can also be an indicator of burnout (Bourg, 2013). This wanting to be alone could potentially lead to detachment, which is symbolic of feeling separated from the job, other individuals, the community, etc. (Bourg, 2013). An employee who experiences burnout at their job may begin to call in sick, might be chronically late to work, and may also lack the motivation to want to work (Bourg, 2013).

### **Attrition and Retention**

Attrition, according to Kelchtermans (2018), refers to persons leaving their career field prior to their age of retirement. Per researchers, Geiger and Pivovarova (2018), teacher attrition is a leading factor in the limited number of efficient teachers in the classroom. According to the Learning Policy Institute, 8% of teachers are leaving the field prior to the age of retirement (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Research also shows, "less than one-third of national teacher attrition is due to retirements" (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond,



2019, p. 3). Those teachers who are struggling with low motivation and burnout are more likely to leave the field prior to retirement (Torenbeek & Peters, 2017). As seasoned teachers are leaving the field, the years of experience are lost upon their departure (Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

Teachers who feel supported by administrators are more likely to extend the longevity of their careers when the right preventative measures are provided. (McIntyre, McIntyre, & Francis, 2017). School administrators play a key role in teacher attrition. The Learning Policy Institute conducted a nationwide survey amongst teachers. The data concluded that “nearly 25% of teachers strongly disagree that their administrator encourages and acknowledges staff, communicates a clear vision, and generally runs a school well” (Learning Policy Institute, 2017, p. 2). School administrators who demonstrate strong leadership qualities in a school where there is collegial support enhances the teacher’s motivation to stay (Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

Bussin (2018), explains employment retention as a method in which employees remain in their current position or work for an organization. There are two definitions of *retain* in connection to teachers, according to Bussin (2018). Bussin (2018) first defines retain as “to hold or possess” (p. 46). The second definition, according to Bussin (2018) is to, “engage the services of” (p. 46). School district administration leadership should continually review the reasons why teachers remain within the district and how to keep those teachers engaged (Bussin, 2018). Understanding why teachers leave the field can be a dubious task, however it is important to learn and talk about (Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011).

Teachers with strong self-efficacy tend to remain in their positions and stay motivated in their careers (Torenbeek & Peters, 2017). Teachers who remain in their career usually do so because of working with the students (Brown, 2021). Teachers also remain because of their

willingness to be a role model for students and make a difference in their lives (Doyle, 2020).

Doyle (2020) also discussed how teachers remain in the classroom because of the teacher's love of learning and passion to educate others by providing information to help students be successful.

Retaining seasoned teachers is valuable, as those teachers who have been teaching for many years can be mentors to new educators at their places of work (Sweeny, 2007). Because of their career longevity and providing insight to the mentee, this may strengthen the new teacher's understanding of how the school operates (Sweeny, 2007). Within the state of Massachusetts, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE) recommends school districts conduct mentor-mentee programs to help guide the new teacher into their journey of working in a school (MADESE, n.d.). "These benefits can lead to a much higher rate of retention, as new educators find themselves in an environment that cultivates continual growth and success" (MADESE, n.d., p. 2).

**Reasons for leaving.** Teachers are leaving the field for a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons that teachers are leaving include salary/compensation, workload, level of support from administrators, and burnout (Buchanan, 2010). Teachers also report that pressure to have high student achievement and increases in demands of the job also impacted turnover (Wang, 2019). Teachers leaving the field lower the number of teachers accessible to schools as the candidate pool lessens (Harris & Adams, 2007). A study conducted by the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research found that teacher attrition lowers student achievement because of the change in staff or lack of filling the positions (Wang, 2019, p. 1).

To build a positive working environment, persons of leadership at the campus level as well as district administrators need to be willing to support the cause of educator well-being.

(Buchanan, 2010). Teacher retention is based on positive reinforcements and support from the school's administration. Increasing the awareness of teacher burnout, anxiety, and stress can help generate discussion and provide preventative measures to create a healthy climate (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

**Administrative support.** Burnout can occur at any time for any person (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). If campus principals and administrators work closely with their teachers, they can build professional relationships with their teams. According to Grayson and Alvarez (2008), "research shows that teachers who are satisfied with the decisions and degree of support provided by school administrators show more positive attitudes regarding their occupation" (p. 1,359).

Preventative measures can be taken to combat workplace burnout within the school system when administrators are able to identify what burnout looks like and the identifiers that can lead a teacher to leave the field (McIntyre, McIntyre, & Francis, 2017). Lack of administrative support can adversely affect the teaching staff if there is poor management, lack of teacher support, low pay wages, and poor communication with the administrators. This can also cause frustration amongst the teachers as they are working hard in the classroom (McIntyre, McIntyre, & Francis, 2017). The demands placed on the teacher cause the teacher to become stressed if they feel underappreciated and unsupported. "The undesirable psychological condition occurs when an employee is subjected to continuous mental and psychological pressures because of emotional exhaustion tiredness" (Sanhi & Deswal, 2015, p. 1). This in turn leads to poor teaching and diminished work ethic, according to Sanhi and Deswal (2015). Teachers can learn how to cope with workplace burnout by practicing techniques and styles to become more resilient to burnout.

## **Workplace Burnout Coping Styles**

Effective coping styles lower the levels of burnout in people when they can handle various situations without avoiding the issue at hand (Rankin, 2016). According to Audulv et al. (2016), coping styles are “constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (p. 2630). Other research indicates that effective coping styles can be a motivator to reduce stress in teachers and decrease emotions causing burnout (Chang, 2009). Some ways in which teachers can practice effective coping styles include psychoeducational groups, peer support groups, mindful practices, school district support, and social emotional learning teams.

**Psychoeducational groups.** A psychoeducational group is an example of a therapeutic group of individuals who are working on a particular issue or area of focus (Brown, 2018). Teachers who can identify their triggers, emotions, and other cognitive inabilities and receive help from counseling support might be more successful in managing burnout in the workplace (Curry & O'Brien, 2012). These are things that teachers can be working on to address their stressors. Psychoeducational groups are an opportunity for an individual to learn how to cope with various emotions and circumstances (Brown, 2018). Within psychoeducational groups, there is a group facilitator who leads the group in discussion (Brown, 2018). The facilitator is a trained or licensed counselor whose purpose is to guide the group and provide recommendations to cope with a situation.

Psychoeducational groups can be beneficial for a person who may be encountering difficulties in their life (Brown, 2018). The groups are formed to provide support to those individuals suffering from stress, burnout, addiction, anger, depression, and other mental health issues (Oliver, 2018). During the group meetings information is shared with the group in a safe

environment and individuals have an opportunity to work with others and practice new coping techniques, such as learning how to relax while at work, establishing healthy boundaries, and learning how to respond to stressful situations (Oliver, 2018). Psychoeducational groups differ from peer support groups in that there is a trained professional leading the group and there is a time frame as to how long the group meets (Brown, 2018).

**Peer support groups.** Peer support groups are a group of people, for example, teachers, who form a group to provide a network of resources and a safe space to talk amongst peers who can relate to similar situations. Peer support groups provide an opportunity for teachers to talk openly and form a safety net (APA, 2012). Having peer support allows for the team members to work together and find alternative solutions to the stress and frustration they experience in the workplace (Rosenfeld & Richman, 1997). Peer support groups are also designed to help teachers share resources amongst one another to manage various situations as well as network with one another (Fenton, n.d.). Situations could include stress, student/parent issues, discipline, or other workplace related issues (Fenton, n.d.).

Peer support groups are designed for members to have conversations amongst peers and discuss issues that are going on within the school (Peterson, Bergström, Samuelsson, Åsberg, & Nygren, 2008). The groups often provide an opportunity for teachers in various grades and subjects to connect with each other (Fenton, n.d). The goal of peer support groups is to build professional relationships among the members and allows them to work together and find alternative solutions to stress and frustration (Peterson et al., 2008, p. 509).

**Mindful practices.** Mindful practices can be defined as “a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you’re sensing and feeling in the moment without judgement” (Mayo Clinic, 2020). Regarding stress, burnout, and tension, mindfulness aids in

keeping the focus on the present moment and not perseverating or ruminating on the circumstances that are uncontrollable (Sujato, 2012). Mindfulness practice has become the second largest practice of meditation in the United States (Zuckerman, 2020). Mindfulness is a practice that involves being centered and relaxed (Lymeus, Hartig, & Lindberg, 2018). A skillful meditator can be defined as a person who is able to not become distracted by the distortion of thinking but instead focus on the present (Sujato, 2012). Mindful practice activities could include being in a natural setting such as the outdoors or within a place that is quiet to regroup (Lymeus et. al., 2018). Mindful activities include yoga, hiking, and swimming (Robinson, Segal, Segal, & Smith, 2020). Zuckerman (2020) reported that “In the age group 18 to 44 years old, there are 13% who practice meditation” (p. 2).

Bringing mindfulness into the classroom not only benefits the students but the teachers as well (Tatter, 2019). There are trainings teachers can participate in to learn how to combine mindfulness practices within academic work. During professional development days for teachers, school administrators can plan training sessions to incorporate mindfulness training (Flook et al., 2013).

**Mindful practices teachers can use in school.** Mindful practice is defined as “mindful activities to bring awareness to the self” (Epstein, 1999, p. 833). Mindful practices that can be incorporated in school can include a space to conduct mindful exercises (Jennings, 2015). For example, teacher wellness rooms have become more prevalent than traditional teacher lunchrooms (Palmer, 2019). This room becomes an area for staff to utilize or create a wellness center within the school for staff to debrief or meditate, which could build a more positive atmosphere in the classroom as well as positive peer/student relationships (Palmer, 2019). Having an area in the teacher’s room, or a quiet space for staff could help with the depletion of

teachers leaving their career due to workplace stress (Shillingford-Butler, Samir, & Ngazimbi, 2012). Having the ability to practice mindful thinking can be incorporated in the classroom during a free period or lunch break.

Prior to the next class or group of students entering the classroom, teachers can utilize the mindful practice of meditation. Examples of this meditation include sitting meditation and walking meditation (Seward, 2018). Both exercises include deep breathing, silence, and being in the moment (Seward, 2018). Other mindful practices teachers can utilize while at work include enhancing the senses for example using an oil diffuser may help create a feeling of relaxation (Mulvahill, 2018). Being mindful encompasses an opportunity of solitude to energize and regroup (Mulvahill, 2018).

**School district support.** Identifying the symptomatic reasoning behind why some teachers experience burnout from their job is an initial step in making the school's administrative personnel more aware of the staff's well-being (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Once these identifiers have been outlined, strategies should be created to ensure the staff receives the assistance they need and retain those teachers who are feeling stressed or experiencing workplace burnout. There are many modalities which campus administrators and staff could utilize within their schools or facilities to retrieve the help needed to reduce the stress (Whitaker, 2018). Examples of support include employee wellness initiatives, health insurance benefits that offer discounts to gyms, wellness programs, and counseling (Graham, 2020). Motivation and resources can also be sent to staff via promotion in emails or informational packets (Graham, 2020).

Employee wellness program initiatives can be supported by the district to promote emotional well-being to support the teachers (Lever, Mathis, & Mayworm, 2017). As Mattke et al., (2013) note, "50% of all employers with over 50 or more employees in the United States

have wellness promotion initiatives” (p. 19). School districts that have implemented wellness programs for their employees have been known to have increased motivation in the workplace and reduced amounts of absenteeism (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008).

**Employee assistance programs.** Within various schools, there are employee assistance programs (EAP). These are defined by the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) as supportive programs that help employees (2019). The programs are aimed at “empowering employees to cope with personal problems, so they can focus more on the job and be productive” (Sabbagha, Ledimo & Martins, 2018, p. 9). The interventions that can be provided by employee assistance programs include counseling-mental health and debt, retirement information, medical information, and transportation to medical appointments (Miller, 2019).

Increasing awareness of the Employee Assistance Programs will help increase the longevity of the individual’s career in education (Sabbagha, Ledimo & Martins, 2018). The alternative for the staff, not receiving any help, could potentially lead to them experiencing more serious episodes of stressors outside of work (Sabbagha, Ledimo & Martins, 2018). This might include an increase in alcohol or drug abuse, family/home issues, feeling depressed, or suicidal ideation (Heshmat, 2017).

**Social emotional learning teams.** Social emotional teams have become a prominent way to help students and staff explore their feelings and define what is happening within them (Phillibert, 2017). Social emotional learning is the ability to regulate emotions and establish positive outcomes (Jones, Boufford, & Weissbound, 2013). According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2021) social emotional learning teams are created to be a resource for teachers, students, and families. Social emotional learning team



members could include principals, social workers, school adjustment counselors, outside agencies such as counseling centers and wellness centers (CASEL, 2021).

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU, 2019), a data analysis organization that works with schools, businesses, and other global agencies, conducted a survey in 2019 of the benefits of social emotional learning teams. A survey of 762 teachers from 15 countries by the EIU found that 80% of teachers reported that social emotional wellbeing produces positive outcomes in the classroom (EIU, 2019). Globally, 67% of teachers in Asia and 65% in Latin America reported the importance of social emotional learning for staff and students in the classroom (EIU, 2019).

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is referred to as the outline or foundational design to the purpose of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). “The conceptual framework explains the path of a research and grounds it firmly in theoretical construct” (Adom, Hussein, & Agu-Agyem, 2018, p. 438). It is an opportunity to demonstrate the significance of the concepts in relation to the research found (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). According to Tamene (2016), the conceptual framework is aimed to develop a theory.

The literature on the theoretical perspectives of workplace burnout by Maslach (1982) and social cognitive theory of Bandura (1986) will guide the research in this study. The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study is to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout.

