

STRESS COPING STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BURNOUT AMONGST PRIMARY  
SCHOOL TEACHERS IN LESOTHO

by

MOTHO ISALIAH MAKHETHA

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## DECLARATION

I declare that stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated or acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis/thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted parameters for originality.



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## DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR ON ORIGINALITY REPORT

I, Prof HM van der Merwe, declare that I have considered the originality software checking report submitted by M. Makhetha. I confirm that the thesis meets an acceptable standard of originality.



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Prof HM van der Merwe

28 January 2019

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Date

## **ABSTRACT**

Teachers are exposed to stressful situations, of which increasing work demands is but one, leading to an alarming escalation of stress and professional burnout as career risks in the teaching profession. The focus of this study is on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout among primary school teachers in Lesotho. Some of the reasons which urged the researcher to carry out this study pertain to the fact that, although teacher burnout is an international concern, limited studies have addressed burnout and stress coping strategies among staff in the teaching service in Lesotho. Prolonged stress is a social problem leading to mental and physical ill health, with an increasing number of teachers leaving the teaching profession in Lesotho due to burnout.

The population for the study was 600 primary school teachers who were engaging in professional development by pursuing a Bachelor of Education in primary education at the National University of Lesotho. This is a part-time programme offered by the University for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education. The study followed a mixed-methods research approach, so for the qualitative study, data were collected using semi-structured individual interviews with 20 participants. For the quantitative study, questionnaires were administered to 350 respondents. Qualitative data were analysed using an inductive approach. Quantitative data were analysed using multiple regression, Chi-square and t-test.

Key findings revealed that variables such as work overload, organisational climate and role conflict are predictors of burnout among teachers. Other variables predicting teacher burnout pertain to learner indiscipline, teacher personality and insufficient teacher remuneration. Burnout attacks career motivation. It also causes aggressive and violent behaviour among teachers. Teachers buffer stress and prevent burnout by employing constructive, less constructive and neutral stress coping strategies. The Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can alleviate stress and prevent burnout among teachers by clarifying their job descriptions, instituting formal induction programmes for new teachers and ensuring that teacher salaries are on par with equivalent professional careers.

**Keywords:** burnout, depersonalisation, emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment, stress, stressors, stress coping strategies

## OPSOMMING

Onderwysers word aan stresvolle situasies blootgestel, waarvan toenemende werkseise net een is; dit lei tot 'n kommerwekkende styging van stres en professionele uitbranding as loopbaanrisiko's in die onderwysberoep. Hierdie studie fokus op strategieë om stres te hanteer om uitbranding onder laerskoolonderwysers in Lesotho te voorkom. Sommige redes wat die navorser genoop het om die studie te doen, hou verband met die feit dat alhoewel onderwyseruitbranding 'n internasionale bekommernis is, is beperkte studies gedoen om uitbranding en strategieë om stres te hanteer onder onderwysers in Lesotho gedoen. Langdurige stres is 'n sosiale probleem wat tot geestelike en fisiese swak gesondheid kan lei, met 'n toenemende aantal onderwysers wat die beroep verlaat in Lesotho as gevolg van uitbranding.

Die populasie vir die studie was 600 laerskoolonderwysers wat by professionele ontwikkeling betrokke was deur vir 'n baccalaureusgraad in Opvoedkunde in primêre onderwys in te skryf by die Nasionale Universiteit van Lesotho. Dit is 'n deeltydse program wat die Universiteit aanbied vir praktiserende onderwysers met 'n Diploma in Primêre Opvoedkunde. Die studie het 'n benadering gebruik van gemengde navorsingsmetodes. Vir die kwalitatiewe studie is data versamel deur semigestruktureerde individuele onderhoude met 20 deelnemers. Vir die kwantitatiewe studie is vraelyste aan 350 respondente gegee. Kwalitatiewe data is ontleed deur 'n induktiewe benadering te gebruik. Kwantitatiewe data is ontleed deur meervoudige regressie, chi-kwadraat en t-toets te gebruik.

Sleutelbevindings het getoon dat veranderlikes soos werksoorlading, organisatoriese klimaat en rolkonflik aanwysers van uitbranding onder onderwysers is. Ander veranderlikes wat onderwyseruitbranding aandui hou verband met leerders se gebrek aan dissipline, onderwysers se persoonlikhede en onvoldoende vergoeding vir onderwysers. Uitbranding val loopbaanmotivering aan. Dit lei ook tot aggressiewe en gewelddadige gedrag onder onderwysers. Onderwysers keer stres en voorkom uitbranding deur konstruktiewe, minder konstruktiewe en neutrale strategieë te gebruik

om stres te hanteer. Lesotho se Ministerie van Onderwys en Opleiding kan stres verlig en uitbranding onder onderwysers voorkom deur hul posbeskrywings duidelik te maak, formele oriënteringsprogramme vir nuwe onderwysers daar te stel en te verseker dat onderwysers se salarisse ooreenkom met soortgelyke professionele beroepe.

## SETSOPOLWA

Barutiši ba lebana le maemo a kgatelelo ya monagano, ao go ona a bakwago ke dinyakego tša mošomo o montši, gomme se se feletša go kgolo ya godimo ya kgatelelo ya monagano le go lapa mošomong wa bona wa sephrofešenale bjalo ka go tsena kotsing ya mošomo wa bona ka phrofešeneng ya biorutiši. Nepišo ya dinyakišišo tše e go maano a go kgona go šoma ka fase ga kgatelelo ye ka nepo ya go thibela go lapa kudu gareng ga barutiši ba phoraemari ka Lesotho. A mangwe a mabaka ao a dirilego gore banyakišiši ba dire dinyakišišo tše ke mabapi le taba ya gore, le ge e le gore go lapa kudu ga barutiši ke tlhobaboroko maemong a boditšhabatšhaba, dinyakišišo tše mmalwa fela di boletše ka ga maano a go kgona go šoma ka mathata a go lapa kudu le a ka fase ga kgatelelo ya monagano gareng ga bašomi ka tirelong ya borutiši ka Lesotho. Kgatelelo ya monagano ye e tšeago lebaka le letelele ke bothata bja setšhaba bjo bo feletšago ka bofokodi bja maphelo a monagano le a mmeleng, fao palo ya godimo ya barutiši e tlogelago phrofešene ya borutiši ka Lesotho ka lebaka la go lapa kudu.

Batho bao ba botšišwago dipotšišo ka mo dinyakišišong tše ke barutiši ba dikolo tša phoraemari ba 600 bao ba bego ba kgatha tema ka tlhabolong ya sephrofešenale ka go dira Kgrata ya Borutiši ka thuto ya phoraemari ka Yunibesithing ya Bosetšhaba ya Lesotho. Le ke lenaneo la thuto leo le dirwago dinako tše dingwe leo le abjago ke Yunibesithi ye go barutiši bao ba šomago bao ba nago le Tiploma ya Thuto ya Phoraemari. Dinyakišišo di latetše mekgwa ya dinyakišišo ye e kopantšwego, ka fao bjalo ka dinyakišišo tša boleng, datha e kgobokeditšwe ka go šomiša dipotšišo tše di beakantšwego ka seripa tše di botšišwago motho ka o tee ka o tee fao go nago le bakgathatema ba 20. Go dinyakišišo tša bontši, dipotšišonyakišišo di filwe baarabi ba 350. Datha ya bontši e sekasekilwe ka go šomiša mokgwa wa tirišo ya bohlatse. Datha ya bontši e sekasekilwe ka go šomiša dipalopalo tša go akanya kamano, Chi-square le t-test. Dikutollo tše bohlokwa di utollotše gore dilo tše dingwe tše di fapanego tša go swana le go šoma mošomo o montši go fetišiša, seemo sa ka mošomong le thulano ya go šoma mošomo ke dilo tše di bonwago bjalo ka tše di bakago go lapa kudu gareng ga barutiši. Dilo tše dingwe tše di fapanego tše di bakago go lapa kudu di mabapi le go se be le

maitshwaro a mabotse ga baithuti, semelo sa barutiši le tefelo ya barutiši ye e sego ya lekana. Go lapa kudu go hlasela tlhohleletšo ya go dira mošomo. Gape go baka maitshwaro a go befelwa le a dikgaruru gareng ga barutiši. Barutiši ba fokotša kgatelelo ya monagano le go thibela go lapa kudu ka go diriša maano a go kgona go phela ka kgatelelo ao a kwagalago, ao a kwagala gannyane le a magareng. Kgoro ya Thuto le Tlhahlo ya Lesotho e ka fediša kgatelelo ya monagano le go thibela go lapa kudu gareng ga barutiši ka go hlatholla gabotse mešomo ya bona, ka go hloma mananeo a semmušo a tlwaelo ya barutiši ba baswa le go netefatša gore meputso ya barutiši e lekana le ya mešomo ye mengwe ya go swana le yona ya sephrofešenale.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CARD	Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands.
JDR	Job Demands-Resources model.
JDC	Job-demand-control model.
JDCS	Job-Demand-Control-Support model.
COR	Conservation of Resources theory.
ERI	Effort-Reward-Imbalance model.
MBSR	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.
PMR	Progressive muscle relaxation.
MBIES	Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educators Survey.
MBIHSS	Maslach Burnout Inventory- Human Services Survey.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Burnout was first recognised as a psychological problem among healthcare and social service professionals in the 1970s (Galek, Flannelly, Greene & Kudler, 2011:633). Studies conducted during that period revealed that healthcare and social service workers often experienced emotional depletion and loss of motivation which resulted in prolonged emotional stress encountered in their jobs (Galek, Flannelly, Greene & Kudler, 2011:633).