Instrumental inquiry, an approach that utilizes a single case (or within a specific study site) that will be applied to this study due to a real-life, contemporary bounded system from multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2012). This approach is applicable to this particular

study as it will provide insight into a particular issue, that of teacher burnout and their application of coping styles. This process will assist the researcher in determining whether teachers are experiencing burnout in the workplace and if effective coping styles are being used by the teachers.

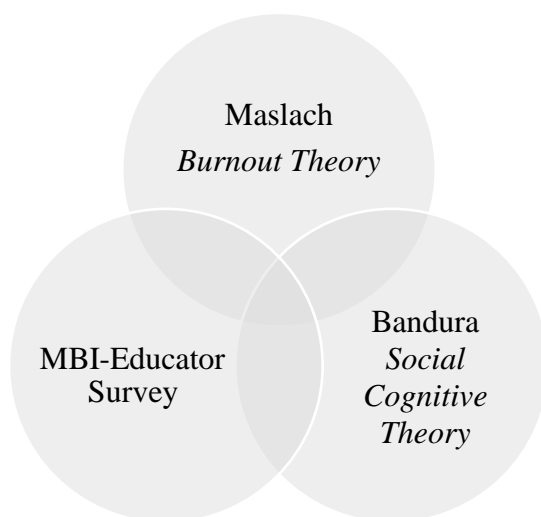
### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework is based on “published and identifiable theories” (Crawford, 2019, p. 37). Conceptual and theoretical framework have an evolving relationship and the term can be used interchangeably in developing the intricacies of the study (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). The theoretical framework is the “intellectual” support to the study being conducted (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017, p. 11). Ravitch and Riggan (2017) describe the theoretical framework as the scaffolding to support the study.

Maslach’s (1982) theory of burnout and Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory are the foundational frameworks for this study (Figure 1). According to Maslach and Leiter (2016), “For many years, burnout has been recognized as an occupational hazard for various people-oriented professions, such as human services, education, and health care” (p. 103). There are similarities between the theories where the feelings of burnout are driven by internal and external factors and by how teachers manage their emotions (Alessandri et al., 2018).

Social cognitive theory “adopts an agentic perspective to self-development, adaptation, and change” (Bandura, 2005, p. 10). The focus of Bandura’s theory is on how people can learn by observing and modeling based upon environmental or social factors causing life changes- positive or negative (Bandura, 2005). A person can learn new strategies on how to manage different situation through effective modeling.

Maslach’s burnout theory is a human centered approach (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This means that the focus of the behavior is on the whole person and how the individual reacts to events or situations. Initially, her theory on burnout Maslach (1982) focused on health care professionals and how caring for patients led to exhaustion, self-efficacy, and cynicism. The theory expanded into other caring professions, such as teaching, to examine the burnout rate of educators (Maslach, 1982).



*Figure 1 delineates the interrelationship/interconnectedness between the perception survey and the theoretical perspectives.*

### **Maslach’s Burnout Theory**

Maslach’s (1982) burnout theory has been classified as the theory where the “worker feels as though they are no longer able to give of themselves at a psychological level, also known as emotional exhaustion” (p. 2). Maslach’s burnout theory relates to those in professions of working with other people, also known as careers in human services. Working with others—in this case, teachers working with students—can be emotionally draining (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Maslach's (1982) burnout theory was first studied by conducting interviews with human service workers (teachers, counselors, social workers, etc.), resulting in an inventory of job satisfaction questionnaire (Maslach, 1982). The inventory included questions relative to Maslach's burnout theory, which focused on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments. "The significance of this three-dimensional model is that it clearly places the individual stress experience within a social context" (Cooper, 1998, p. 69). Understanding the phenomenon of teacher burnout is important to this research in order to help signify the exhaustion and depersonalization teachers could be facing within their careers (Maslach, 2016).

**Weaknesses of burnout theory.** Critics of Maslach's burnout theory have suggested there are more than the three factors, (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) lack of personal accomplishment, and (c) depersonalization to burnout than Maslach outlines in the theory, (Densten, 2001). The additional factors include psychological and somatic strain relative to emotional exhaustion (Densten, 2001). Researchers have also posed that chronic burnout is not only related to work issues as the feelings continually happen outside of work (Bianchi, Trucot, Laurent, Brisson, & Schofield, 2014). According to Bianchi et al. (2014), burnout should be seen as a "multicontextual syndrome" whereby the longevity of the stress induced feelings can occur at any point for a person (p. 359).

**Strengths of burnout theory.** Those critics who favored Maslach's burnout theory utilize the theory in the workplace because burnout had been a phenomenon that no one had previously talked about (Maslach, 1993). Maslach's burnout theory examined the stress encountered on the job as a method for employers to evaluate workplace stressors (Taris,

LeBlanc, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2005). Taris et al., (2005) also discussed how Maslach's theory was systemic in that the three factors can occur when an employee is encountering workplace burnout.

### **Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**

Bandura (1986) developed social cognitive theory, that explains how environmental and mental influences form a reaction to events (McLeod, 2016). Social cognitive theory is relative to a triadic process where the person, the behavior, and the environment influence one another (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Examples of how social cognitive theory can be demonstrated include a person learning to play a sport or going on a new diet (Cherry, 2020, p. 9). Social cognitive theorists are concerned with how the environment drives a person's motivation (Bandura, 1986). Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020) described social cognitive theory from a perspective of "what people think can affect their actions and environments, actions can alter their thoughts and environments, and environments can influence individuals' thoughts and actions" (p. 2).

Within social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is presented as a motivational factor that people can learn to achieve within their career (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Self-efficacy can be defined as how a person envisions themselves handling the situation (Bandura, 1999). Self-efficacy "plays a major role in how people perceive situations and how people behave in response to situations" (Cherry, 2020, p. 1). Teachers manage the classroom, which includes but is not limited to lesson planning, behavior management, and interacting with the students and personnel. Relative to teachers experiencing workplace burnout, this theory will be used to determine if teachers actually self-report they are effectively managing their emotions related to workplace stress.

**Weaknesses of social cognitive theory.** Criticism of Bandura's social cognitive theory included that the focus was on the thought process rather than the biological or hormonal response to an individual's reaction to a situation (LaMorte, 2019). Another criticism is that the theory focuses on how environmental change can instantly affect the individual. (LaMorte, 2019).

**Strengths of social cognitive theory.** Those that favored Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986) felt that the theory focused on human actions and the conditions surrounding learned observation behaviors (McLeod, 2016). Others that favored social cognitive theory described the theory as a process to alleviate chronic issues and improve the outcome to a behavior/illness (Tougas, Hayden, McGrath, Huguet, & Rozario, 2015). A strength of social cognitive theory is the topic of self-efficacy (Schunk, 2019). "Efficacy may influence teachers' activities, efforts, and persistence" (Schunk, 2019, p. 224) which causes increased motivation in the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers who love what they do are often willing to work through the difficult moments and find a balance between work and personal life. According to Cox (2019), teachers continually learn about themselves, how to handle various situations inside and outside of the classroom, and how to build positive relationships with faculty and staff. Keeping teachers who love what they do and continue to thrive through teaching their students should be of importance to persons in leadership at the district (Rankin, 2016).

Maslach's (1982) burnout theory and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory are relative to education (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Both theories measure motivational factors in the environment, as well as assess how individual's reaction to their environment

affects the workplace. Burnout theory and social cognitive theory provide two lenses to help explain the factors that may lead to burnout in the workplace and how people develop positive/negative attributes to their job.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Within this chapter the methodologies to be utilized to gather data to examine teachers' perceptions of workplace burnout and to identify if effective coping styles are being used by the teachers are located. This was accomplished by conducting a participant survey utilizing Maslach's Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach, 1982). The MBI-ES is used for persons working in an educational environment which includes administrators, staff members and teachers (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1986). Using an instrumental case study provided an opportunity to probe for more information (Creswell, 2013).

Scholarly articles relative to burnout in the workplace were gathered from the University of New England Library Services (online) ProQuest, ERIC, Google Scholar, and Sage publications. Qualitative instrumental case studies can be defined as a snapshot of feelings and beliefs (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Blomberg and Volpe (2016) define case study as a qualitative method for a researcher to utilize as a way to gather data for a period of time through surveys, interviews, observations, and other data gathering resources.

The theories that were used in this study were Maslach's (1982) burnout theory and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. A qualitative methodology provides a "rationale for that approach, describes the research setting and sample, and describes data collection and analysis methods" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 11) which will be beneficial for this researcher. Within this chapter a rationale will be provided as to the processes this researcher will use to conduct this study as well as an analyzation of data collected throughout the study to accomplish the study's purpose (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

This qualitative instrumental case study is designed to determine teachers' perceptions regarding effective coping styles being used by teachers in south shore Massachusetts to prevent



burnout in the workplace. This study will also determine if effective coping styles are being used by seasoned high school and middle school teachers. In this instance of studying how teachers cope with stress in the workplace, the researcher has determined a qualitative instrumental study is the best design for this study.

### **Purpose of the Proposed Study**

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether if they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. Teachers are tasked with numerous responsibilities outside of their primary role of educating students (Koenig, Rodger, & Specht, 2018). These responsibilities include but are not limited to lunch duty, bus duty, additional forms, paperwork to complete on student progress, and monitoring the bathrooms and hallways (Ledesma, 2011). Many teachers face the stress of the job, identifying the cause and level of their stress and how each person copes with the stress. Conducting a perception survey is an opportunity to gather information and history of how the teacher's stress became relevant, how the stress is managed and if their coping style is effective to reduce career burnout (McIntyre, McIntyre, & Francis, 2017).

### **Research Questions and Design**

In seeking to examine teachers' perception on burnout in the workplace and to determine if effective coping styles are being utilized by teachers who are experiencing burnout the following research questions will guide this study:

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?

RQ 2: What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle

school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?

### **Research Design**

The research design will be framed as qualitative instrumental case study using Maslach's (1982) burnout theory and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. Instrumental research designs are used to examine how people interpret social perspectives. To address the major topic of teacher burnout which includes factors such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced levels of burnout, the MBI-ES survey (Appendix D) will be utilized. The MBI-ES (Maslach, 1986) focuses on three factors as subscale measurements using a Likert scale:

*Emotional Exhaustion.* Emotional exhaustion measures the teacher's feelings of being overly exhausted by their work.

*Depersonalization.* Depersonalization measures the teacher's "unfeeling" and impersonal response toward recipients of a person's instruction.

*Personal Accomplishment.* This factor measures how competent and successful a person feels with the achievements at the workplace.

The MBI-ES survey can be considered a perception survey (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). These types of surveys (Worth, 2021) are presented to participants in a variety of ways through yes/no questions, and multiple-choice questions or with responses represented on a scale such as always, never, often. Perception surveys are primarily qualitative due to them being based on what a participant thinks about a given issue rather than gaining information through quantifiable variables (Worth, 2021). Questions in perception surveys can be closed ended, or open-ended which allows the participant to respond using their own words (Worth, 2021).

Case studies are a form of investigative inquiry using multiple resources to gather the information (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). A case study can be an effective methodology as it examines a current phenomenon in a specific setting (Crowe, Creswell, Robertson, Hubby, & Sheikh, 2011). A case study was appropriate for this study to explore how high school and middle school teachers who have been employed for three or more years perceive workplace burnout and to discover if effective coping styles are being used.

Creswell and Poth (2018) define instrumental case studies as a study where the “researcher focuses on an issue or concern and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue” (p. 98). Instrumental case studies are an opportunity for the researcher to gain a better understanding of a particular issue (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). According to Yin (2018), instrumental case studies allow the researcher to answer the “how and why” of a phenomenon (p. 11).

### **Site Information and Population**

The proposed site for this study is a campus within a south shore Massachusetts school district that has both high school and middle school grades, with students in grades 8-12, on the same campus. This site was also chosen due to ease of accessibility because the researcher is employed at the campus. The district is led by one Superintendent and governed by one School Committee. A school committee for this site consists of parents/guardians of learners, school community members, and community leaders who care about education (Herwan, Aswandi, & Chiar, 2018). The roles of the school committee are to make decisions that affect procedures, school calendar, and funding, to name a few areas (Herwan et al., 2018). Within the case study district, there is one Pre-Kindergarten school, eight primary schools with grades K-5, two middle schools with grades 6-8, and one high school with grades 9-12 (MADESE, 2021).

The history of the high school is significant as it not only provides core academic coursework, but it is also a technical and vocational school (MADESE, 2021). It should be noted that for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, grade 8 is now located at the high school due to a new middle school being built in Sunny Days School District. In 2008, this south shore high school was ranked eighth in academic performance amongst other area high schools (MADESE, 2021). The student demographic within the high school and middle school are 72% Caucasian, 11% Hispanic, 7.5% African American, 5% Asian, and 4% multi-race (MADESE, 2020). Presently, there are 137 teachers at the high school. Of those 137 teachers, 10 will be invited to voluntarily participate in this study. All participants will be required to have three or more years of teaching experience.

### **Sampling Method**

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) defined sampling method as “one that is selected because it reflects the average personal situation or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 97). It is anticipated this purposive sampling method will include 10 educators who have been working in education for three or more years. Seasoned, or experienced teachers are defined as teachers who have been teaching for over three years (Koni & Krull, 2018). Novice teachers, working three years or less, are new to the profession and they are adjusting to the teaching profession (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). Research has shown that most novice teachers do not understand the dynamics of the relationship between the blending of campus administrator and teacher duties as the new teacher is finding their way in their first job (Melnick & Meister, 2008).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) describes purposeful sampling as a specific sample of participants. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim,

2016). This researcher will obtain permission to conduct the research from Sunny Day School district as well as the principal of the school and send a letter to the potential participants of the study. This researcher will contact the Director of Human Resources and the Data and Assessment Strategy Manager to receive a list of teachers who have taught at the study site for three or more years. While the director and manager will know who those teachers are, they will have no knowledge of exactly when the researcher will be submitting the survey to the teachers by email via REDCap, nor will they have any knowledge of which teachers respond to the researcher's invitation to participate in the study. This is to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality. The researcher will only send the survey to the educators who have the three or more years of experience by way of their work email from researcher's UNE email to invite them to participate in this study by way of REDCap.

Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) is a "secure web application for building and managing online surveys and databases" (REDCap, 2021, p. 1). REDCap was created in 2004 at Vanderbilt University (REDCap, 2021). The software was created by researchers who were in need of collecting secure data that followed HIPPA compliance. According to Patridge and Bardyn (2018), "Projects are self-sufficient and secure databases that can be used for normal data entry or for surveys across multiple distinct time points" (p. 142).

All participant responses were anonymous, and all data collected remained confidential. Through REDCap's software program all participants were assigned a pseudonym with a random alphanumeric identifier to ensure they remain anonymous to the researcher. No personal identifiable information will be collected or recorded. Neither the researcher or any persons at the school district knew which educators of the district have responded to the request to participate.

Within the invitation to participate, the teachers that choose to participate in the study were directed to click on a weblink embedded in the email invitation which took them directly to the REDCap survey. It should also be noted that within the invitation to participate, that it was reiterated that no personal identifiable information was collected or recorded. A timeline will be given of seven business days for the teachers to respond to the invitation to participate. The first 10 respondents to the invitation will be included in the participant pool. Any participant responses received beyond the first 10 will not be reviewed by the researcher and will remain securely unopened on REDCap.

### **Instrumentation**

When determining the appropriate method of instrumentation, the researcher chose a qualitative questionnaire (i.e., survey or open/close ended questions) to measure educator burnout and coping styles. According to Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe (2010), an instrumental case study “provides insight into a particular issue, redraw generalizations, or build theory” (p.1). Instrumentation for this study will include a field test and an anonymous participant perception survey.

This researcher employed a qualitative questionnaire, i.e., survey with open-ended questions that the researcher will code. Coding allows the researcher to look for emergent themes in response to the questions answered by participants. A Likert-scale was also utilized which assisted the researcher to understand the strength and prevalence of certain participant perceptions but does not provide numerical values to analyze statistically. The Likert-scale questions assisted the researcher in discovering the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. The open-

ended questions allowed the researcher to gather richer information from the participant responses, as well as information the researcher may not have anticipated and included as part of the Likert-scale questions. The survey asked questions related to the research questions of (1) What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace? and (2) What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout? The survey was administered to study participants via REDCap. REDCap is a web-based application that can “capture data for clinical research and create databases and projects” (Patridge & Bardyn, 2018, p. 142). Data will be prepared for coding utilizing a computer-generated program through REDCap.

### **MBI-ES Survey**

The Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educator Survey (MBI-ES) is a survey, similarly, designed as the initial Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, 1986). This MBI-ES is designed for educators, which includes teachers, administrators, and other staff working in the school system. (Maslach, 1986). The MBI-ES survey has 22 questions measuring burnout based on three categories. Those three categories include exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments of teachers. The three categories are key components in identifying burnout (Maslach, 1986).

### **Field Test**

A field test was conducted prior to IRB approval. A field test is defined as “a preliminary tryout of a proposed instrument to see if it will work for the actual study in data collection stages” (Bagdady, 2020, p. 1). The field test included one teacher who completed an agreement form to participate in the field test (Appendix B). The teacher did not participate in the study.

The field test was an opportunity for the researcher to examine the validity of the instrumentation used in this study (Bagdady, 2020).

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The data collection was used to collect evidence significant to workplace burnout and to discover if teachers are effectively coping with the burnout they experience. The collection of the data was conducted through the MBI-ES perception survey. Participant responses to the perception survey were coded, not for the purpose of being able to identify the participants, but for the researcher to be able to link the survey responses with the same participant to gather their related data collection. This also allows for participant anonymity in that they will be assigned alphanumeric identifiable codes.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis is synonymous with filing information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During this stage of the methodology, data analysis “involves organizing the data” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 181). The researcher will follow Creswell’s 5 Steps for data collection and analysis. The five steps include managing and organizing data, reading and memoing of emergent ideas, describing and classifying codes into themes, developing, and accessing interpretations and lastly, representing and visualizing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data gathered from the participant responses will be categorized into similar coping styles used during stressful situations within the workplace.

There are a variety of rating scales that can be used to determine agreement or disagreement. For the purpose of this study, a Likert scale was used for completion of the MBI-ES. A Likert scale will measure the participants perception but does not provide numerical value to analyze statistically (Likert, 1932). Likert created the 5-point scale survey where, “the



questions were presented in such a form as to permit a judgment of value rather than a judgment of fact” (Likert, 1932, p.12). The Likert scale questions for this survey will help the researcher discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. The open-ended questions will allow the researcher to gather deeper information from the participants’ responses that were not gathered in the close ended questions in the Likert survey.

Ultimately, coding is a process whereby the researcher can analyze the information from the participants’ survey responses and conclude the coping styles, or lack there-of, that teachers use to combat/resolve workplace stress (Saldaña, 2013). In addition to identifying themes on teacher’s coping styles, this researcher will also identify the perceptions of teacher’s definition of burnout. Creswell and Poth (2018) discuss the importance of coding and creating themes as it a process in which a researcher is making sense of the data collected.

### **Limitations of the Research Design**

The conditions of this study can potentially be affected by numerous external factors causing limitations to this study. Per Bloomberg and Volpe (2016), external factors could include but not limited to the selection of study participants, school setting or study site, and persuasion by administration. Participants’ providing short responses to specific perception survey questions is one limitation that might affect the outcome of the study. Participants could potentially not provide honest responses. Within this study, participants self-reported their degree of burnout. Self-reporting was considered a limitation because the participant “may not be able to assess themselves accurately” (Salters-Pedneault, 2020) which can affect how the survey questions were answered. Another limitation that could affect the research is the relationship between the

researcher and participants. This is based upon the researcher's employment at the study site. Even though the perception survey is anonymous, participants could still feel that the researcher may somehow be able to personally identify them which is not the case.

Within this qualitative instrumental case study, four of the five procedural areas to establish trustworthiness in the research will be applied which include credibility, dependability, confirmability transferability (Amankwaa, 2016). Due to data being collected through an anonymous perception survey, member checking, the fifth of Creswell's (2013) procedures will not be applied. This researcher is aware of the ethical issues that may arise during this study and will continue to examine personal beliefs and feelings throughout this process to ensure a rigorous study is being conducted. The topics to establish trust will be discussed by this researcher. To further ensure validity of the study is demonstrated credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, will be provided.

### **Credibility**

Credibility can be defined as the reader finding truth in the research that was conducted as well as connecting the data to real life situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to ensure trustworthiness in participant responses specific strategies are established (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The strategies include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and member checking. For this qualitative instrumental case study with data being collected through an anonymous perception survey, this researcher will not utilize member checking as a strategy for credibility.

Prolonged engagement can be defined as becoming familiar with the environment which the researcher is studying (Korsjens & Moser, 2018). This provides an opportunity to create a stronger connection between the researcher and the data (Korsjens & Moser, 2018). Persistent

observation is another strategy that can be used to establish credibility. Persistent observation can be defined as attention to details or characteristics of the study (Korsjens & Moser, 2018).

### **Dependability**

Dependability as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is the opportunity for the reader to examine the process in which the data was obtained. Within this qualitative instrumental case study, the data that will be gathered will determine if teachers are experiencing workplace burnout. This study will also provide data on whether there is evidence relative to if teachers are effectively coping with workplace burnout. Dependability will be demonstrated in this qualitative instrumental case study as the researcher was transparent throughout the process. Transparency is another factor in determining dependability in the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **Confirmability**

Confirmability can be defined as process where, “the researcher’s interpretations and findings are clearly derived from the data, requiring the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions and interpretations have been reached” (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017, p. 3). Keeping detailed notes throughout the study provides the researcher an opportunity to refer back to information that was obtained through the perception survey from REDCap as well as the journal articles (Connelly, 2016).

### **Transferability**

Transferability can be defined as “the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents” (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). Transferability is also known as external validation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Stress within the workplace is a commonality, however how stress is managed varies

(Choudhury, 2012). Readers might be able to relate this study to their professional practice. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the researcher may not know how this information is used at other sites. It is anticipated that the data provided in this study will be rich in information to allow other readers to determine if the material is transferable. Researching how teachers manage workplace stress and what they perceive about burnout could create an opportunity for programs to be created within the workplace (McIntyre et al., 2016). By collecting data for analysis from participants within the educational field, this will hopefully provide an opportunity to demonstrate the coping styles individuals use to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### **Ethical Issues and Conflict of Interest in the Proposed Study**

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is designed to guide researchers in appropriate practices and ensure that research studies are accurately completed (UNE IRB, 2020). Researchers should follow guidelines to ensure participant rights are protected (UNE IRB, 2020). Ethical practices included having participant consent throughout their involvement in the research study. According to the Institutional Review Board, informed consent “ begins with the recruitment of participants and continues through the duration of the participant’s involvement in the research” (UNE IRB, 2020, p. 6). Participants of the study need to be aware of the risk and benefits to determine if participation in the study is agreed upon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

### **Ethical Issues**

Ethical issues can be defined as being “morally bound to conduct our research in a manner that minimizes potential harm to those involved in the study” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 160). A pseudonym was used to name the high school and middle school to protect the anonymity of the research site and participants. The participants for this study were teachers who work within a high school and middle school located in south shore Massachusetts.

Participants received an invitation to participate in the study via their work email. Within the invitation to participate, participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that they may withdraw their involvement at any time without any repercussions.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest can affect the outcome of the study based on the researcher's personal bias or circumstance (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The researcher is currently employed at the study site. During the perception survey process the researcher will need to ensure personal biases do not influence the study. According to Bird and Spier (2008), conflict of interest can occur at any point in the study. To reduce instances of discrimination against the participants their names and other identifying information will not be used during perception survey or in transcription of perception survey responses.

### **Conclusion and Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. This chapter was designed to explain the details and methodology that will be used in this qualitative instrumental case study. The qualitative instrumental case study methodology of this study was significant as it demonstrated the actions taken to ensure validity and transparency (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

The researcher took all precautionary measures to ensure the protection of the research site and participant rights throughout their involvement in this qualitative instrumental case study. The survey responses were analyzed to reveal themes that were relative to teacher perceptions of burnout in the workplace and if effective coping styles are being used. The

researcher addressed credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, during the analysis of data upon completion of having received participant responses via the REDCap survey.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to discover high school and middle school teachers, in south shore Massachusetts, perceptions of the extent of their workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. Data was collected utilizing an anonymous survey consisting of short answer and Likert scaled questions. Participants responses from the survey were coded using Creswell's (Creswell & Poth, 2018) 5 Steps process. Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) data system was utilized to create the anonymous survey and databases as well as to store the online anonymous survey securely.

The researcher utilized Maslach's (1982) burnout theory when creating the anonymous survey. The survey questions were relative to Maslach's burnout themes of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory was relative to this study as theory focused on learned behaviors based on environmental factors. Maslach's (1982) burnout theory focuses on people who work in the human service fields, such as education, that experience burnout in the workplace. The theory also emphasized that working in demanding jobs or emotionally charged environments can lead to burnout (Maslach, 1982). Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory focused on individuals and learned behavior. Social cognitive theory emphasized how people people's interactions towards each other may transform into a learned behavior, i.e., observational learning (Bandura, 1986).

In this chapter an overview of the data collection and analysis process will be reviewed. Emergent themes from participant responses will likewise be presented. Lastly, the participants' perceptions of their stress in the workplace and coping styles they have used will also be presented in order to attempt to answer the research questions that drove this study. The

following research questions guided this study, and were developed after reviewing literature relative to educator burnout and coping styles:

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?

RQ 2: What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?

### **Analysis Method**

This researcher chose to use a qualitative instrumental case study to further understand perceptions of burnout experienced in the workplace by seasoned teachers in a high school and middle school setting as well as determine if effective coping styles are being used by the participants to combat burnout. Stake (1995) described the purpose of an instrumental case study as, “a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding” (p. 3). Obtaining instrumental case study participant survey outcomes according to Stake (1995), can obtain “insight” (p. 3) from the data gathered. It is important to understand the data as emerging themes are created from the participants’ responses (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). For this study, participant responses were gathered from an anonymous survey.

Participants were recruited to participate in this study from a potential pool of 141 high school and middle school teachers at Sunny Days School District. The school district is located in south shore Massachusetts. Purposeful sampling was used for participant selection as specific participants, seasoned teachers with three years or more of experience were recruited and surveyed for this study. Using purposeful sampling helped develop a better understanding of the subject (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).



Teachers eligible to participate in this qualitative instrumental case study must have had three or more years of teaching experience. This researcher contacted the Data and Assessment Manager for Sunny Days School District to obtain the list of eligible teachers via email. Once the list was received via email, this researcher excluded teachers who were not evaluated by this researcher as the researcher is employed at the same district. An email was then generated with permission from Sunny Days School District inviting those teachers to participate in the survey. Included in the email was the invitation to participate (Appendix B), as well as the University of New England's consent to participate in the study (Appendix C). The survey was open to complete for seven business days. The researcher received 17 responses from educators. For the purpose of this study, only the first 10 educators to respond were accepted as participants after it was determined they had indeed met eligibility requirement to participate. All responses were securely stored on an excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was stored on this researcher's personal computer. The remaining seven educator responses were not used for this study and were not reviewed by this researcher. Those seven responses were stored separately on an excel spreadsheet. All responses received from the survey were securely stored on a two-factor identification system for three years as required by IRB.