Burnout is also a serious and common concern among teachers (Amimo, 2012:339; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:53). At the start of their profession, many teachers are enthusiastic and dedicated but after a few years they lose interest, become cynical and distant themselves from colleagues and learners (Amimo, 2012:339; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:53). They become exhausted. As the burnout process spirals down, learners become victims of poor teaching (Amimo, 2012:339). Some teachers leave the profession while others continue with poor teaching (Amimo, 2012:339; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:53).

There are a substantial number of definitions for burnout. However, a few of them are considered in this study. Burnout is defined as a work-related syndrome that stems from an individual's perception of a significant discrepancy between effort (input) and reward (output) (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131; Pucella, 2011:52). This perception of the individual is influenced by individual, organisational and social factors (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131; Pucella, 2011:52). According to Aksu and Temeloglu (2015:219) and Küçüksüleymanoğlu (2011:53), burnout occurs most often in those who work with troubled or needy clients and is marked by withdrawal from and cynicism toward clients, with symptoms such as irritability, anxiety and lowered self-esteem.

Burnout in teaching has a number of problematic outcomes. Burned-out teachers experience a lack of personal accomplishment in teaching, less job satisfaction and

less productivity (Matin, Kalali & Anvari, 2012:48; Mutkins, Brown & Thorsteinsson, 2011:500). Other problems related to burnout are less commitment in teaching, job turnover intentions and tendency to depersonalise learners (Aksu and Temeloglu, 2015:220; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564).

Contemplating these demoralising effects of burnout on teacher performance hampering effective teaching for the sake of successful learning, a study on constructive ways to alleviate teacher stress in order to counteract burnout is viable.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Research on high levels of stress resulting in burnout that started in the 1970s was triggered by an observation that some workers who were originally motivated, gradually lost their commitment and became increasingly frustrated and exhausted (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131; Koenig, 2014:4). The conclusion is that burnout often surfaces as negative attitudes, such as anger, irritability, inflexibility and cynicism (Innstranda, Langballeb & Falkum, 2011:242; Galek et al., 2011:634). While burnout can occur in all professions, it is common amongst teachers, doctors and mental health workers due to the nature of their work of sustained intense involvement with people (Louw, George & Esterhuyse, 2011:1; Tsigilis, Zournatzi & Koustelios, 2011:53). Teachers suffer from high stress levels caused by prolonged interpersonal interactions with students, education officers, parents and colleagues (Amimo, 2012:338; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:54; Munir & Mehmood, 2013:181). Crucial factors contributing to teacher burnout which impede teaching from running smoothly pertain to teachers continually facing increasing workloads, larger class sizes and unmotivated students (Koruklu, Feyzioğlu, Özenoğlu-Kiremit & Aladağ, 2012:1824; Montero-Marin, Prado-Abril, Demarzo, Gascon & Garcí'a-Campayo, 2014:2). The other variables which cause teacher burnout are undisciplined learners, and minimal parental and administrative support (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:54; Tashi, 2014:72).

### **1.2.1 Departing from self-efficacy theory as a theoretical framework**

In order to understand burnout as a result of constant high levels of stress, self-efficacy theory is used as a point of departure. Self-efficacy is defined as a person's judgment

of his/her capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to attain predetermined types of performances (Breso, Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011:340; Foley, 2013:40; Reinke, Herman & Stormont, 2013:40). Self-efficacy is concerned not only with the skills one has, but also with the estimation of what one can attain with the skills one currently possesses (Breso et al., 2011:340). Self-efficacy enhances individuals' comfort levels when facing difficult situations such as stress and burnout, therefore, lack of efficacy plays an antecedent role in the burnout process (Foley, 2013:40). Burnout results from successive self-efficacy crises insofar as self-efficacy enhances intervention for increasing engagement and performance and thereby decreases burnout (Breso et al., 2011:342; Reinke et al., 2013:40).

Self-efficacy makes a difference to how people feel, act and how they actively shape the meaning ascribed to situational characteristics (Norton, 2013:29). Self-efficacy increases the perceptions of situational opportunities and decreases the perceptions of situational threats, such as stress resulting in burnout (Consiglio, Borgogni, Alessandri, & Schaufeli, 2013:24; Foley, 2013:40). Self-efficacy beliefs are associated with a positive perception of the main social components of the work environment such as clients, colleagues and supervisors (Consiglio et al., 2013:24; Reinke et al., 2013:40).

Teachers' sense of self-efficacy is related to instructional practices, proactive and positive classroom management, student achievement and motivation (Consiglio et al., 2013:24; Reinke et al., 2013:40). Teachers' beliefs about their self-efficacy are identified as a variable that strongly influences their implementation of new interventions to deal with stress (Consiglio et al., 2013:24; Reinke et al., 2013:40).

### **1.2.2 Antecedents of burnout**

In addition to the definitions provided for burnout in the introduction, burnout can further be defined as relating to a figurative expression of a situation of extinction of energy, motivation or incentive (Amimo, 2012:338; Çağlar, 2011:1842; Matin et al., 2012:48). Burnout implies an experience (Matin et al., 2012:47; Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012:83). Burnout is associated with people in service-providing positions who experience a state of exhaustion and a change in attitude and behaviour in response

to demanding, frustrating and unrewarding work, and fatigue as a result of working too long, too much and too intensely with needy clients at the expense of their own needs (Çağlar, 2011:1842; Matin et al., 2012:48). Burnout then comes about when the body and the mind are persistently strained to respond to constant levels of high stress (Matin et al., 2012:47; Thieman et al., 2012:83). According to Çağlar (2011:1842) and Matin et al. (2012:47) burnout is related to the factors present in a situation in which a person feels overworked, confused about work expectations and concerned about job security. Burnout is further related to the situation in which a worker feels that he/she is under-appreciated and burdened with responsibilities that are immensurable with pay (Çağlar, 2011:1842; Matin et al., 2012:47; Thieman et al., 2012:83).

Burnout is viewed as a psychological syndrome which consists of three dimensions, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131; Rostami, Ghanizadeh & Ghapanchi, 2015:14). Emotional exhaustion is described as a chronic feeling of being emotionally depleted and attitudinally exhausted, feelings experienced in the work environment (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Çağlar, 2011:1843). A teacher at the stage of emotional exhaustion expresses personal feelings of weariness and irritability which involve lack of energy (Amimo, 2012:340; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:1). Burned out teachers have feelings of lack of joy, enthusiasm and satisfaction (Çağlar, 2011:1843; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:1). Burnout has negative effects on workers' motivation, interest and concentration (Munir & Mehmood, 2013:180). Burnout leads to a situation in which a teacher develops cynical attitudes towards learners and begins to hate the idea of waking up every day to face a new school working day (Amimo, 2012:340; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:1). Depersonalisation is characterised by negative and cynical feelings and withdrawal from contact with learners (Amimo, 2012:338; Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Çağlar, 2011:1843). At the stage of depersonalisation the teacher's rate of absenteeism from school and lessons increases (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Çağlar, 2011:1843). Bataineh and Alsagheer (2012:6) and Çağlar (2011:1843) observe that the teacher at the stage of depersonalisation treats learners as personal objects, calling them by derogatory names. Reduced personal accomplishment is characterised by a feeling of ineffectiveness or lack of personal accomplishment (Amimo, 2012:338; Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Çağlar, 2011:1843). A teacher at the stage of reduced personal accomplishment feels that he/she is no longer

accomplishing anything at work (Amimo, 2012:338-339). If, at this stage, something is not done to help, the teacher's motivation may reduce to an extent where failure becomes a way of life (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Çağlar, 2011:1843).