This researcher planned on 10 teachers participating in this study by way of completing the anonymous survey. This researcher successfully met the participant goal of 10 participants. The names that were provided from the Data Assessment Manager were given to the researcher on a Google doc. The list was securely stored on a two-factor identification device away from public access. At the start of the survey, participants consented to participating in the study after reading the consent form that had been sent to them electronically via email. Participants could not move forward in the survey without their given consent. The consent form provided

information on anonymity and confidentiality. Participants had the ability to print out their consent form for their records as well as the invitation to participate and University of New England's consent form.

The participants were automatically organized numerically through REDCap. To protect participant anonymity, the survey did not collect demographic information. Participants were then assigned pseudonyms (Table 1) by the researcher to allow for ease of reading.

**Table 1**

*Numeric Participant Pseudonyms*

<b>Numeric Participant</b>	<b>Assigned Pseudonym</b>
01	Nicole
02	Vinny
03	Samantha
04	Mike
05	Ron
06	Paul
07	Angelina
08	Lauren
09	Jenny
10	Deena

**Survey**

The REDCap survey link was sent to eligible participants through their work email. Also included in the email was the University of New England consent to participate in an anonymous study. The survey was designed to gather participant responses to their perceptions of burnout in the workplace and coping styles used to combat the burnout. The survey was anonymous. Once the anonymous survey closed, the researcher created a pseudonym for the 10 participants. The pseudonyms were assigned at random starting with participant 01-10.

The first section of the survey contained seven short answer questions. The short answer questions included: (1) How do you describe stress in the workplace? (2) In your current position, do you, or have you personally experienced work related stress and how does that stress

look or feel like? (3) What are some of the things that you feel has caused your workplace stress? (4) Have you ever been trained in ways to reduce your stress if so, please share examples of how you have done that? (5) In your school or district, in the past, have administrators or HR personnel discussed stress coping styles for employees? (6) Are there programs offered for teachers to attend to train on coping styles and have you accessed these programs in your district? and (7) If you could design a program for teachers to help reduce stress in the workplace, what would it look like?

The second part of the survey included 16 Likert scaled questions adapted from Maslach's (1986) burnout inventory. The questions were designed to measure three focal areas which consisted of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1986). The Likert scale consisted of ratings ranging from never, a few times a year, once a month or less, a few times a month, or once a week (Table 2) and were each assigned a point value. In order to score the responses, using the point value system created by Maslach (1986) the participants' responses were tallied in order to determine their average score.

**Table 2**

*MBI- Educator Survey Likert Scale Point Values*

<b>Likert Scale Rating</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Never	0
A few times a year	1
Once a month or less	2
A few times a month	3
Once a week	4
A few times a week	5
Everyday	6

In order to calculate the total for each participant, this researcher utilized the formulas as designed by Maslach (1986) for score calculation. This researcher tallied individual scores for the 10 participants. A table was created for each scale and the participants responses were listed in the columns to calculate their individual scores.

Data from the surveyed participant responses were downloaded from REDCap into an excel spreadsheet which organized responses per participant. To identify the trends and emergent themes, this researcher looked for key phrases and similar responses from the data that was gathered from participants responses regarding the perception of workplace burnout and what coping styles they used. According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), “survey studies describe trends in the data...” (p. 385).

### **Coding**

Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) describe coding as a “system of classification- the process of noting what is of interest or significance, identifying different segments and labeling them to organize the information contained in the data” (p. 198). This researcher reviewed the participants responses repeatedly outlining key phrases they used to identify and define their perception of workplace burnout. This researcher used Creswell’s (Creswell & Poth, 2018) five steps to code the participants short answer responses from the survey. Coding data and analyzing the information is not a direct linear process but rather a cyclical technique where each step in the process is relative to one another (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The following steps outline the coding process:

1. Manage and organize data.
2. Read and memo emergent ideas.
3. Describe and classify codes into themes.
4. Develop and assess interpretations relative to themes.
5. Represent and visualize the data.

Throughout this process steps were repeated and revisited to ensure emergent themes were identified. The coding process included this researcher highlighting repetitive words and

similar phrases in the participant responses. Emergent themes were also combined to prevent repetitive information.

### **Presentation of Results**

Through direct interpretation, the presentation of results formed four prevalent themes. With direct interpretation, this researcher was able to analyze the data obtained, establish patterns and differences to create a “naturalistic generalization” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 206). A naturalistic generalization is defined as a process in which the researcher presents the outcomes in a way that “people can learn from the case themselves, apply learnings to a population of cases, or transfer them to another similar context” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 206). Emergent themes were formed from the survey short answer questions and the Likert scale questions. Themes associated with the short answer questions included (a) uncertainty of expectations, (b) causes and feelings of workplace burnout, (c) coping styles and (d) training to help reduce burnout in the workplace. Themes associated with the Likert scaled survey included how frequently participants experienced burnout in the workplace (emotional exhaustion), how many participants did not frequently feel as though the job hardened them emotionally (depersonalization), and lastly, how high participants scored with knowing their students, dealing effectively with problems, impacting others, and creating a relaxed atmosphere (personal accomplishment).

### **Survey Questions Emergent Themes**

Participant responses for survey question one presented an emergent theme of uncertainty of expectations (Table 3). This theme also connects to/supports Research Question One. This was evidenced through participant responses such as Samantha who reported that “stress this year has been very different than previous years. One constant thing that has caused

me stress through the years is lack of communication and expectations.” Mike reported, “No consistent rules and expectations adhered to creates anxiety, overload, and stress.” Ronnie reported, “feeling like you can never get anything done or having so many tasks it becomes overwhelming.” “Nicole reported, “there is inconsistency with messages from leadership regarding accountability, however expectations on faculty have increased.” Vinny reported, “there are several days in one week that are non-routine causing missed class time plus staff meetings, plus grades are due- those weeks throw me off and cause stress.”

**Table 3**

*Uncertainty of Expectations*

Theme	Responses	Survey Question/Connecting Research Question
Uncertainty of Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited communication of expectations</li> <li>• Lack of support-peer/administration</li> <li>• Not enough time to plan</li> <li>• Increased expectations of teachers</li> <li>• Figuring out important information after the fact</li> <li>• No consistent rules or expectations adhered to</li> </ul>	1/1

There were repetitive, or common responses discovered within the participants short answer question responses. The common responses included (a) the pressure from administration on the participants to complete projects, (b) participants trying to accomplish tasks within a workday and balancing the additional workload, (c) lack of communication by

administration contributed to teachers not knowing the expectations, (d) not feeling comfortable asking questions for clarification, and (e) afraid of making mistakes.

**Table 4**

*Causes and Feelings of Workplace Burnout*

Theme	Response	Survey Question/Connecting Research Questions
Causes and feelings of workplace burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not being able to manage time effectively</li> <li>• Fear of making a mistake</li> <li>• Remote and in person learning has been frazzling and stressful</li> <li>• Moving from classroom to classroom to conduct classes</li> <li>• Sleep deprivation</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Pressure in my chest</li> <li>• No separation between work and personal</li> </ul>	2,3/1

An example of common responses discovered in participants Angelina and Jenny's remarks. Angelina shared, "stress in the workplace is constantly feeling worried you aren't doing the right thing." Jenny reported "it sneaks up most when we feel uncertain of expectations." Other commonalities of responses included participants feeling overworked with little appreciation. Paul reported, "stress in the workplace is normally caused by a feeling that I have too much work to do and not enough time."

The second emergent theme was causes and feelings of workplace burnout (Table 4). This theme also connects to/supports Research Question One. Responses varied from each

participant which included lack of detailed information from administration on how to complete tasks to do them correctly. Mike reported, “I feel unsupported, devalued and feeling that I’m not important or that my professional opinion isn’t liked. It is ignored or twisted.” Samantha reported:

I found I constantly did not feel well internally. Being around people made me feel like I was constantly sick. I would finally develop a routine I became comfortable with, and the school or state changed everything on us with little notice.

When participants were asked about what burnout in the workplace looked or felt like they responded with a variety of descriptions. Nicole, Deena, and Jenny similarly reported feeling, “withdrawn or isolated from peer groups whom they once socialized with.” Samantha reported, “I found I was getting headaches and not sleeping.” Ron also reported that he began to keep lists in a notebook of additional tasks that needed to be completed outside of lesson planning which caused increased feelings of burnout. Vinny, Ron, and Deena report that their feelings of burnout in the workplace carried out into their personal lives – feeling frustrated with family members or not engaging in activities. Ronnie reported, “it results in avoiding work that needs to be done to focus on other work that is lower priority or more enjoyable. Also, it manifests in me lashing out verbally at my family.” Lastly, Vinny, Samantha, Ron, and Jenny reported feeling unproductive due to lack of sleep. Jenny reported, “it causes sleep deprivation and isolation and less able to be doing a job well.”

The third emergent theme highlighted was coping styles (Table 5). This theme also connects to/supports Research Question Two. The ten participants described techniques used to reduce burnout in the workplace. Nicole reported, “Mindfulness training has been offered. Emails with supportive links have been sent, I have not taken advantage of the opportunities.”



Vinny reported, “I work out- I am getting my brain calm.” Samantha reported, “I’ve done some optional PD on mindfulness but other than that I have not been trained. I can leave work at work this helps some of the stress go away.” Mike reported, “Mindfulness podcasts and webinars.”

**Table 5**

*Coping Styles*

Theme	Responses	Survey Questions/Connecting Research Question
Coping Styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work out/exercise</li> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Meditation</li> <li>• Deep Breathing</li> <li>• Social Emotional Practices</li> <li>• Mindfulness techniques</li> <li>• Read</li> <li>• Find a quiet space to regroup</li> </ul>	4/2

The fourth emergent theme included training to help reduce burnout in the workplace (Table 6). This theme also connects to/supports Research Question Two. All participants answered what training was available to learn ways to cope with burnout in the workplace. Paul reported, “there used to be training but not this year.” Angelina reported, “no” to the question regarding training being offered. Ronnie reported, “I think so, the employee assistance program, but I’ve never used it.” Other participants reported that more programs for seasoned teachers need to be offered. Samantha reported “I think teachers just need a place to be heard.” Ronnie reported, “I pursue lots of PD on my own because the district offers it for newer educators.” Jenny reported, “just to have a social setting where we can air our grievances without fear.”

Deena reported, “it would be a variety of options to include exercising, building things, sleep/meditation, or drawing.”

**Table 6**

*Training to Help Reduce Burnout in the Workplace*

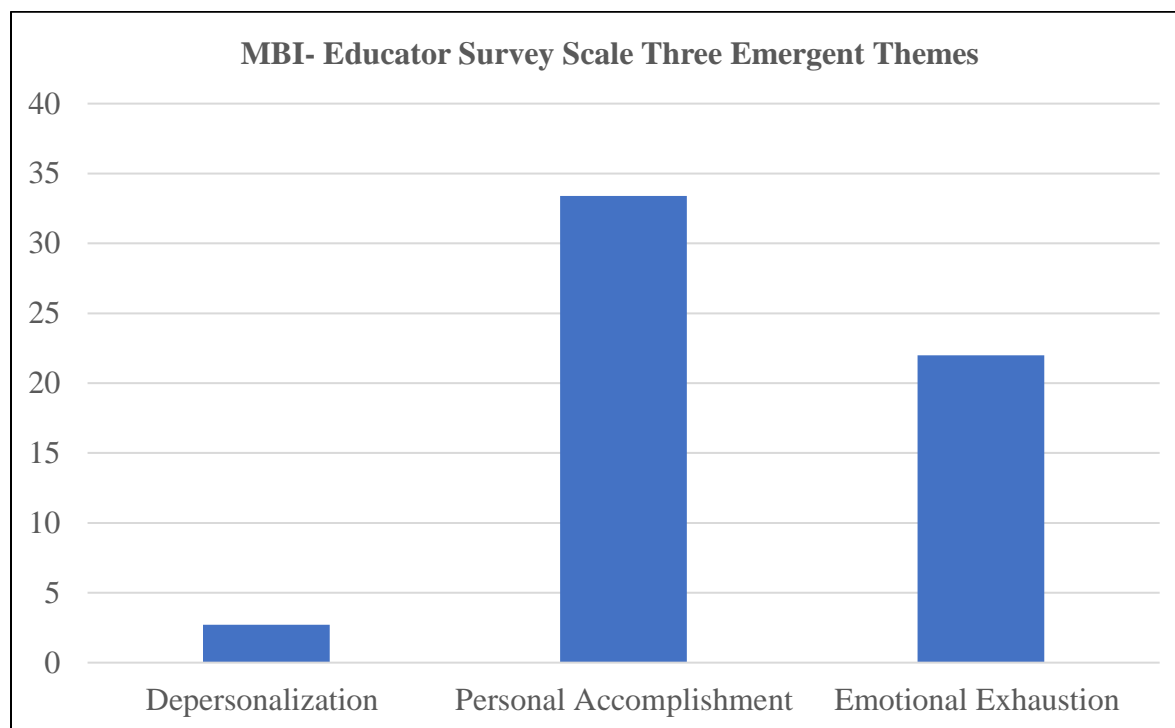
Theme	Common Responses	Survey Question / Connecting Research Questions
Training to help reduce burnout in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindfulness Training</li> <li>• Webinars on self-care</li> <li>• No formal training-only links to sites</li> <li>• Never received training on stress reduction for staff</li> </ul>	4,5,6/2

### Unexpected Responses

Participant responses that were surprising to this researcher included lack of participation in self-care professional development. Nicole, Vinny, Lauren, and Jenny reported that they have not accessed the training offered. Nicole stated, “Emails with supportive links have been sent I have not taken advantage of the opportunities.” This researcher was also surprised to read participant responses on how very few professional development topics were directed to help staff reduce burnout in the workplace. Mike reported, “they discuss it, but it is in terms of what we can do for our students.”