There are several causal antecedents of burnout. For example, high job demands and lack of key resources such as social support and organisational support are perceived as causing burnout in human services personnel such as teachers, health workers and priests/ministers (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307). The other antecedents of burnout are monotonous and repetitive work (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307). Burnout is also associated with the experience of unpleasant emotions such as fear and frustration (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566-567). The emotions of fear and frustration contribute to the experience of psychological stress and burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566-567). Interpersonal demands related to the service work environment are reported to be key sources of burnout (Mutkins, Brown & Thorsteinsson, 2011:500-501). For instance, challenging client behaviour is seen as one of the aspects of interpersonal demands of the service work environment which is linked to burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566-567). Challenging client behaviours include aggression, self-injury, property damage and inappropriate sexual conduct (Mutkins et al., 2011:500-501; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:307).

### **1.2.3 Symptoms of burnout**

In service careers such as teaching there are four main symptoms of burnout, namely, physical, mental, emotional and behavioural symptoms (Amimo, 2012:340; Consiglio et al., 2013:25; Consiglio, 2014:70; Salami, 2011:112; Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012:417; Schaufeli, Maassen, Bakker & Sixma, 2011:250; Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:7; Zhang, Zhao, Xiao, Zheng, Xiao, Chen, & Chen, 2014: 123):

- Physical symptoms range from chronic fatigue to frequent headaches and nausea (Amimo, 2012:340). A burned-out teacher suffers nightmares, disorientation and exhaustion even before the pressures of a new day start (Amimo, 2012:340). A burned out teacher may feel physically drained even when he/she has not exerted himself/herself physically (Consiglio, 2014:70).

He/she may go to bed at the end of the day feeling too tired to fall asleep (Consiglio, 2014:70). Amimo (2012:340) observes that overt physical symptoms of burnout include frequent grinding of teeth, frowning and disgust. Other physical symptoms include sighing, shallow breathing and general weight loss (Consiglio, 2014:70). Some more symptoms include development of psychopathic illnesses such as lingering colds, gastrointestinal disturbances and ulcers (Schaufeli et al., 2011:250). Moreover, burnout increases hypertension, depression, anxiety and critical heart attacks (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012:417).

- Mental symptoms are manifested in an individual's negative thought patterns, low self-concept and feelings of inferiority in the sense of feeling not good enough to do anything (Consiglio, 2014:70; Zhang et al., 2014: 123). Amimo (2012:340) notes that a teacher who is a victim of burnout believes that he/she is not able to teach effectively and has learners who are not able to learn effectively. According to Tunde and Onabanjo (2013:7) the fear of facing failure prompts teachers to plan mental escapes or to change to a new line of work.
- Emotional symptoms manifest in teachers withdrawing from family, friends and colleagues (Consiglio et al., 2013:25). Emotional symptoms also relate to feelings of meaninglessness, the constant experiencing of personal crisis and professional isolation (Schaufeli et al., 2011:250).
- Behavioural symptoms include chronic absenteeism, resignation from the profession and becoming a workaholic (Amimo, 2012:340). Behavioural manifestations of burnout result in teachers showing decreased tolerance for frustration and stressful situations and subjective feelings of being very tired, worthless, helpless, fearful, angry and embarrassed (Amimo, 2012:340; Consiglio, 2014:70). In many instances teachers who suffer from burnout question their own professionalism (Consiglio, 2014:70).

In summary, symptoms of burnout include negative emotions, attitudes and behaviour (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012:417). Burnout is characterised by sadness, performance difficulties and social withdrawal (Schaufeli et al., 2011:250). Burned out teachers experience personality disorders, cognitive dysfunction, sleep disorders because of

difficulties to sleep and early awakening (Consiglio, 2014:70; Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:7).

#### **1.2.4 Types of teacher burnout**

Teacher burnout can be categorised into three categories of burnout, namely, Types I, II and III (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:570). Type I burnout represents the teachers who are worn out (Khan, 2011:35). This group comprises teachers who react to stress not by working harder but they attempt to balance the discrepancy between input and output by reducing their input (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3). Teachers in this category do not believe that their actions can affect their intended goals but they have a view that, regardless of how hard they work, a classroom will be a disappointing place for them (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3). Workers with Type I behaviour often show personality characteristics such as being highly ambitious, energetic, impatient, competitive, hardworking, time urgent and high achieving (Khan, 2011:33). People with Type I behaviour are more successful but due to their personality characteristics they become restless and their self-satisfaction level reduces to a very low one (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:8). So if they fail to achieve their targets in time they are more likely to develop burnout (Khan, 2011:35). Workers with Type I personality are inclined to control their environment (Salami, 2011:115) and tend to have ineffective problem solving strategies since they are more vulnerable to anxiety and stress (Salami 2011:115; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012: 570). In ambiguous role conditions, individuals with type I personality have a tendency to be more aggressive and impatient in carrying out their duties and this leads to a situation of burnout (Salami 2011:115; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:570).

Teachers in the Type II burnout category are excessively driven, overcommitted and they cling to a high sense of self-esteem thereby attempting to succeed against all odds (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3). This group of teachers risk their personal health and neglect their personal lives to maximise the probability of professional success (Salami 2011:115). To the Type II burnout teachers, their job is an extension of the self and the ego and the job must therefore be performed successfully (Khan, 2011:35). An acknowledgement of failure is impossible to the Type II burnout teachers (Khan, 2011:35; Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3).

Teachers adhering to the category of Type III burnout are composed of the under-challenged teachers (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3). This group of teachers appears to be neither over nor under used by their employers (Tunde & Onabanjo, 2013:3). The under challenged teachers are disinterested rather than frustrated and they are bored rather than intolerably stressed (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012: 570). Most of the time, the underchallenged teachers complain that their skills go unnoticed and also that their talents are not being utilised sufficiently in their schools (Khan, 2011:35).

### **1.2.5 Ways of avoiding teacher burnout**

With regard to the teaching profession, burnout diminishes the joy of teaching, makes effective classroom management unattainable and infuses dread into every desire to teach (Linsin, 2011:1; Tsigilis et al., 2011:53). Teacher burnout should therefore be avoided at all cost. Ways of avoiding teacher burnout pertain to the following:

- **Constructive discipline:** Burnout can be avoided by practising effective classroom management in the sense of applying constructive discipline (Linsin, 2011:1). The number one cause of stress among teachers is trying to convince learners to behave (Linsin, 2011:1). Actions such as reprimanding, scolding, arguing, threatening, manipulating and discussing learners' misbehaviour are ineffective codes of conduct containing a high degree of potential stress (Linsin, 2011:1; Beltman et al., 2011:186). Counteracting measures to avoid stress with related burnout pertains to enforcing a consequence for the learner's misbehaviour and moving on to teaching-related matters (Linsin, 2011:1; Beltman et al., 2011:186). Effective classroom management consists of the two components of expert skills and the right mind-set to sustain learner motivation which in turn energises and inspires the teacher to sustained engagement (Beltman et al., 2011:186).
- **Time management:** A common cause of teacher burnout are time constraints which have a negative influence on effective lesson preparation and the organising of time for proper reflection (Jamadin et al., 2015:309). An effective way of counteracting time constraints is to arrange for more time by arriving at school earlier (Beltman et al., 2011:186). This results in an enabling condition for increased productivity allowing a teacher to work twice

as efficiently and with fewer distractions before school than one would experience at any other time of the day (Beltman et al., 2011:186).

- Organised: Being organised is one of the main de-stressors for teachers insofar as knowing where each file is and knowing where to find the specific information or lesson plan (Linsin, 2011:1). Knowing how to reach this information quickly ensures peace of mind and one less thing to be concerned about (Linsin, 2011:1; Montero-Marin et al., 2014:4). Linked to the notion of being well-organised is the value of ensuring a clutter-free environment in which to function (Linsin, 2011:1; Montero-Marin et al., 2014:4). In this regard, Linsin (2011:3) notes that keeping one's classroom clear of needless materials and equipment ensures a clutter-free classroom which is more appealing and more conducive to optimal teaching and learning.
- Distance between work and personal life: Jamadin et al. (2015:309) and Linsin (2011:2) emphasise that as soon as teachers leave the school premises, their workday should be over in the sense of distancing themselves from the work stressors. Thieman et al. (2012:86) and Linsin (2011:2) point out that if teachers are in the habit of sustaining thoughts about their disappointments and dilemmas of the workday even after the workday is over, they will be prone to burnout related to additional conditions such as, for example, insomnia.
- Physical exercise: Apart from improving physical health, regular cardiovascular-related exercises contribute to improved emotional well-being (Linsin, 2011:2). In this regard Linsin (2011:2) and Plante (2013:2) point to the value of swimming and dancing to clear teachers' heads thus avoiding burnout.
- Healthy eating habits: Increasingly people are worldwide alerted to the value of healthy food consumed in smaller quantities (Beltman et al., 2011:186). With reference to the teaching profession and the demand for sustained high levels of energy throughout the extended school day, burnout can be avoided by eating smaller meals while eliminating consumption of sugar, white flour and foods high in saturated fat (Beltman et al., 2011:186; Linsin, 2011:2).
- Rest: A good night's sleep is not negotiable for a teacher due to the fact that teaching is one of the few professions in which the employee is not granted

time to relax during the working hours (Linsin, 2011:3; Plante, 2013:2). Even when teachers are not feeling well, they remain responsible for their learners (Linsin, 2011:3; Plante, 2013:2).

- Constructive routines: Classroom routines enhance productivity because when learners know the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of what is expected of them they are focused to take part in their own learning (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:4). Constructive routines serve as counteracting measures for groundless talking, endless explaining and potential stress as a result of misbehaviour due to learners not being informed about what is expected of them (Beltman et al., 2011:186).

In summary, burnout preventive approaches include primary prevention measures which entail work and environmental design modification, providing clear job descriptions and expectations in an effort to address role ambiguity and conflict, and organisational and management development (Amimo, 2012:342). Secondary prevention measures cover education and training of personnel to be capacitated to manage stress appropriately in order to counter the possible development of burnout (Bahrer-Kohler, 2013:28). Tertiary prevention measures include aspects such as a responsive management system and enhanced health services provision which improve an individual's ability to cope with stress (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2012:9).

### **1.2.6 Teacher attrition and burnout in Lesotho**

In the context of Lesotho, teacher attrition is classified into two categories, namely, involuntary and voluntary attrition (Lesotho College of Education, 2012:117). Involuntary teacher attrition results because of death, compulsory retirement at the age of 65, or because of dismissal from the teaching service due to disciplinary action (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:100). Voluntary teacher attrition pertains to the voluntary retirement of teachers at the age of 55 years of permanent service with full pension benefits, resignation, international migration and redeployment in alternative job markets (Lesotho College of Education, 2012:117; Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:100). Voluntary retirement and resignation of teachers from the teaching profession in Lesotho, as is the case worldwide, can be attributed to burnout.

Research has theorised this fact of voluntary teacher resignation due to excessive stress leading to burnout (Bas, 2011:86; Smollin, 2011:1; Sulakshna & Sanjay, 2013:679).

### **1.3 MOTIVATION FOR STUDY**

The focus of this study is on burnout and coping strategies among teachers in Lesotho. Burnout is a pertinent contemporary problem in the teaching service in Lesotho. The following reasons urged the researcher to carry out a study on this problem:

- While burnout has been an international concern and studies have been carried out in many countries about this problem, to the researcher's knowledge there are no studies conducted to investigate burnout in Lesotho.
- Prolonged burnout is not only a social problem but it can also lead to both mental and physical ill-health problems.
- There has been an increase in the number of teachers leaving the teaching profession in Lesotho on grounds of burnout (Bas, 2011:86; Smollin, 2011:1; Sulakshna & Sanjay, 2013:679).

Considering the consequences of burnout on work performance such as job turnover, absenteeism, low morale and reduced feelings of job satisfaction for those suffering from it, studies on ways to alleviate the condition are valuable. With regard to the teaching profession, literature reveals that burnout is especially associated with the helping professions, such as education, health and social services (Çağlar, 2011:1842; Hussein, Al Faisal, Wasfy, Monsef, AbdulRahim, El Sawaf, Al Marzooqi, & Echtibi, 2015:24). Apart from affecting the mental, psychosomatic and social health of educators, conditions of burnout decrease the quality of teaching and work performance, which in turn negatively influence learners' academic achievement (Tsigilis et al., 2011:53; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564). An understanding of the antecedents of burnout along with the effects thereof on teachers' well-being should enable school management to institute policies designed to minimise the effects of work-related burnout which in turn will save expenses due to turnover, absenteeism and reduced productivity (Tsigilis et al., 2011:53; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564). As teacher burnout is an issue facing almost all the primary schools in Lesotho resulting

in teachers leaving the teaching profession in large numbers and teachers not being productive, a study on teacher burnout as experienced in Lesotho can contribute to ways of countering the phenomenon of teacher burnout.

#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

With reference to what was discussed in paragraph 1.2 about the negative influence of stress and burnout on the individual and the group, burnout in teaching has a number of problematic outcomes such as unsympathetic behaviour towards learners and an intolerance for classroom disruption leading to absenteeism and eventual resignation which all affect teaching and learning negatively (Amimo, 2012:344; Mutkins et al., 2011:501; Tsigilis et al., 2011:54).

Considering the negative effect of teacher burnout on teaching and learning, the following principal research question was formulated: How can teachers be equipped to cope with stress in order to prevent work-related burnout?

In order to solve this problem, the main research question is divided into five sub-questions that are investigated first so that the solution to these sub-questions can contribute to the solution of the main research question.

- What is the relationship between stress and burnout?
- What are the stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers?
- What are the consequences of burnout among teachers?
- What strategies can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout?
- What role can the Ministry of Education and Training play as a way of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout?

In relation to analysis of quantitative data, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- Variables such as teachers' work overload, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational

climate, organisational culture and role conflict are predictors of burnout among teachers.

- Variables such as teachers' age, personality, work experience and type of school are predictors of burnout among teachers.
- Both male and female teachers are affected by burnout in the same way.

## **1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

The focus of this study was on teacher burnout and the coping strategies personnel employ to counter possible burnout in the teaching profession. In this regard the study was focused on the following aims:

- To determine the relationship between stress and burnout.
- To establish the main stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers.
- To determine the consequences of burnout among teachers.
- To establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout.
- To establish the input from the Ministry of Education and Training to alleviate teacher stress in order to prevent burnout.

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this investigation is to study the extent of teacher stress and burnout and to establish stress coping strategies whereby teachers can manage their stress in order to prevent burnout. In this investigation, data were collected by conducting a literature study and an empirical investigation.

Apart from strategies to cope with stress in order to counter possible burnout, the following relationships were determined in this study:

- The relationship between burnout and teacher's age, gender, personality and experience.

- The relationship between burnout and work overload, role ambiguity and a lack of staff development, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict.
- The relationship between burnout and type of school and general organisational commitment.

### **1.6.1 Research paradigm and research approach**

Departing from the ontological and epistemological views of positivist, interpretivist/constructivist and critical paradigms, the researcher supports the notion that reality is socially constructed in that there are many ways of seeing the world (Carlsson, 2011:720; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25) and through the course of this study perceptions may change to reach a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, namely teacher stress resulting in burnout and ways to avoid such a negative condition from happening.

With regard to research approach, the researcher adopted a mixed-methods research approach consisting of quantitative and qualitative research representations. The mixed-methods research approach was appropriate for this particular investigation because the researcher's aim was to firstly examine the relationship between burnout which is a dependent variable and teacher's age, personality, experience, work overload, role ambiguity, type of school, lack of personnel development and general organisational commitment which are the independent variables. This was followed by the use of a qualitative approach. The combination of a quantitative and a qualitative research approach provided a deeper understanding of the research problem under investigation. Research has demonstrated that a mixed methods research approach enables a researcher to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2012:535; Creswell, 2013:150; Daniel, 2014:2; Plano-Clark, Anderson, Wertz, Zhou, Schumacher and Miaskowski, 2014:3).

Quantitative research, as qualitative research, has its own unique characteristics. The following are the characteristics of a quantitative research approach (Creswell, 2012:13; Goerts & Mahoney, 2012:4; Soeters, Shield & Rietjens, 2014:4 - 5):

- Describing a research problem through a description of trends or a need for an explanation of the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2012:13).
- Creating purpose statements and hypotheses that are specific, narrow, measurable and observable (Soeters et al., 2014:4-5).
- Collecting numeric data from a large number of people using instruments with pre-set questions and responses (Goerts & Mahoney, 2012:4).
- Analysing trends, comparing groups or relating variables using statistical analysis and interpreting results by comparing them with prior predictions and past research (Soeters et al., 2014:4-5).
- Writing the research report using standard, fixed structures and evaluation criteria, taking an objective and unbiased approach (Creswell, 2012:13).
- Quantitative research problems require a researcher to explain how one variable affects another (Creswell, 2012:13).

The characteristics of quantitative research, mentioned above, were applicable and appropriate for this investigation since the researcher's aim was to determine the relationships between the predictor and predicted variables.