### Likert Scale Emergent Themes

There were three emergent themes measured with the Likert questions. According to Given (2008), “emergent themes are a basic building block of inductive approaches to qualitative social science research and are derived from the life worlds of research participants through the process of coding” (p.1). Based on all of the participant responses and assigned point values, the average for each emergent theme was calculated (Figure 2).



*Figure 2. MBI-Educator Survey Scale Three Emergent Themes*

The first identified theme within the MBI-ES was depersonalization. This theme is associated with research question one regarding seasoned teachers' perceptions of burnout in the workplace. Vinny and Ron responded that they do not worry about the job hardening them emotionally. Paul, Angelina, and Lauren reported that the job was hardening them emotionally a few times a month. Samantha, Jenny, and Deena reported that the job was hardening them emotionally once a week. Lastly, Mike, reported that the job is hardening them emotionally a few times a week. Maslach and Jackson (1981) described depersonalization as the "impersonal response towards recipient's response or self-care" (p. 101).

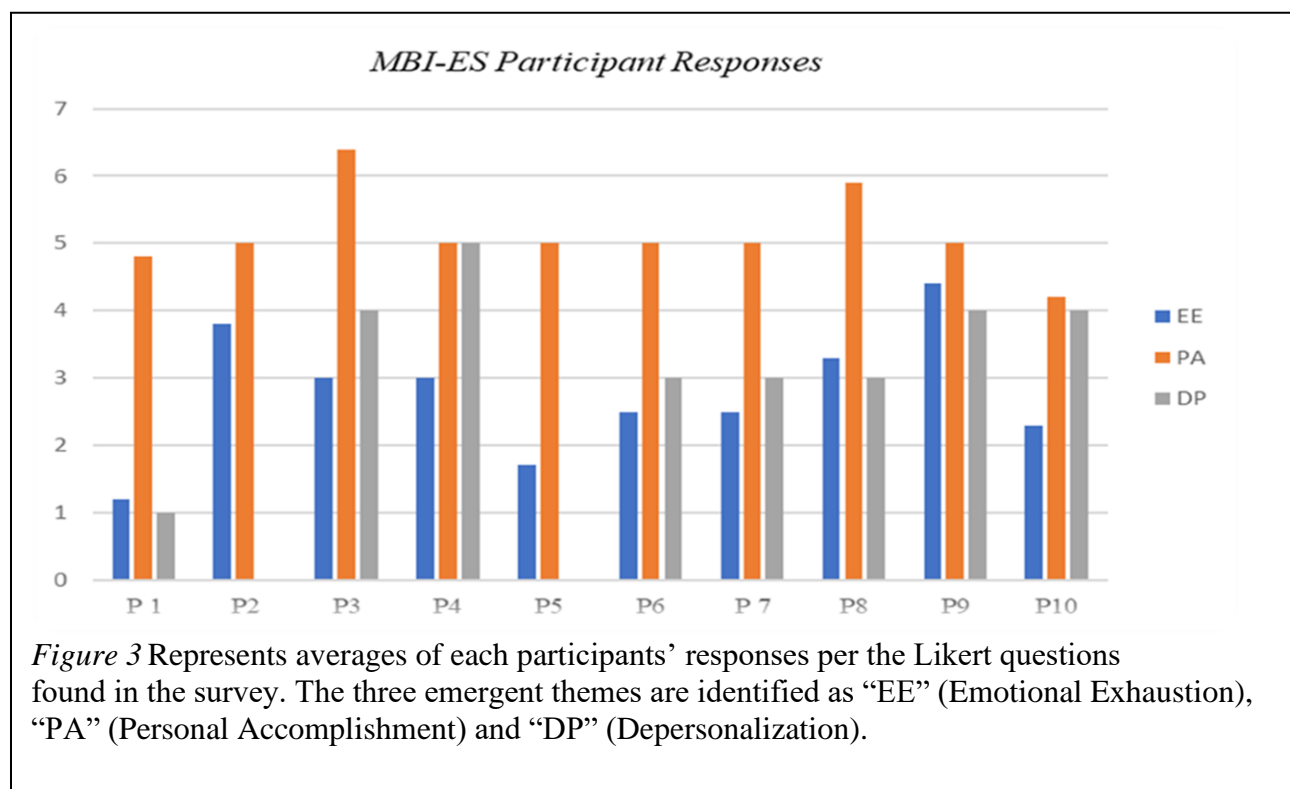
Personal accomplishment is the second identified theme used to measure burnout within the MBI-ES. This theme can be connected to research question two regarding coping styles. Of the 10 participants, Deena reported that they can easily understand how their students feel about things a few times a year. Vinny, Mike, Paul, Angelina, and Lauren reported that they deal

effectively with the problems of their students every day. Samantha, Ron, and Angelina reported feeling energetic a few times a week. Nicole, Samantha, Mike, Ron, Paul, and Deena reported that they accomplished many worthwhile things in this job a few times a week. Nicole, Vinny, and Mike reported that they can create a relaxed atmosphere with their students every day. Personal accomplishment, according to Maslach and Jackson (1981), “describes feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people” (p. 101).

The third identified theme within the MBI-ES was emotional exhaustion. This theme is associated to research question one, teachers’ perception of burnout in the workplace. Of the 10 participants, Vinny and Jenny reported feeling emotionally drained from work a few times a week. Of the 10 participants, Samantha and Angelina reported feeling burned out from their work a few times month. One participant, Vinny, reported feeling burned out from their work a few times a week. Of the 10 participants, Nicole, Ron, Paul, and Lauren reported feeling that they are working too hard at their job a few times a week. Of the 10 participants, Angelina reported feeling they are working too hard at their job every day. According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), “the Emotional Exhaustion subscale describe feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work” (p. 101). All the participants provided their perceptions of emotional exhaustion and how these feelings impacted their daily work. In connection with the short answer questions, participants responded to feeling emotionally exhausted based on the increase of demands this year. According to Klusmann, Aldrup, Schmidt, and Lüdtke (2021), “*high job demands result in constant overload and, ultimately, in emotional exhaustion*” (p. 174). Of interest to this researcher is that personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion were higher than depersonalization.

Based on the information gathered from the Likert questions, the average scores for

personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion were higher than depersonalization. To establish the scores, this researcher calculated the mean for each category for every participant. The Likert scaled questions were assigned based on Maslach's (1986) three emergent themes- depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion.



### Summary

Purposeful sampling was used for this qualitative instrumental case study as a select group of individuals were chosen to help the researcher to understand a particular trend (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Seasoned teachers were chosen to reflect on their perceptions of burnout in the workplace. After data was collected from the short answer responses and Likert scaled questions, they were organized into emergent themes to address the research questions.

Participants were able to describe their perception of their personally experienced burnout in the workplace, including the causes of burnout and what burnout felt like to them. What was made clear in the participant responses was that the participants were feeling burnout in the workplace. Participants were also able to describe the techniques that they use to reduce burnout in the workplace, however they are willing to learn more about coping styles to combat burnout. Participants also described that more training is needed for the staff to alleviate the feelings of burnout and increase their longevity to remain in the classroom. The discussions and findings of the study including interpretations and future recommendations will be discussed in the proceeding chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

Burnout in the workplace can vary from teacher to teacher. To understand the causes of burnout and determine if effective coping styles are being used by teachers, a qualitative instrumental case study was conducted. The participants of this study consisted of seasoned teachers who have been teaching for more than three years. The study's setting was a high school and middle school within south shore Massachusetts.

Data was gathered through REDCap in the form of an anonymous survey which helped identify if the participant experienced burnout in the workplace. The participants completed short answer questions and Lickert scaled questions relative to burnout in the workplace and coping styles used to combat the burnout. A summary of the study's findings and conclusions drawn from the data gathered will be discussed in this chapter. A discussion of the interpretation of findings, recommendations for further action, and recommendations for further research will also be discussed.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to discover the perceptions of high school and middle school teachers in south shore Massachusetts on the extent of their workplace burnout and to discover their perceptions on whether they are using effective coping styles to prevent burnout. This chapter provides an interpretation of the results gathered from data collected through an anonymous survey. The survey included short answer questions and Likert scaled questions. Two research questions that guided this study included:

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?

RQ 2: What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle

school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?

According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), “in the process of interpreting results, researchers first summarize the major findings” (p. 199). The researcher investigated high school and middle school teachers’ perceptions of burnout in the workplace and the coping styles they use to combat that burnout. The theoretical concepts that supported this study included Maslach’s (1982) burnout theory and Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory.

This study’s research questions were answered through a qualitative instrumental case study. An anonymous survey was designed to incorporate short answer questions and Likert scaled questions based on Maslach’s (1982) burnout inventory- educator survey.

### **Survey Short Answer Responses**

Seven short answer questions were created to gather information from participants regarding their interpretation of burnout in the workplace. Using short answer questions within the anonymous survey allowed the researcher to gather a better understanding of burnout in the workplace and the coping styles utilized by the participants. The emergent themes that were established based on the participants short answer responses included (a) uncertainty of expectations, (b) causes and feelings of workplace burnout, (c) coping styles, and (d) training to help reduce burnout in the workplace.

**Uncertainty of expectations.** Question one of the survey’s short answer questions asked participants “How do you describe stress in the workplace?” Participant responses for this question are relative to research question one, “What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?” Five out of 10 participants responded that their stress was being caused by uncertainty of expectations from administration. Without clear expectations, participants reported that there



was an increase in stress within the workplace. Lauren reported, “administrative directives constantly changing without equitable support to all employees increase stress.” Per research clear expectations help teachers understand their role, what is needed to complete a task, and feel valued (Downey, 2018). According to Mathibe (2008), “when employees know and understand what is expected from them, when those expectations are to be met, and how those expectations should be met, they will be motivated to achieve those goals” (p. 4).

**Causes and feelings of workplace burnout.** The second emergent theme was causes and feelings of workplace burnout. The short answer question asked participants, “In your current position, do you or have you personally experienced work related stress and how does that stress look or feel like?” This short answer question is also relative to research question one that asks participants for their perceptions of what burnout in the workplace felt or looked like. The 10 participants responded that they have experienced stress within the workplace. Each participant responded to how stress felt to them. Of noted interest is that literature previously reviewed was found similar to the symptomatic responses from the participants. Symptoms of stress, to name a few, include anxiety, sleep problems, irritability, and social withdrawal (Mayo Clinic, 2020). This is evidenced through Nicole and Ron’s responses. Nicole responded, “I find myself withdrawing from relationships with peers.” Ron mentioned, “It (stress) manifests itself in me lashing out at my family.”

The third short answer question asked participants “What are some of the things that you feel has caused your workplace stress?” Six out of 10 participant responses included increase in demands from administration, traveling to classrooms to teach classes, not feeling supported by leadership, and having too much to do with little time. This is evidenced through Lauren

reporting, “Dealing with constant adjustments to the work expectations combine with not have a stable work area and dealing with the apathy of the students.”

**Coping styles.** The third theme, coping styles, was relevant to research question two, “What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?” Six of the 10 participants responded they had utilized coping styles and that mindfulness trainings at work have been offered as well as websites/links to access stress reduction information. Two participants, Vinny and Deena responded that they work out, meaning they exercise in one way or another. Two participants, Lauren and Angelina, reported that they have not been trained and use their own methods for stress reduction, such as exercising or meditation. Five out of 10 participants responded the need for more training focusing on coping with burnout in the workplace and administrative support for staff to combat burnout.

**Training to help reduce burnout in the workplace.** The last emergent theme that was discovered from the short answer participant responses included training to help reduce burnout in the workplace. Training can be defined as “a process which helps in developing the Knowledge and the Skill set of the employees in order to advance and alter their performance in the workplace” (Sheeba & Christopher, 2020, p. 263). Participants were asked, “In your school or district, in the past have administrators or HR personnel discussed stress and coping styles for employees?” This question aligns with research question two regarding “What coping styles are used and if those methods are effective?” Participants were also asked, “Are there programs offered for teachers to attend to train on coping styles and did you access these programs in your district?” Seven out of 10 participants responded that there has been training offered in the past. One participant, Samantha, responded that the professional development was directed more for

student stress and not for educators. Three out of 10 participants also responded that there has not been training for teachers to combat stress. One participant, Ron, mentioned their knowledge of the employee assistance program provided at work. Employee assistance programs can be defined as a “program that assists employees navigate through life challenges, adverse reactions, stress and other issues that can affect their productivity at work” (Taylor, 2020, p. 1). Six out of 10 participants also responded that while there were trainings offered, they did not participate in the training. This researcher finds it interesting that while some of the participants felt that more training is necessary, they admitted that they had not taken advantage of the trainings that were already offered.

### **Likert Scale Responses**

Once participants completed the short answer section, they then answered 16 Likert scaled questions developed from Maslach’s (1986) Burnout Inventory- Educator Survey. Three emergent themes were discovered based on Maslach’s (1982) burnout theory that included (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) personal accomplishment, and (c) depersonalization. Emotional exhaustion was defined as being depleted of energy. According to Maslach and Leiter, “workers feel drained and used up, without any source of replenishment” (1999, p. 69). Personal accomplishment was defined as feeling competent within the workplace (Maslach, 1986). Lastly, depersonalization was defined as a detachment from the workplace. The participant responses in this section of the anonymous survey indicated that the levels of emotional exhaustion were high as well as the feelings of personal accomplishments.

### **Implications**

Implications of the study are defined as, “suggestions for the importance of the study for different audiences” (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 200). Burnout in seasoned teachers is a

prevalent and ongoing issue. While this study captured data from a small population of participants, it can provide insight into an expansion of policy development and practice by Sunny Days School District leaders. The first implication in this study, based upon participant responses, is the acknowledgement that burnout among human service professionals, such as teachers, continues to exist in the workplace. Sunny Days School leaders can further learn about the well-being of their staff. “As burned-out teachers negatively affect themselves, their students, and the educational system” (Everes, Tomic, & Brouwers, 2004, p. 132) it is necessary to create and promote burnout reduction resources to support the longevity of seasoned teachers.

The second implication is relative to the study’s findings on creating more professional development on social emotional wellbeing training for teachers. The second implication is identified as the social emotional wellbeing training was previously designed for students not teachers. “Professional development is the strategy schools and school districts use to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their practice throughout their career” (Mizell, 2010, p. 1). Ongoing professional development can include social emotional wellbeing for all teachers (Mizell, 2010). Adding training sessions that incorporate mindfulness training and other techniques to reduce stress throughout the workday can be beneficial to the longevity of a teacher. The data gathered in this qualitative instrumental case study indicated that there is a lack of professional development regarding staff wellbeing. While six of the 10 participants responded that trainings have been provided, they are predominantly directed toward student social emotional learning as well as stress reduction for students. This information could be beneficial for other school districts and school leaders to the wellbeing of its staff.

The third implication of this study is that seasoned teachers felt strongly about their personal accomplishments, as answered in the MBI-Educator Survey (Maslach, 1986). While

studies have been conducted on burnout amongst teachers, more information on how to help those teachers that have been teaching for over three years to remain engaged in the profession. As novice teachers enter the field of education, surveys or interviews of seasoned teachers can provide insight into the field to help newer teachers become acclimated.

### **Recommendations for Action**

Findings and implications, founded upon this study's results, led this researcher to make the following recommendations for action. It is recommended that leaders within Sunny Days School and Sunny Days School District develop staff trainings that incorporate social emotional wellbeing. Staff development is defined as an opportunity for professionals, such as teachers, to expand their learning on content areas in which they teach, or to grow within their field (Smith, 1982). Teachers who are competent in social emotional wellbeing tend to be more adept with their emotions as well as being aware of other people's emotions. Training in social emotional wellbeing increases "efficacy in regulating emotions, while reducing stress and burnout" (Schonert-Reichel, 2017, 143). Training is defined as improving the performance of staff as well as the productivity within the school (Azmi, 2021). Participants in this study were asked, "If you could design a program for teachers to help reduce stress in the workplace what would it look like?" Participants responded with a variety of training ideas to help combat burnout in the workplace. One participant reported that training could incorporate how to relax while at work.

A second recommendation is connected to making changes to the school district's current social emotional learning team. Leaders within the district could develop social emotional teams that would be helpful in proactively teaching coping styles to reduce burnout in the workplace for teachers. The social emotional learning team could provide more resources for staff as well as in-person training. The social emotional learning team consists of a district administrator,

social worker, and school adjustment counselors, but no teachers. Incorporating a program in which teachers can participate is an opportunity to develop skills to reduce stress, strengthen collaboration amongst the entire staff, and foster mentorship (CASEL, 2021). While many programs have been developed to help students reduce stress and emotionally regulate, social emotional learning teams should begin with teachers to strengthen their social emotional skill development (Scott, 2021). A district wide program could provide consistency throughout the entire staff and the tools can be utilized regardless of the school.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

Based upon this study's findings and implications, and relative to the research questions it is recommended that further research be conducted at the study's site to incorporate teachers district wide and not solely at the middle and high school grades. This will allow the Sunny Days School District leaders an opportunity to evaluate if burnout in the workplace is being experienced at all grade levels across the district.

It is also recommended that further research be conducted at the study site to include all educators and not only those with more than three years of teaching experience. Expanding the number of participants allows for more data to be gathered. Utilizing more teachers from the district could provide further insight for district leaders if burnout in the workplace is occurring within the staff. This could include conducting interviews with teachers.

A third recommendation is that multiple districts be included in a study. This could include multiple districts within the same state, or multiple districts across multiple states. This could be more helpful in obtaining a better idea of the prevalence of educators' workplace burnout and in identifying the coping styles they successfully utilize across a broader scale.

A fourth recommendation includes developing mentoring programs that Sunny Days School District leaders could incorporate into their orientation program for newly hired educators. While the district provides mentors, per participant responses, to new teachers, further development of the program to provide additional support to the new teachers being hired is recommended. As novice teachers are entering the field of education, utilizing seasoned staff who understand the school community, and how to handle challenging situations would be beneficial for those entering into the district. Perhaps this will decrease stressors that lead to burnout in the workplace. Within the state of Massachusetts, The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides recommendations for school districts within the state to incorporate mentorship for teachers. A more structured program should be designed within the Sunny Days School to include topics such as workplace burnout as an example.

A final recommendation for further research of study includes a longitudinal study of teacher preparatory programs across the state of Massachusetts. The purpose of this recommendation includes measuring the program effectiveness as well as whether or not preparatory programs focus on burnout in the workplace and how educators cope with those feelings of burnout. Monitoring educators enrolled in a teacher preparatory program and following up on their entry into the workforce could benefit higher education teacher preparatory programs to ensure teacher career readiness.

### **Conclusion**

Maslach's (1982) burnout theory and Bandura's (1986) social learning theory served as this study's guiding framework. The blending of both of these theories and incorporating the anonymous participant survey bridged a connection that with the right tools, teacher burnout could potentially be alleviated. The data gathered in this qualitative instrumental case study

provided evidence that burnout is being experienced by seasoned teachers and that they are utilizing coping styles to combat the stressors that lead to their burnout. Literature on educators' workplace burnout and stressors directly aligns with those experienced by the educators at Sunny Days School and the impact this has had upon them.



## References

- Adom, D., Hussein, E., & Agu-Agyem, J. (2018). Theoretical and conceptual framework: Mandatory ingredients of a quality research. *Journal of Scientific Research*, 7(1), 438-441.
- Ahola, K., Toppinen-Tanner, S., & Sappanen, J. (2018). Interventions to alleviate burnout symptoms and support return to work among employees with burnout: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Burnout Research*, 4, 1-11. doi.org/10.1016/j.burn.2017.02.001
- Alessandri, G., Perinelli, E., DeLongis, E., Schaufeli, W., Theodoru, A., Borgogni, L., Caprara, G., & Cinque, L. (2018). Job burnout: The contribution of emotional stability and emotional self-efficacy beliefs. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 91(4), p. 823-851. New York, NY: Wiley Publishing.
- Alhija, F. (2015). Teacher stress and coping: The role of personal and job characteristics. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 185, 374-380. doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.415.
- Amankwaa, L. (2016). Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 23(3), 121-127.
- American Federation of Teachers. (2017). Survey reveals high stress amongst teachers. *American Educator*, 39 (3), p. 42. Retrieved from <https://link-gale-com.une.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A431349008/OVIC?u=bidd97564&sid=OVIC&xid=c16ec141>.
- American Psychological Association (APA). (2012). *Support for teachers*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org › monitor › 2012/02 › teachers>.
- American Psychological Association (APA). (2020). APA dictionary of psychology. Retrieved

- from <https://dictionary.apa.org/>
- Anderson, C., & Kirkpatrick, S. (2016). Narrative interviewing. *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*, 38, 631-634. Doi-org.une.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s11096-015-0222-0
- Arendale, D. (2010). What is education best practice? Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334454764\\_What\\_is\\_a\\_Best\\_Education\\_Practice](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334454764_What_is_a_Best_Education_Practice).
- Auduly, Å., Packer, T., Hutchinson, S., Roger, K.S., & Kephart, G. (2016). Coping, adapting, or self-managing – what is the difference? A concept review based on the neurological literature. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72 (11), 2629– 2643. doi: 10.1111/jan.13037
- Azmi, W. (2021). Employee training and development- The ultimate guide 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.startuphrtoolkit.com/employee-training-and-development/>.
- Bagdady, I. (2020). *Qualitative calculation for field test inclusion, implementation and execution stages*. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/@irenabagdady/qualitative-calculation-for-field-test-inclusion-implementation-and-execution-stages-eea3eaa56ba5>.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory of personality. *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Bandura, A. (2002). Reflexive empathy: On predicting more than has ever been observed. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 25(1), 24-25.  
doi:10.1017/S0140525X0226001X
- Bandura, A. (2005). *The evolution of social cognitive theory*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

- Bianchi, R., Truchot, D., Laurent, E., & Brisson, R. (2014). Is burnout solely job-related? A critical comment. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 55(4), 357-361.
- Bird, S., & Spier, R. (2008). A conflict of interest disclosure police for science and engineering ethics. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 14, 149-152.
- Bloomberg, L., & Volpe, M. (2016). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE publications.
- Bourg, S. (2013). *The tell tale signs of burnout...Do you have them?* Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/high-octane-women/201311/the-tell-tale-signs-burnout-do-you-have-them>.
- Brown, B. (2021). *Why do teachers stay in the classroom?* Retrieved from <https://teachoutsidethebox.com/2016/01/why-do-teachers-stay-in-the-classroom/>.
- Brown, N. (2018). *Psychoeducational groups: Process and practice*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.
- Buchanan, J. (2010). May I be excused? Why teachers leave the profession. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 30(2), 199-211. doi: 10.1080/02188791003721952
- Bussin, M. (2018). *Retention strategies: The key to retain excellent employees*, Johannesburg, South Africa: KR Publishing.
- Cafasso, J. (2019). *Emotional exhaustion: What it is and how to treat it*. Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/emotional-exhaustion>.
- Carter, S. (2013). *The tell tale signs of burnout...Do you have them?* Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/high-octane-women/201311/the-tell-tale-signs-burnout-do-you-have-them>.

- Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). The trouble with teacher turnover: How teacher attrition affects students and schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(36), 1-31.
- Caspersen, J., & Raaen, F. (2014). Novice teachers and how they cope. *Teachers and Teaching*, 20(2), 1-23. doi: 10.1080/13540602.2013.848570
- Cha, S. H., & Cohen-Vogel, L. (2011). Why they quit: a focused look at teachers who leave for other occupations, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 22(4), 371-392. Retrieved from [https://doi: 10.1080/09243453.2011.587437](https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2011.587437)
- Chang, M. (2009). An Appraisal Perspective of Teacher Burnout: Examining the Emotional Work of Teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21(3), 193-218.
- Charles, S. (2019). *Job burnout: How to spot it and take action*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/job-burnout-how-spot-it-take-action-n1011116>.
- Cherry, K. (2020). *How social learning theory works*. Retrieved from <https://www.verywellmind.com/social-learning-theory-2795074>.
- Choudhury, K. (2012). *Managing workplace stress: The cognitive behavioral way*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing.
- Cody, A. (2014). *Gallup poll finds a majority of teachers not engaged*. Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-john-thompson-gallup-poll-finds-majority-of-teachers-not-engaged/2014/04>.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2021). *What is SEL?* Retrieved from <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>.

- Connelly, L. (2016). *Trustworthiness in qualitative research*. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321684950\\_Trustworthiness\\_in\\_Qualitative\\_Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321684950_Trustworthiness_in_Qualitative_Research).
- Cooper, C. (1998). *Theories of organizational stress*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford Press.
- Cooper, C., & Quick, J. C. (Eds.). (2017). *The handbook of stress and health: A guide to research and practice*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>.
- Cox, J. (2019). *Professional development: how to love being a teacher*. Retrieved from <https://www.teachhub.com/professional-development-reasons-love-being-teacher>.
- Crawford, L. (2019). *Research design and methods*. New York, New York: SAGE Publication.
- Creswell, J. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publishing.
- Creswell, J., & Guetterman, T. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New York, NY: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J., & Poth, C. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publication.
- Cropanzano, R., Rupp, D., & Byrne, Z. (2003). The relationship of emotional exhaustion to work attitudes, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(1), 160-169.
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Hubby, G., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 100, 1-9.
- Curry, J., & O'Brien, E. (2012). Shifting to a wellness paradigm in teacher

- education: a promising practice for fostering teacher stress reduction, burnout resilience, and promoting retention. *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry*, 14, 178-191.
- Davidson, R. (2003). Affective neuroscience and psychophysiology: Toward a synthesis. *Psychophysiology*, 40(5), 655-665.
- Densten, I. (2001). Rethinking burnout. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22(8), 833-847.
- Downey, M. (2018). *How can schools make their teachers feel valued and supported?* Retrieved from <https://www.ajc.com/blog/get-schooled/how-can-schools-make-their-teachers-feel-valued-and-supported/paSMgBiklsPjIaaQXIqEIO/>.
- Doyle, A. (2020). *Interview question: Why did you decide to become a teacher?* Retrieved from <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/why-did-you-decide-to-become-a-teacher-2063855>.
- Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). (2019). *Emotion and cognition in the age of AI*. Retrieved from [https://edudownloads.azureedge.net/msdownloads/emotion\\_and\\_cognition\\_ai.pdf](https://edudownloads.azureedge.net/msdownloads/emotion_and_cognition_ai.pdf).
- Ellis, C., Skidmore, S., & Combs, J. (2017). The hiring process matters: The role of person–job and person–organization fit in teacher satisfaction. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 53(3), 448–474. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X16687007>
- Epstein, R. (1999). Mindful practice. *Journal of American Medical Association*, 282(9), 833-839.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S., & Alkassim, R. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. doi: 10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11
- Farhud D. D. (2015). Impact of Lifestyle on Health. *Iranian Journal of Public Health*, 44(11), 1442–1444.
- Fenton, J. (n.d.). *Managing stress through teacher talk groups*. Retrieved from <http://teachersnetwork.org/ntny/nychelp/mentorship/stress.htm>.