The unique characteristics of qualitative research as illustrated by empirical literature and the way it appropriates inclusion in this study pertain to the following (Creswell, 2012:16; Goerts & Mahoney, 2012:4; Soeters et al., 2014:4 - 5):

- Exploring the research problem and developing a detailed understanding of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2012:16; Goerts & Mahoney, 2012:4).
- Collecting data based on words from a small number of individuals so that the participants' views are obtained (Soeters et al., 2014:4 - 5).
- Analysing the data for description through themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings (Creswell, 2012:16; Goerts & Mahoney, 2012:4).
- Writing the report using flexible, emerging structures and evaluative criteria and including the researchers' subjective reflectivity and bias for a comprehensive engagement with the phenomenon of study (Creswell, 2012:16).

### **1.6.2 Selection of sites and participants**

The target population for the study was the primary school teachers who are engaged in professional development by pursuing a Bachelor of Education in primary education at the National University of Lesotho. A total of 600 primary school teachers were enrolled for this qualification at the National University of Lesotho for the 2017 academic year. This is a part-time programme offered by the University for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education. The sample for the quantitative part of the study consisted of 350 teachers. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of 350 teachers from the population.

Stratified random sampling is the procedure in which the population to be inferred from is divided into heterogeneous groups (Scheaffer, Mendenhall, Ott & Gerow, 2012:115). The assumption is that the respondents in each stratum are homogenous (Scheaffer et al., 2012:115). The sample is then drawn randomly from the population according to the percentage of participants in each stratum (Scheaffer et al., 2012:115). Stratification is used when the population reflects an imbalance on a characteristic of a sample (Creswell, 2012:44; Scheaffer et al., 2012:115). For example, for this particular study, there were more females than males in the population. Therefore, the use of simple random sampling would result in a selection of more females than males. So, the use of stratified random sampling led to a selection of representative data.

The sample for the qualitative part of the study comprised of 20 teachers. The quota sampling technique was employed to select the sample of 20 teachers from the population. For this particular investigation, there were more females than males in the population. Therefore, the use of other sampling techniques would result in a selection of more females than males. So, the use of quota sampling led to a selection of representative data. Hence, the use of quota sampling ensured that the selected sample had a proportional number of male and female teachers relative to the population.

### **1.6.3 Data collection**

Data were collected through the use of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI is a structured questionnaire assessing the degree of burnout (Özkan, Celik & Younis, 2012:258). This instrument was used to assess the degree of burnout among the respondents. The MBI was developed by Maslach and Jackson in 1981 (Özkan et al., 2012:258). This is an instrument which is used to measure dimensions of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment (Özkan et al., 2012:258; Sevgi, Vesile & Emine, 2012:309). The instrument is also used to capture measures on variables such as job dissatisfaction and workloads (Sevgi et al., 2012:309; Tsigilis et al., 2011:55). The MBI has a psychometric property of 0.7 (Sevgi et al., 2012:309; Tsigilis et al., 2011:55), which is a very good reliability index. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of research assistants who assisted with the administration of the questionnaire. 350 questionnaires were administered to the respondents.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the problem under investigation, namely, stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers, individual in-depth interviews were employed as a complementary data gathering instrument. Twenty individual interviews were conducted.

### **1.6.4 Data analysis**

To analyse the quantitatively collected data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. For this particular study, descriptive statistics was used for the purposes of enabling the researcher to present, analyse and interpret data in a more meaningful way. On the other hand, inferential statistics relating to multiple regression, chi-square and T-test were used for the purposes of confirming the findings and drawing conclusions. With regard to multiple regression, the method allows a researcher to expand the number of variables in the regression equation (Andrew, Pedersen & McEvoy, 2011:217). The purpose of multiple regression analysis is to create a regression equation for predicting the independent variable from a group of dependent variables (Andrew et al., 2011:217; Teo, 2013:71). In this study, multiple regression was employed to predict burnout from teachers' work overload, organisational

commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, general organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict.

Chi-square is a statistical test which is used to test for a difference among groups in terms of a categorical dependent variable (Creswell, 2012:613; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:508). In this study, Chi-square was used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between burnout and teacher's age, gender, personality, work experience and type of school.

To analyse the qualitatively collected data an inductive approach was used. This approach entails organising data into categories or themes and identifying patterns in order to interpret meaning and construct relevant answers to postulated research questions (Creswell, 2012:238; Newby, 2013:479). This method of qualitative content analysis represented a systemic classification process of coding and identifying themes with the purpose of ensuring that all the perspectives from interview data were covered.

#### **1.6.5 Validity and reliability**

The validity and reliability of the instruments which were used to collect data for this study were ascertained by conducting a pilot study prior to collecting data for both the quantitative and the qualitative investigation. Secondly, the researcher ensured validity and reliability of the tools through member checking by sharing the results of the collected data with participants in order to reach common ground on the authenticity of findings.

#### **1.6.6 Ethical considerations**

It is ethical for researchers to respect the site in which the research takes place. This respect, therefore, was shown by gaining permission before entering the site, by disturbing the site as little as possible and viewing oneself as a guest at the place of study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:88; Creswell, 2012:23). In order to achieve this, the respondents and participants were informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and the individual responses would be held in strict

confidence and would be used only for academic purposes. Ethical considerations with this study on teacher burnout are discussed in more detail in Chapter four.

## **1.7 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION**

This section focuses on the definitions of the main concepts used in this study.

### **1.7.1 Burnout**

Burnout represents three conditions pertaining to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a reduced feeling of personal accomplishment (Salami, 2011:111; Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6). These conditions occur sequentially in that emotional exhaustion leads to an emotional and cognitive distancing from work which results in reduced personal accomplishment and a tendency to exert negative and uncaring attitudes towards others with a resulting tendency to treat clients as objects (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012:416; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:565-566). Considered within a school context and the close involvement of teachers with learners in the teaching and learning process, teacher burnout does affect learner achievement negatively (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012:416).

### **1.7.2 Stress**

Stress, as the condition of an unpleasant feeling that individuals experience as a result of their work, impacts negatively on their physical, emotional and psychological well-being (Salami, 2011:114). The workplace is interpreted as a threat to self-esteem and well-being, which results in the developing of stress as an inability to cope with the pressures of work (Jamadin et al., 2015:309). Stress develops when work demands exceed available coping resources (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:2).

### **1.7.3 Coping strategies**

Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts that workers employ to master, tolerate and reduce stressful events (Thieman et al., 2012:82). These efforts represent ways in which people choose to respond to stressful situations in order to manage specific

internal and external demands that are considered as exceeding an individual's resources (Ereno, Andrade, Miyauchi, Salinda, Arevalo & Reyes, 2014:150). Effective coping strategies play an important role in reducing stress levels and increasing job performance (Ereno et al., 2014:150). Coping strategies are categorised into problem-focused and emotion-focused actions (Thieman et al., 2012:82). Problem-focused coping strategies entail defining the problem, developing alternative solutions, evaluating the alternatives, selecting a solution and finally taking an action to solve a problem or change a difficult situation in an active manner (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:2). Emotion-focused coping strategies are the coping responses which do not change the problem or situation directly but help develop new meanings to be assigned to regulate the emotions that are aroused (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:2).

## **1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

The study is divided into the following eight chapters:

### **Chapter One**

This chapter as an orientation to the study, highlights the background to the study, the motivation for the study and the problem statement with related research questions and research aims. As an orientation to the research, the research methodology and research design are also introduced.

### **Chapter Two**

Chapter two entails a review of related literature on the phenomenon of employee burnout with a specific focus on the teaching profession. Self-efficacy as a theoretical framework for stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers is discussed. Secondly, the person-environment-fit theory and the transactional model of stress as other applicable frameworks underlying the study on teacher burnout are highlighted. Thirdly, burnout as the result of chronic and excessive stress which is associated with being in an occupation with considerable interaction with fellow human beings is highlighted. Fourthly, the medical, pastoral and teaching profession as occupations with substantial interaction with stakeholders, which can

cause severe stress resulting in burnout, are discussed. Finally, models of burnout and stress are highlighted.

### **Chapter Three**

This chapter covers a review of related literature on correlations between teacher burnout and variables such as age, gender, personality, work experience, work overload, role ambiguity, lack of staff development, organisational climate, organisational culture, type of school and general organisational commitment. Finally, coping mechanisms which are employed by teachers to counter stress are highlighted.

### **Chapter Four**

Chapter four entails an explanation of the research methodology and research design used for conducting the empirical investigation. Data were collected, analysed and interpreted with the aim of answering the research questions appropriately.