- Flook, L., Goldberg, S.B., Pinger, L., Bonus, K., & Davidson, R.J. (2013), Mindfulness for teachers: A pilot study to assess effects on stress, burnout, and teaching efficacy. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7, 182-195. <https://doi-org.une.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/mbe.12026>
- Freudenberger, H.J. (1974). Staff Burn-Out. *Journal of Social Issues*, 30, 159-165. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1974.tb00706.x>
- Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. (2019). U.S. schools struggle to hire and retain teachers. *Economic Policy Institute*. Retrieved from <https://www.epi.org/publication/u-s-schools-struggle-to-hire-and-retain-teachers-the-second-report-in-the-perfect-storm-in-the-teacher-labor-market-series/>.
- Garner, P., Bender, S., & Fedor, M. (2018). Mindfulness-based SEL programming to increase preservice teachers' mindfulness and emotional competence. *Psychology in the Schools*, 55(4), 377-390. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22114>
- Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. (2018). The effects of working conditions on teacher retention. *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(6), 604-625. doi: 10.1080/13540602.2018.1457524
- Given, L. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Graham, A. (2020). *Care about employee mental health? This matters, too*. Retrieved from <https://www.theexprogram.com/resources/blog/care-about-employee-mental-health-this-matters-too/>.
- Grayson, A., & Alvarez, H. (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>
- Hargreaves, A. (1998). The emotional politics of teaching and teacher development: with

- implications for educational leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 4(1), 315-336. doi: 10.1080/1360312980010401
- Hargreaves, A., & Goodson, I. (1996). *Teacher's professional lives*. Washington, DC: Falmer Press.
- Harris, D., & Adams, S. (2007). Understanding the level and causes of teacher turnover: A comparison of other professions. *Economics of Education Review*, 26(3), 325-337.
- Heinemann, L., & Heinemann, T. (2017). Burnout research: Emergence and scientific investigation of contested diagnosis, *SAGE Open*, 1-12. doi:10.1177/2158244017697154
- Herwan, H., Aswandi, A., & Chiar, M. (2018). The role of school committee in supporting the fulfillment of education facilities and infrastructure. *Journal of Education Teaching and Learning*, 3(2), 282-287.
- Heshmat, S. (2017). *Stress and addiction*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201705/stress-and-addiction>.
- Idris, F., Ya'Acob, A., Gill, S., & Hassan, Z. (2010). The role of education in shaping youth's national identity. *Precedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 59, 443-450. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.299
- Jacobson, D. (2016). *Causes and effects of teacher burnout*. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3938&context=dissertations>.
- Jennings, P. (2015). *Seven ways mindfulness can help teachers*. Retrieved from [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven\\_ways\\_mindfulness\\_can\\_help\\_teachers](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven_ways_mindfulness_can_help_teachers).



- Jones, S.M., Bouffard, S.M., & Weissbound, R. (2013). Educators' social and emotional skills vital to learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92, 62-65.
- Kalker, P. (1984). Teacher stress and burnout: Causes and coping strategies. *Contemporary Education*, 56(1).
- Kelchtermans, G. (2018). Professional self-understanding in practice: Narrating, navigating and negotiating: Mapping challenges and innovations. *Research on Teacher Identity*. New York, NY: Springer International Publishing.
- Klusmann, U., Aldrup, K., Schmidt, J., & Lüdtke, O. (2021) Is emotional exhaustion only the result of work experiences? A diary study on daily hassles and uplifts in different life domains. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 34(2), 173-190. doi: 10.1080/10615806.2020.1845430.
- Koenig, A., Rodger, S., & Specht, J. (2018). Educator burnout and compassion fatigue: A pilot study. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 33(4), 259–278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0829573516685017>
- Koni, I., & Krull, E. (2018). Differences in novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of planning activities in terms of primary instructional tasks. *Teacher Development*, 22(4), 464-480. doi: 10.1080/13664530.2018.1442876
- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24 (1), 120-124. doi: 10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092
- LaMorte, W. (2019). *Behavior change models*. Retrieved from <https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph-modules/sb/behavioralchangetheories/index.html>.
- Learning Policy Institute. (2017). *The role of principals in addressing teacher shortages*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

- Ledesma, P. (2011). *Teacher leadership or teacher extra duty?* Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion-teacher-leadership-or-teacher-extra-duty/2011/08>.
- Lever, N., Mathis, E., & Mayworm, A. (2017). School mental health is not just for students: Why teacher and school staff wellness matters. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Youth*, 17(1), 6–12.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 22, 5-55.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, I. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Livingston, K. (2016). Teacher education's role in educational change. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(1), 1-4. doi:10.1080/02619768.2016.1135531
- Lymeus, F., Hartig, T., & Lindberg, P. (2018). Building mindfulness bottom-up: Meditation in natural settings supports open monitoring and attention restoration. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 59. doi :10.1016/j.concog.2018.01.008
- Lynch, M. (2016). *Ask the expert: The effects of teacher burnout*. Retrieved from <https://www.theedadvocate.org/ask-dr-lynch-the-effects-of-teacher-burnout/#:~:text=It%20also%20brings%20about%20other,less%20committed%20to%20their%20jobs>.
- Maeran, R., Pitarelli, F., & Cangiano, F. (2013). Work-life balance and job satisfaction among teachers. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Family Studies*, 18(1), 51-72. Retrieved from [http://ijfs.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/18\\_1\\_04.pdf](http://ijfs.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/18_1_04.pdf).
- Maslach C. (1982). *Burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Maslach, C. (1986). Maslach burnout inventory- Educator survey. Retrieved from <https://www.mindgarden.com/316-mbi-educators-survey>.
- Maslach, C. (1993). Burnout: A multidimensional perspective. *Professional burnout: Recent developments in theory and research*. Oxfordshire, England: Taylor & Francis.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 2, 99-113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030020205>
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S., & Leiter, M.P. (1986). *Maslach burnout inventory*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (1999). *Teacher burnout: A research agenda*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: recent research and its implications for psychiatry. *World psychiatry: Official journal of the world psychiatric association (WPA)*, 15(2), 103–111. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20311>.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York, New York: Longman Publication.
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE). (n.d.). *Teacher induction programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/teachers.html>.
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE). (2020). *School and district profiles*. Retrieved from <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/general/general.aspx?topNavID=1&leftNavId=100&orgcode=03360000&orgtypecode=5>.
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE). (2021). *School and district profiles*. Retrieved from <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/general/general.aspx?topNavID=1&leftNavId=100&orgcode=03360000&orgtypecode=5>.
- Mathibe, I. (2008). Expectancy Theory and its implications for employee motivation.

- Academic Leadership: The Online Journal*, 6(3), 1-16.
- Mattke, S., Liu, H., Caloyeras, J., Huang, C., Van Busum, K., & Khodyakov, V. (2013). *Workplace wellness programs study*. Retrieved from [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org).
- Mayo Clinic. (2020). *Mindfulness exercises*. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356>.
- McIntyre, T. M., McIntyre, S. E., & Francis, D. J. (Eds.). (2017). *Educator stress: An occupational health perspective*. Basel, Switzerland: Springer Publication. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-53053-6
- McLeod, S. (2008). Social roles. *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-roles.html>.
- McLeod, S. (2016). Albert Bandura's social learning theory. *Simple Psychology*. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html>.
- Melnick, S. A., & Meister, D. G. (2008). A comparison of beginning and experienced teachers' concerns. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 31(3), 39-56. Retrieved from <https://une.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.une.idm.oclc.org/docview/215934753?accountid=12756>.
- Merriam, S., & Tisdell, E. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, S. (2019). Underused EAPs are a missed opportunity to help workers. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/benefits/pages/under-used-eaps-are-a-missed-opportunity.aspx>.
- Mills, A. J., Durepos, G., & Wiebe, E. (2010). *Encyclopedia of case study research*.

- Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412957397
- Mizell, H. (2010). *Why professional development matters?* Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.
- Mulvahill, E. (2018). *7 simple ways to sneak mindfulness into your teaching day*. Retrieved from <https://www.weareteachers.com/mindfulness-for-teachers-guide/>.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Stayers, movers, and leavers*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_slc.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_slc.asp).
- National School Climate Center. (2021). *What is school climate and why is it important*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolclimate.org/school-climate>.
- Northouse, P. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Oliver, B. (2018). *What is a psychoeducational group?* Retrieved from <https://nexusrecoveryservices.com/blog/what-is-a-psychoeducational-group/>.
- Palmer, P. (2019). *Teacher wellness rooms- timing or trending?* Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/teacher-wellness-rooms-timing-trending-m-ed-m-a-cpp>.
- Patridge, E., & Bardyn, T. (2018). Research electronic data capture (REDCAP). *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 106(1), 142-144. doi 10.5195/jmla.2018.318
- Peterson, U., Bergström, G., Samuelsson, M., Åsberg, M., & Nygren, Å. (2008). Reflecting peer-support groups in the prevention of stress and burnout: randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 63, 506-516. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04743.x

- Phillibert, C. (2017). *Everyday SEL in high school: Integrating social-emotional learning and mindfulness into your classroom*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>.
- Rankin, J. G. (2016). *First aid for teacher burnout: How you can find peace and success*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>.
- Ravitch, S., & Riggan, M. (2017) *Reason & rigor: How conceptual frameworks guide research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- REDCap. (2021). *About Research Electronic Data Capture*. Retrieved from <https://www.project-redcap.org/>.
- Richardson, K., & Rothstein, H. (2008). Effects of occupational stress management intervention programs: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Occupation Health Psychology*, 13(1), 69-93.
- Rinke, C., & Mawhinney, L. (2019). *Opportunities and challenges in teacher recruitment: Voices across the pipeline*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Rippon D., McDonnell A., Smith M., McCreadie M., & Wetherell, M. (2020). A grounded theory study on work related stress in professionals who provide health & social care for people who exhibit behaviours that challenge. *PLoS ONE*, 15(2).
- Robinson, L., Segal, R., Segal, J., & Smith, M. (2020). *Relaxation techniques for stress relief*. Retrieved from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/relaxation-techniques-for-stress-relief.htm>.
- Rosenfeld, L., & Richman, J. (1997). Developing effective social support: Team building and the social support process, *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 9(1), 133-153. doi: 10.1080/10413209708415388
- Ross, P., & Zaidi, N. (2019). Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 8(4), 1-4.

- Sabbagha, M., Ledimo, O., & Martins, N. (2018). Predicting staff retention from employee motivation and job satisfaction. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 28(2), 136-140.  
doi:10.1080/14330237.2018.1454578
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publication.
- Salters-Pedneault, K. (2020). *The use of self-report data in psychology*. Retrieved from <https://www.verywellmind.com/definition-of-self-report-425267>.
- Sanhi, M., & Deswal, A. (2015). Burnout among teacher teachers with respect to biographical, psychological, and organizational variables. *Semantic Scholar*. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9fd3/aa0fa64991c000be591eb5f768b45ed6f08a.pdf>.
- Schonert-Reichel, K. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 137-155.
- Schunk, D. (2019). Some lessons learned that built self-efficacy. *Education Review*, 26, 1-7.
- Schunk, D., & DiBenedetto, M. (2020). Motivation and social cognitive theory. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 60, 1-10.
- Schwarzer, R. (2008). Perceived teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job stress and burnout: Mediation analyses. *International Association of Applied Psychology*, 57(1), 152-171.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00359.x>
- Scott, K. (2021). *Promoting social emotional learning for our teachers*. Retrieved from [https://ldaamerica.org/lda\\_today/promoting-social-emotional-learning-for-our-teachers/](https://ldaamerica.org/lda_today/promoting-social-emotional-learning-for-our-teachers/).
- Seward, B.L. (2018). *Managing stress: Principles and strategies for health and wellbeing*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Publishing.

- Sheeba, M.J., & Christopher, P. (2020). Exploring the role training and development in creating innovative work behaviors and accomplishing non-routine cognitive jobs for organizational effectiveness. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(4), 263-267.  
doi:10.31838/jcr.07.04.49
- Shillingford-Butler, M., Samir, P., & Ngazimbi, E. (2012). The role of the professional school counselor in reducing teacher anxiety. *American Counseling Association*. Retrieved from [https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/vistas\\_2012\\_article\\_58.pdf?sfvrsn=12](https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/vistas_2012_article_58.pdf?sfvrsn=12).
- Shirai, K., Iso, H., Fukuda, H., Toyoda, Y., Takatorige, T., & Tataru, K. (2006). Factors associated with "Ikigai" among members of a public temporary employment agency for seniors in Japan: Gender differences. *Health Quality of Life Outcomes*, 4(12), 1-6.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/1477-7525-4-12>
- Simon, M., & Goes, J. (2010). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success*. Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Publishing.
- Smith, R. (1982). Learning how to learn: Applied theory for adults. *A Journal for Continuing Education Professionals in Health Sciences*, 4(2), 93-98.
- Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM). (2019). Managing employee assistance programs. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/managingemployeeassistanceprograms.aspx>.
- Sproles, K. (2018). The emotional balancing act of teacher: A burnout recovery. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 1543, 99-107.
- Stake, R. (1995). The art of case study research. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication.
- Sujato, B. (2012). *A history of mindfulness*. Santipada.



- Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teacher? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.* Retrieved from <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/coming-crisis-teaching>.
- Sutton, J., & Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management. *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy*, 68(3), 226–231. <https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456>
- Sweeny, B. (2007). *Leading the teacher induction and mentoring program*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Szigeti, R., Balázs, N., Bikfalvi, R., & Urbán, R. (2017). Burnout and depressive symptoms in teachers: factor structure and construct validity of the Maslach burnout inventory-teachers survey among elementary and secondary school teachers in Hungary. *Stress and Health*, 33, 530– 539.
- Tamene, E. H. (2016). Theorizing conceptual framework. *The Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 4(2), 50-56.
- Taris, T., LeBlanc, P.M., Schaufeli, W., & Schreurs, P. (2005). Are there relationships between the dimension of the Maslach burnout inventory? A review and two longitudinal tests. *Work and Stress*, 19(3), 238-255. doi: 10.1080/02678370500270453
- Tatter, G. (2019). *Making time for mindfulness*. Retrieved from <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/19/01/making-time-mindfulness#:~:text=Research%20has%20also%20shown%20mindfulness,more%20effective%20in%20the%20classroom>.
- Taylor, T. (2020). *What is an employee assistance program?* Retrieved from [www.balancecareers.com/about-employee-assistance-programs-eap-1177842](http://www.balancecareers.com/about-employee-assistance-programs-eap-1177842).

- Thompson, P., & Jaque, S.V. (2017). Depersonalization, adversity, emotionality, and coping with stressful situations, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 19(2), 143-161. doi: 10.1080/15299732.2017.1329770.
- Torenbeek, M., & Peters, V. (2017). *Explaining attrition and decreased effectiveness of experienced teachers: A research synthesis*. 57(3), 397–407. <https://doi-org.une.idm.oclc.org/10.3233/WOR-172575>
- Tougas, M. E., Hayden, J. A., McGrath, P. J., Huguet, A., & Rozario, S. (2015). A systematic review exploring the social cognitive theory of self-regulation as a framework for chronic health condition interventions. *PloS one*, 10(8), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0134977>
- Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2010). Bracketing in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work*, 11, 80-96. doi: 10.1177/1473325010368316
- UNE Institutional Review Board. (2020). *The University of New England policies, procedures and guidance on research with human subjects*. Retrieved from <https://www.une.edu/sites/default/files/2020-08/UNE%20IRB%20PP%20%282020%29%20Final.pdf>.
- Van den Brande, W., Baillien, E., Vander Elst, T., De Witte, H., Van den Broeck, A., & Goddreis, L. (2017). Exposure to workplace bullying: The role of coping strategies in dealing with work stressors. *BioMed Research International*, 2017,1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2017/1019529>.
- Vinney, C. (2019). *Social cognitive theory: How we learn from the behavior of others*. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-cognitive-theory-4174567>.
- Wang, K. (2019). *Teacher turnover: Why it's problematic and how administrators can address*

- it. Retrieved from <https://www.scilearn.com/teacher-turnover/>.
- Watson, S. (2020). *Causes of stress*. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/causes-of-stress>
- Whitaker, T. (2018). *Leading school change*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Worth, M. (2021). *What is a perception survey?* San Francisco, CA: InfoBloom. Retrieved from <https://www.infobloom.com/what-is-a-perception-survey.htm>.
- Yildirim, G. (2017). Examination of the relation between burnout syndrome and ways of coping with stress in teachers. *I-Manager's Journal on Educational Psychology*, 10(4), 12-18.
- Yin, R.K. (2018). *Case study research and application: Designs and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Zuckerman, A. (2020). *46 meditation statistics: 2020/2021 benefits, market value, and trends*. Retrieved from <https://comparecamp.com/meditation-statistics/#:~:text=More%20than%2035%20million%20Americans,for%20more%20than%20two%20years>.

## APPENDIX A: Request to Conduct Research

### Request to Conduct Research

#### Part I: Personal Information

Name:

Jennifer Mendicino

Work Location:

Work Address:

Work Telephone:

Email address:

Name of Approver:  
(Weymouth employees  
only)

Alan Strauss, Principal

#### Part II: Introduction to the Project

Title of the Project:

Educator Burnout + Coping Styles

Why are you  
conducting the study?☐ Masters Thesis/Paper☐ Independent Research☒ Dissertation Research/Project☐ Federal/State/Foundation Grant

University Affiliation:

University of New England

Faculty Advisor:  
(graduate students only)

Has this study been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB)?

☐ Yes, it has been reviewed and approved. Attach IRB approval notification.☒ No, review is pending. Evidence of IRB approval may be submitted at a later date, but must be received prior to initiating study.☐ No, this study is exempt from IRB approval as indicated in federal guidelines.

Rationale for exemption:

Expected Date of Project Completion:

August 2021

Weymouth School District, 11 Middle Street, Weymouth, Massachusetts 02189-3000

**Part IV: Required Attachments**

- ☒ Research Description (including the purpose, research design and methodology, detailed protocol for data collection, plan for analyzing the data, and expected benefit to the school district)
- ☒ Copy of informed consent/assent forms, all data collection instruments (e.g. surveys, tests, observation protocols) and the informational letter that will be sent to the participants describing the study

**Please read each of the following statements and place a check mark in the box indicating your have read and agree to abide by each of the following statements.**

- ☒ I will comply with all statutes, rules, and regulations applicable to conducting research including the *Federal Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*. I will abide by all of the policies and regulations of the Weymouth School District and will conduct this research with the stipulations accompanying any letter of approval.
- ☒ I will request approval for any changes or additions made to data collection instruments that are not formatting or editing related after receiving approval. The research and use of data will be consistent with the approved research design. No further uses of this data will be permitted without additional written permission from the Office of Data and Assessment.
- ☒ I acknowledge that participation in research by students, parents, and school staff is voluntary. I will preserve the anonymity of all participants in all reporting of this study. I will not reveal the identity or include identifiable characteristics of schools or the school district unless authorized by the Senior Administrator of Data and Assessment.
- ☒ I will notify the Office of Data and Assessment immediately if my status as principal investigator changes.
- ☒ At the completion of the study, I will provide the Office of Data and Assessment in the Weymouth School District with a copy of the results.

Signature of Researcher/Principal Investigator 2/11/21  
 Date  
 Signature of Principal/Supervisor 2/11/21  
 Date  
 Signature of Advisor (graduate students only) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please email, mail, or hand-deliver the requested material to:**

[Redacted]  
 Data and Assessment Strategy Manager

[Redacted]  
 111 Middle Street

[Redacted]  
 Weymouth, MA 02188

Please allow five to seven school days upon receipt for approval. No data may be collected prior to formal approval.

## **APPENDIX B: Invitation to Participate**

### **Invitation to Participate in Research Study**

Study Title: Educator Burnout and Coping Styles: A Case Study

Principle Investigator: Jennifer Mendicino , Doctoral Candidate, University of New England

Dear Potential Study Participant,

I am inviting you to participate in a qualitative instrumental case study discussing educator burnout and coping styles. To participate in this study, you must: 1) have three or more years of teaching experience and 2) currently work within a school district located in the South Shore area. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Furthermore, your participation is anonymous, and your identity will not be shared with anyone.

**Study's Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to identify the burnout amongst our teachers and the methods used to cope with the workplace stress. The objective is to not only identify specific teachers who experience burnout but the effectiveness in the methods they used to reduce workplace stress.

#### **Research Questions:**

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of tenured south shore Massachusetts high school and middle school teachers regarding burnout in the workplace?

RQ 2: What, if any, coping styles are being used by tenured high school and middle school teachers that they perceive as effective in preventing workplace burnout?

**Procedures:** Teachers who meet the criteria will be selected based on their expression of interest. This researcher will then send the link to the survey created on RedCap.com. The identity of the school, school district, and yourself will be protected throughout the study and thereafter. A clean data set will be created to protect your identity.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality of all participants will be protected in compliance with the University of New England' research with human participants policies and procedures. Only the researcher of the study will have access to the information. The identity of the school, school district, and yourself will be protected throughout the study and thereafter. A clean data set will be created to protect your identity.

**Compensation:** No monetary or non-monetary compensation will be provided for your time or responses.

**Questions:** If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and your participation, please do not hesitate to contact me, the researcher, via email at [jmendicino@une.edu](mailto:jmendicino@une.edu), or via

phone at (774)254-3957. You may also contact the researcher's advisor, Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D. at the University of New England at [jlookabaugh@une.edu](mailto:jlookabaugh@une.edu).

Thank you for your valuable time and willingness to participate in this research study. Your contribution not only supports my dissertation study but also informs the current research on effective coping strategies for teachers and how burnout has affected seasoned teachers.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendicino

Jennifer Mendicino, M. Ed.  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership  
University of New England

## APPENDIX C: Consent to Participate in Anonymous Survey

### UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESEARCH

Version 09.21.18

**Project Title:** Educator Burnout and Coping Styles: A Case Study

**Principal Investigator(s):** Jennifer Mendicino

#### **Introduction:**

- Please read this form. The purpose of this form is to give you information about this research study.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete.
- Your participation is voluntary.

#### **Why is this research study being done?**

The purpose of this study is to identify the burnout amongst teachers and the coping styles they utilize to cope with the workplace stress. The objective is to not only identify educator stressors in the workplace but to identify the effectiveness in the coping styles educators use to reduce workplace stress.

#### **Who will be in this study?**

Teachers who have been employed for three or more years.

#### **What will I be asked to do?**

Complete an anonymous qualitative instrumental perception survey. The anonymous survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

#### **What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?**

There are no physical activities identified for this study.

#### **What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?**

By participating in this study, the information gathered will help identify educator stress in the workplace and determine if effective coping styles are being used to reduce burnout.

#### **What will it cost me?**

There are no fees to participate.

#### **How will my privacy be protected?**

The identity of the school, school district, and yourself will be protected throughout the study and thereafter. A clean data set will be created to protect your identity.



***PLEASE NOTE: THE UNE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD MAY REVIEW THE RESEARCH RECORDS.***

**How will my data be kept confidential?**

Confidentiality of all participants will be protected in compliance with the University of New England' research with human participants policies and procedures. Only the researcher of the study will have access to the information. The identity of the school, school district, and yourself will be protected throughout the study and thereafter. A clean data set will be created to protect your identity.

***PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS, PLEASE DO INCLUDE ANY INFORMATION THAT CAN IDENTIFY YOU.***

**What are my rights as a research participant?**

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University.
- Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with Jennifer Mendicino.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate there is no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason.
  - If you choose to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You will be informed of any significant findings developed during the course of the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.
- If you sustain an injury while participating in this study, your participation may be ended.

**What other options do I have?**

- You may choose not to participate.

**Whom may I contact with questions?**

- The researcher conducting this study is Jennifer Mendicino
  - For more information regarding this study, please contact (774) 254-3957 or [jmendicino@une.edu](mailto:jmendicino@une.edu).
  - If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D. (207) 221-4960 or [jlookabaugh@une.edu](mailto:jlookabaugh@une.edu).
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call Mary Bachman DeSilva, Sc.D., Chair of the UNE Institutional Review Board at (207) 221-4567 or [irb@une.edu](mailto:irb@une.edu).

**Will I receive a copy of this consent form?**

- You print and keep a copy of this consent form.

**I understand the above description of the research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I understand that by proceeding with this survey I agree to take part in this research and do so voluntarily.**

## APPENDIX D: Teacher Perception Survey

CONFIDENTIAL

Educator Burnout and Coping Styles  
Page 1

### Educator Burnout and Coping Styles

Record ID \_\_\_\_\_

Greetings,

☐ Yes  
☐ No

You are being invited to participate in a perception survey. This survey is part of dissertation research, and survey questions will include Likert scale responses and short answer questions. Completion of the survey should take approximately 15 minutes. Participation is voluntary. Participants will remain anonymous; no identifiable participant information will be collected. You may discontinue the survey at any time for any reason without penalty. You may skip any question you do not wish to answer. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits to taking this survey. Your responses will be confidential and the results from the study will be reported only as collective data. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (774) 254-3957.

By selecting yes, you are indicating that you have read the description of the study and that you agree to the terms as described.

Please take a moment and answer the following questions.

1. How do you describe stress in the workplace?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. In your current position, do you, or have you personally experienced work related stress and how does that stress look or feel like?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are some of the things that you feel has caused your workplace stress?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you ever been trained in ways to reduce your stress and if so, please share examples of how you have done that.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. In your school or district, in the past, have administrators or HR personnel discussed stress and coping styles for employees?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Are there programs offered for teachers to attend to train on coping styles and have you ever accessed these programs in your district?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. If you could design a program for teachers to help reduce stress in the workplace, what would it look like?

## MBI for Educators Survey

**Please take a moment to complete a brief survey .**

[illegible]

## APPENDIX E: CITI Certification

		Completion Date 10-Sep-2020 Expiration Date 09-Sep-2024 Record ID 38355724
This is to certify that:		
<b>Jennifer Mendicino</b>		
Has completed the following CITI Program course:		
<b>Human Research</b>	(Curriculum Group)	
<b>Data or Specimens Only Research</b>	(Course Learner Group)	
<b>1 - Basic Course</b>	(Stage)	
Under requirements set by:		
<b>University of New England</b>		
Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).		
		Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
Verify at <a href="http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/7w0f1d45c4-486a-43f1-93e2-2b5cde8a7d98-38355724">www.citiprogram.org/verify/7w0f1d45c4-486a-43f1-93e2-2b5cde8a7d98-38355724</a>		

**APPENDIX F: IRB Approval****UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW ENGLAND**

Institutional Review Board  
Mary DeSilva, Chair

**Biddeford Campus**  
11 Hills Beach Road  
Biddeford, ME 04005  
(207)602-2244 T  
(207)602-5905 F

**Portland Campus**  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, ME 04103

To: Jennifer Mendicino, M.Ed.  
Cc: Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed. D  
From: Brian Lynn, J.D.  
Director of Research Integrity

Date: May 19, 2021

IRB Project # & Title: 0421-15; Educator Burnout and Coping Styles

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects has reviewed the materials submitted in connection with the above captioned project and has determined that the proposed research is exempt from IRB review and oversight as defined by 45 CFR 46.104(d)(2).

Additional IRB review and approval is not required for this protocol as submitted. If you wish to change your protocol at any time, including after any subsequent review by any other IRB, you must first submit the changes for review.

Best of luck with your research, please contact me at (207) 602-2244 or [irb@une.edu](mailto:irb@une.edu) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Lynn", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Lynn, J.D.  
Director of Research Integrity