### **Chapters Five and Six**

Chapters five and six represent an analysis of the qualitative (Chapter five) and quantitative data (Chapter six) and a discussion of the related research findings. Data were analysed based on the research questions and hypotheses. The incorporation of data collected via the MBI questionnaire into the data collected via individual interviewing transcended into a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of teacher burnout and viable coping strategies as counteracting measures.

### **Chapter Seven**

The focus of this chapter is on a critical combining of qualitative and quantitative research findings. The main aim was to discuss the critical interpretation of combined qualitative and quantitative research findings.

## **Chapter Eight**

This chapter focuses on a summary from which conclusions are drawn and recommendations made to contribute to an enhancement of the practice of coping with stress in order to counter burnout in the school environment. The conclusions and recommendations made from the summary are based on the findings from the literature review and empirical investigation.

### **1.9 SUMMARY**

Teaching is one of the most demanding professions. Literature indicates that teachers continually face increasing workloads, larger class sizes, unmotivated and undisciplined learners, minimal parental and administrative support and scarce resources which impede teaching from running smoothly. Because of these conditions, there is a likelihood of eventual burnout among teachers due to sustained high levels of stress. Thus, the teaching profession is being perceived as a highly stressful one which warrants an investigation into viable coping strategies in order to counteract possible burnout with related decreased productivity.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **A LITERATURE REVIEW ON SELF-EFFICACY AND BURNOUT WITH THE SCHOOL AS WORK ENVIRONMENT**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Studying stress and burnout among teachers has implications for improving understanding of work stress and burnout as well as for enhancing teachers' work life (Chaly, Anand, Reddy, Nijesh & Srinidhi, 2014:440). Understanding environmental and personal factors which influence stress and burnout can benefit both teachers and the education system (Chaly et al., 2014:440). It can help these parties to forecast burnout as well as factors related to the early manifestation of burnout (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564). From such information, appropriate intervention strategies which can combat stress in order to prevent burnout can be developed, thus contributing to increased productivity resulting in improved teaching and learning (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012: 6).

Burnout has many undesirable effects on workers. Buyukbayraktar and Temiz (2015:131) observe that burnout makes workers feel both personal and professional dissatisfaction. According to Buyukbayraktar and Temiz (2015:131) an individual experiencing burnout does not want to go to work, doubts his/her abilities and behaves in a manner that is out of character. Burnout affects employees' efficiency negatively and reduces an individual's performance (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131).

Burnout does not have negative effects only on work performance and work satisfaction but also on workers' social life and personal relationships. This fact is illustrated by Aksu and Temeloglu (2015:220) who emphasise that the victims of burnout develop negative feelings about themselves and show negative behaviours such as aggression and violent behaviours towards their colleagues. This issue is also supported by Shoaga, Bukki and Obiyomi (2015:96) who postulate that burnout affects workers' social relationships and attitudes by making interactions both at home and work difficult because victims of burnout have problems of social withdrawal and being prone to conflict. Kizilci, Erdoğan and Sözen (2012:309) also observe that workers who suffer from burnout hamper other workers because of their underperformance,

psychological destruction, resignation and retardation. Workers who are the victims of burnout hamper their colleagues with their underperformance since burnout leads to absenteeism and decreased productivity, both of which results in work overload for other workers (Kizilci et al., 2012:309) as the other workers are overburdened by the work load of the victims of burnout (Kizilci et al., 2012:309). Workers who suffer from burnout hamper their colleagues with their psychological destruction because burnout puts workers in a state of extreme confusion and insecurity, with the danger of psychological trauma including harassment, bullying and violent behaviour to fellow workers, all of which have negative consequences on the work performance of other workers (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:297). Mutune and Orodho (2014:11) argue that burnout creates despair amongst affected workers which in many instances result in their resignation. These resignations have a negative impact both on the employers and employees because they lead to a shortage of qualified staff which affects work performance and work load (Mutune & Orodho, 2014:11). With regard to workers who suffer from burnout hampering their colleagues with their burnout-related retardation, Schaufeli and Salanova (2014:297) argue that burnout makes individuals to be resentful, to feel extremely tired and anxious and to fail to perform their duties effectively which leads to a situation in which the performance of other workers is also affected. Burnout is a hampering condition for both those people who suffer from this syndrome and their colleagues because it disrupts an individual's mental balance and causes disharmony between its victims and their colleagues (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:220). This phenomenon, therefore, should be studied to determine successful coping and ameliorating endeavours.

## **2.2 Self-efficacy theory as a theoretical framework**

In order to gain a deeper understanding of burnout as a result of constant high levels of stress, self-efficacy theory is used as a theoretical framework for this study. Self-efficacy theory is a relevant theory in conducting studies which deal with teacher burnout because it explains that teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy tackle their problems with vigor knowing that they are capable of conquering such problems (Norton, 2013:28). Savaş, Bozgeyik and Eser (2014:160) and Consiglio et al. (2013:25) state that understanding teacher self-efficacy has benefits for teachers in terms of understanding and coping with stress and possible burnout because teacher

self-efficacy can have a positive effect on teacher motivation and performance which in turn assists with the ability to cope with stress.

### **2.2.1 The concept of self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy is a widely accepted framework for conducting research on job stress and burnout as it provides the theoretical justification for the postulation that it has a protective effect against stress and burnout development (Consiglio, Borgogni, Alessandri & Schaufeli, 2013:24; Foley, 2013:44). Self-efficacy is grounded in Bandura's theoretical framework of social cognitive theory which emphasises that people can exercise influence over what they do (Kumar, 2013:33). Kumar (2013:33) and Langley, Martin and Kitchel (2014:2) assert that in this conception people are self-organised, proactive, self-regulating and self-reflecting. Self-efficacy as it relates to being self-organised, being proactive, being self-regulating and being self-reflecting is analysed in the paragraphs that follow below.

Self-efficacy is associated with being self-organised (Kumar, 2013:33). A self-organised individual has the ability to utilise resources and activities in such a way that individual goals and objectives are realised that relate to the goals and objectives of the organisation and which are then mutually achieved (Kumar, 2013:33). Being self-organised entails executing of job-related duties in a professional manner (Langley et al., 2014:2). Professionalism involves competence, successful achievement of goals and continued effectiveness in one's work (Toppinen-Tanner, 2011:16). A self-organised individual is visionary and goal-oriented (Langley et al., 2014:2) which implies that a self-organised individual always works towards achieving the goals of his/her organisation. A self-organised worker has an ability to plan and coordinate the available resources efficiently, that is, with the approach of constantly doing what can be done with what is available within the specific context. (Langley et al., 2014:2).

Being proactive entails the achievement of targets and future work requirements, which leads to self-development (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). In order to be proactive one should be visionary to anticipate correctly (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). Verešová and Malá (2012:295) describe a proactive worker as someone who is ingenious, responsible and scrupulous. A proactive individual takes responsibility for

his/her own actions and implements the organisational vision in a successful manner (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). Proactiveness as it relates to being ingenious means being accountable for one's own actions at the place of work (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). It entails the issues of honesty and transparency in the process of performing applicable duties (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). In relation to being scrupulous, pro-activeness involves taking precautions before making and implementing any kind of decision (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295). A proactive individual accumulates resources, mobilises resources and has the ability to prevent burnout before it develops (Verešová & Malá, 2012:295).

Self-efficacy is positively related to individuals' engagement in self-regulative activities in a workplace environment (Kirmizi, 2015:33). It is described as the process in which workers take an initiative in identifying the needs of their organisation, formulating goals and exploring the resources with or without the guidance from their supervisors (Kirmizi, 2015:33). Being self-regulative involves regulating one's efforts to achieve the organisational aims, applying self-monitoring and ensuring productive time management and effective utilisation of both material and human resources (Kirmizi, 2015:33). A self-regulated person sets the organisational goals for himself/herself without the guidance of the manager (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011:194). Self-monitoring as one of the processes of self-regulation entails the ability to take control of one's work-related activities and assess one's work progress (Kirmizi, 2015:33). A self-regulated worker has skills of managing time effectively (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011:194). Time management involves executing relevant tasks within a specified period of time and maintaining attention during the process of executing one's duties (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011:194). A self-regulated person is able to mobilise the resources available to him or her and uses these resources wisely (Kirmizi, 2015:33).

Self-efficacy is associated with being self-reflecting (Beverborg, Slegers, Endedijk & van Veen 2015:188). Self-efficacious individuals constantly reflect on their inputs by examining their own activities at the workplace (Beverborg et al., 2015:188). It is through self-reflection that workers are able to examine their experiences and explore their beliefs in order to alter their thinking and behaviour patterns for improved functioning (Beverborg et al., 2015:188). Self-reflection as a correlate of self-efficacy helps teachers to discover how to benefit from workplace conditions and to be task

interdependent (Beverborg et al., 2015:188). Beverborg et al. (2015:192) describe task interdependence as a situation in which employees work as a team in order to complete the tasks assigned to them in an optimal manner. Task interdependence is important because it stimulates interaction between the members of the team, facilitates the exchange of information and provides a ground for sharing of resources which leads to the successful completion of tasks (Beverborg et al., 2015:192). Self-reflection enables individuals to understand how their own and that of their team members' knowledge and skills can function as resources for the organisation (Beverborg et al., 2015:188). Self-reflection enables an individual to generate new knowledge and new ideas and as such it serves as a basis for future action (Beverborg et al., 2015:191).

Self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs that they have capacities to produce designated levels of performance and that they can exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Gerbino & Barbaranelli, 2011:81; Wang, Hall & Rahimi, 2015:121). Literature shows that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy have confidence in their ability to overcome obstacles such as stress and burnout (Consiglio et al., 2013:25; Foley, 2013:40). Self-efficacy plays an important role in determining how individuals perceive their environmental challenges and react to those challenges (Foley, 2013:40). People who have high levels of self-efficacy approach challenges with their strength and resources, knowing that they have the ability to conquer the challenges (Norton, 2013:28). High self-efficacy predicts better adjustment to an individual's environment and lowers levels of strain and burnout across various professions, including teaching (Consiglio et al., 2013:25). Self-efficacious employees are less affected by burnout (Norton, 2013:33). Self-efficacious personnel are protected from burning out not only because they cope better with the negative emotions generated by the work but also because they shape their work environment and interact with it differently (Consiglio et al., 2013:24-26). They have an ability to capitalise on the opportunities for personal growth (Consiglio et al., 2013:24-26). This proactive role of self-efficacy triggers the cognitive representation of situations, emphasising the aspects that better fit with the individual's expectations and psychological state (Consiglio et al., 2013:24-26; Kumar, 2013:33).

Specifically, in relation to the teaching profession, self-efficacy refers to an individual teacher's belief in his/her ability to plan, organise and carry out activities required to attain valued educational goals (Foley, 2013:40). Teachers with positive self-efficacy tend to be more satisfied and better performers than teachers with negative perceptions of their self-efficacy (De Jong, Mainhard, Van Tartwijk, Veldman, Verloop & Wubbels, 2014:296). Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy rarely complain about physical health problems such as fatigue, stress, burnout and pain (Caprara et al., 2011:81). In contrast, teachers with low levels of self-efficacy are more likely to report lower job satisfaction, higher levels of stress, depression, anxiety and helplessness (Foley, 2013:40; Norton, 2013:28). Teachers with low levels of self-efficacy have a feeling that no matter how hard they attempt accomplishing a task, they cannot make a difference (Caprara et al., 2011:81; Foley, 2013:43 - 44; Wang et al., 2015:121).

With reference to teacher behaviour in the classroom, studies demonstrate an association between teacher self-efficacy and classroom management (Wang et al., 2015:121). Teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to be more patient, make better use of class time, criticise learners less, encourage learners' autonomy and responsibility and persist longer when dealing with challenging learners (Reinke, Herman & Stormont, 2013:40). Teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy are likely to be motivated to manage classroom and learning environments successfully (Gibbs & Powell, 2012:566). Teachers who have a higher sense of self-efficacy perceive issues such as student misbehaviour in a more manageable manner than those with a lower sense of self-efficacy (Gibbs & Powell, 2012:566; Reinke et al., 2013:40).

Teachers' sense of efficacy is also related to instructional practices, learning and academic achievement (Wang et al., 2015:121). High levels of self-efficacy lead to better instruction due to self-efficacious teachers being more willing to invest efforts in their teaching, thereby creating mastery experiences that further bolster their self-efficacy (De Jong et al., 2014:296). Highly self-efficacious teachers have a tendency to feel that they can teach the learners and that they can succeed in teaching (Norton, 2013:28). Teachers with higher self-efficacy levels are always more willing to experiment with new teaching strategies in order to cater for their learners' needs (De Jong et al., 2014:296).

### **2.2.2 The role of self-efficacy in pupils' learning**

Self-efficacy plays an important role in instructional practices and teachers' behaviour patterns and in matters relating to pupils' learning (Putwain, Sander & Larkin, 2013:634). In illustrating this fact, Putwain et al. (2013:634) note that in relation to pupils' learning, self-efficacy exerts a greater influence on effective learning, effective study skills, persistence and aspirations which results in teachers experiencing decreased levels of stress. Learners who are self-efficacious tend to generate and test alternative courses of action when they do not initially achieve success in their learning (Breso, Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011:340; Putwain et al., 2013:634). They perform better in the classroom because of their elevated levels of effort and persistence and deal more effectively with problematical situations by manipulating the cognitive and emotional processes related to those situations (Breso et al., 2011:340; Putwain et al., 2013:634). In terms of academic performance, self-efficacy enhances learners' comfort levels when facing examinations (Breso et al., 2011:342; Putwain et al., 2013:634). All of these actions by learners with high levels of self-efficacy influence teachers to encounter less stress in the classroom environment.

Putwain et al. (2013:634) purport that self-efficacy enhances pupils' efficiency in learning. Therefore, self-efficacious learners lead to a situation in which teachers experience less stress levels because learners' behaviours have an impact on teachers' emotional experiences (Becker, Keller, Goetz, Frenzel & Taxer, 2015:2). For example, high achieving and highly motivated learners are a source of positive emotional experiences for teachers (Becker et al., 2015:2). Teachers prefer to teach learners who work hard and invest their effort in academic work, the net result of which is reduction in teachers' stress and burnout (Becker et al., 2015:2). On the other hand, learners' misbehaviour is a key factor which elicits stress and burnout among teachers (Becker et al., 2015:2). Learners who disrupt lessons and do not follow the classroom regulations or rules affect teachers' classroom instruction and work performance which result in jeopardising teachers achieving their classroom lesson objectives and such misbehaviour causes negative long-term effects on teachers' well-being and emotional exhaustion (Becker et al., 2015:2).

### **2.2.3 The effect of self-efficacy on work performance**

Self-efficacy has a positive impact on employees' work performance. In proving this point, Cherian and Jacob (2013:81) argue that there is a correlation between workers' self-efficacy and their performance including the ability to cope with current changes in career plans, ability to generate new ideas and grow to a managerial level. Furthermore, self-efficacy enables an individual to perform better as a team member and to acquire new skills (Cherian & Jacob, 2013:81). Self-efficacy enhances employees' commitment to their work (Cherian & Jacob, 2013:81).

Individuals with high levels of self-efficacy believe in themselves and strive to exhibit high performance while individuals with low levels of self-efficacy do not have confidence in themselves and end up with low performance (Iroegbu, 2015:170). In showing the importance of self-efficacy as linking to employee work performance, Herath (2013:44) observes that it enables the worker to work productively under continuous stress, pressure and conflict. Self-efficacy also encourages individuals to tolerate unexpected changes in business conditions and to persist in the face of adversity at the work place (Herath, 2013:44).

Based on self-efficacy as being self-organised, proactive, self-regulating and self-reflecting (par 2.2.1), self-efficacy is linked to employees' performance in terms of the ability to articulate the vision and values of the organisation, the ability to inspire others to embrace the vision and values of the organisation and the ability to formulate a set of actions in pursuit of the attainment of organisational goals (Herath, 2013:44). In relation to goal setting, Lunenburg (2011:2) claims that self-efficacy influences the goals that employees choose for themselves. According to Lunenburg (2011:2) workers with low levels of self-efficacy tend to set relatively low goals for themselves while individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are likely to set high personal goals which they manage to realise through perseverance and dedication.

Pertaining to persistence in executing tasks, Lunenburg (2011:2) observes that employees with high levels of self-efficacy are confident that they can perform any task irrespective of its difficulty and that they are likely to persist in their efforts even when problems surface. Employees with high levels of self-efficacy work hard to execute

new tasks because they are confident that their efforts will be successful (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Workers with high levels of self-efficacy work hard to execute new tasks effectively, which points to high levels of energy (Lunenburg, 2011:2). The reason for this is because high levels of self-efficacy do not only influence individuals to work hard to learn how to perform new tasks but it also influences the effort that people exert on their work (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Furthermore, self-efficacy influences the persistence with which employees attempt new and difficult tasks (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Iroegbu (2015:171) who also demonstrates a correlation between energy levels of employees with high levels of self-efficacy, emphasises that strong self-efficacy beliefs enhance workers' accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways (Iroegbu, 2015:171). First, individuals with a strong sense of personal competence approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as dangers to be avoided (Iroegbu, 2015:171). Second, individuals with high levels of self-efficacy have great intrinsic motivation or interest in completing tasks assigned to them (Iroegbu, 2015:171). Third, employees with high levels of self-efficacy have a tendency of setting challenging goals and maintaining a strong commitment to them (Iroegbu, 2015:171). Fourth, individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy put in more effort even in the face of failure and thus easily recover their confidence after failures or setbacks because they attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge (Iroegbu, 2015:171). Finally, high self-efficacy levels help in creating feelings of serenity in approaching difficult tasks and activities (Iroegbu, 2015:171).

#### **2.2.4 The sources of self-efficacy**

Literature documents four major sources of self-efficacy, namely, mastery experiences or past performance, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological states (Breso et al., 2011:340; Foley, 2013:40). According to Bresó et al. (2011:340) mastery experiences refer to past success in comparable tasks and it entails establishment of intervention programmes promoting self-efficacy in various contexts. In simpler terms, mastery experiences can be described as a situation in which workers who have succeeded on work-related tasks are likely to have more confidence to complete similar tasks in the future than employees who have been unsuccessful (Lunenburg, 2011:3). According to Lunenburg (2011:3) managers can boost the self-

efficacy of their subordinates through providing professional development, coaching, setting attainable goals and supportive leadership.

The second source of self-efficacy is vicarious experience or modelled performance (Hemmings, 2015:4). Gibbs and Powell (2012:566) describe vicarious experiences as an act of learning through observing consequences of other individuals' actions and adjusting one's own behaviour accordingly. That is, seeing a co-worker succeed in performing a particular task may boost the observer's self-efficacy knowing that by using the same skills and efforts, similar outcomes can be achieved (Lunenburg, 2011:3). For example, if a teacher sees her colleague producing good results in Mathematics, this may increase her confidence that she can also produce good results in the subject by putting in the same effort and gaining the same knowledge and skills as that of the successful colleague.

The third source of self-efficacy is called verbal persuasion (Lunenburg, 2011:3). Verbal persuasion entails providing an encouragement for an individual to complete a task or achieve certain behaviour (Gibbs & Powell, 2012:566). It involves convincing individuals that they have the ability to execute a particular task successfully (Lunenburg, 2011:3). Employers can use verbal persuasion to enhance the self-efficacy of their employees through the Pygmalion effect (Lunenburg, 2011:3). The Pygmalion effect is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy based on the relation of higher expectations and increased performance whereby if an individual thinks or wants something to happen, the individual may unconsciously make it happen through his/her dedicated actions (Lunenburg, 2011:3).

The last source of self-efficacy is psychological states also known as emotional cues (Lunenburg, 2011:3). Psychological states involve an act of ensuring that a person is relaxed prior to attempting a new behaviour (Breso et al., 2011:340). The reason for this is that the lower the levels of anxiety, stress and fatigue are, the higher the levels of self-efficacy will be (Breso et al., 2011:340). Lunenburg (2011:4) notes that psychological states dictate self-efficacy. For example, a worker who expects to fail at performing a particular task is likely to experience certain physiological symptoms such as feeling flushed, sweaty palms and headache (Lunenburg, 2011:4).

The four sources of self-efficacy have some implications for stress and burnout alleviation. The sources demonstrate that self-efficacy-based interventions have positive effects on individuals' well-being and performance. That is, enhanced self-efficacy levels are strongly tied to changes in states of well-being such as a decreased possibility for burnout due to managing stressors effectively.

## **2.3 Other applicable frameworks for conducting research on stress and burnout**

In addition to self-efficacy as theoretical framework for this study, two other theories are also applicable to be considered as frameworks underlying the study on teacher stress and burnout. Empirical studies demonstrate that the person-environment-fit theory and the transactional model of stress and burnout are acceptable frameworks for conducting research on work stress and burnout (Abedallah, 2015:5; Kusi, Mensah & Gyaki, 2014:16; Salami, 2011:112).

### **2.3.1 The person-environment-fit theory**

Person-environment-fit refers to the degree to which an individual's characteristics match with those of his or her environment (Kusi et al., 2014:16; Salami, 2011:112). Person-environment-fit theory is applicable to the teaching profession because it suggests that lack of fit or imbalance between work demands and teachers' capability to meet such demands results in stressful situations which eventually lead to burnout (Okeke, Shumba, Rembe & Sotuku, 2015:97). According to the person-environment-fit theory, the interaction between an individual and his/her environment determines whether a situation is stressful for that person (Anazodo, Onyeizugbe & Agbionu, 2012:32). The assumption is that human behaviour is a function of a person and that the environment and a person's vocational satisfaction, stability and achievement depend on the congruence or fit between the person's personality and the environment in which the person works (Salami, 2011:112). According to Kusi et al. (2014:16), a high degree of fit between a person and his/her work situation predicts positive work outcomes, the person-environment-fit approach suggesting that for optimal productivity individuals should be compatible with their environments. Kusi et al. (2014:16), therefore, conclude that decision-making performance and human

functioning in general reach an optimal level of performance and productivity when an individual's cognitive capability matches the complexity of his/her environment.

### **2.3.2 The person-environment-fit theory and the teaching profession**

The person-environment-fit theory postulates that stress is a by-product of an imbalance between work or environmental demands and the teachers' ability to meet those demands (Okeke et al., 2015:97). Okeke et al. (2015:98) argue that teachers in the process of performing their professional duties are faced with a problem of conflicting values between personal and professional needs, but a fit between the personal and professional needs of the teachers may result in positive reactions, even in the face of the difficulties encountered with performing their duties.

Chatterjee and Ramesh (2015:39) link teachers' teaching styles with person-environment-fit theory. Teachers resort to the teaching strategies which are congruent with their former learning styles (Chatterjee & Ramesh, 2015:38). In other words, when teaching their learners, teachers put more emphasis on the domains (levels of educational activity) which they used and mastered while they were students (Chatterjee & Ramesh, 2015:39). According to the person-environment-fit theory, the reason for teachers to put more emphasis on the domains they learned at school is influenced by a belief that it will be convenient and easy for their learners to learn the same domains which they (teachers) have learnt when they were students (Chatterjee & Ramesh, 2015:39).

There is an association between teachers' personality and person-environment-fit theory (Okeke et al., 2015:98 93). Teachers' personalities can either influence the success or failure of learners (Okeke et al., 2015:98 93). For example, positive teachers' personality traits support pupils' learning by creating conducive environments for learning and cooperation and encouraging learners' active participation in class activities (Okeke et al., 2015:98 93). On the other hand, negative teachers' personality traits affect pupils' learning negatively, resulting in passivity and a lack of emotional security within the learning environment (Okeke et al., 2015:98 93).

### **2.3.3 The transactional model of stress and burnout**

The transactional model of stress and burnout is a suitable framework for conducting research on work stress and burnout. This model explains that a stressful transaction or contact between a teacher and his/her work environment results in teacher burnout (Kusi et al., 2014:16). According to the transactional model of stress and burnout, stress and burnout are the products of the transaction or contact between an individual and his/her environment (Anazodo et al., 2012:32; Dewe, JO'Driscoll, & Cooper, 2012:26 in Gatchel & Schultz). That is, interaction causing demands in an individual's environment creates stress for that individual (Mackey, 2014:5). The transactional model of stress and burnout asserts stress as a process which involves a complex transaction between individual and environment (Abbas, Farah & Apkinar-Sposito, 2013:481). Stress consists of three processes, namely, primary appraisal which entails perceiving a threat, secondary appraisal which involves potential response to a threat and coping that entails executing a response (Abbas et al., 2013:481). According to the transactional model of stress and burnout, there should be a match or fit between individuals' abilities and their environmental demands (Abbas et al., 2013:481), because lack of fit between the demands placed on workers and their abilities to meet those demands can result in stress (Kusi et al., 2014:16). Abbas et al. (2013:481) argue that in a threatening situation, if the individual lacks the ability to cope, he/she will experience strain.

### **2.3.4 The transactional model of stress and burnout and the teaching profession**

According to the transactional model of stress and burnout, stress and burnout among teachers is caused by their perception of the imbalance between their classroom demands (challenges) and the resources needed to face those challenges such as support in the form of availability of educational facilities and supervisors' support (Lambert, McCarthy, Fitchett, Lineback & Reiser, 2015:3). That is, a situation in which teachers perceive that their classroom demands exceeds their resources leads to stress and burnout (Lambert et al., 2015:3). The proponents of the transactional model of stress and burnout make a proposition that teachers' perceptions of classroom demand concerning perceived classroom resources result in teacher stress (Lambert

et al., 2015:3). In relation to Classroom Appraisal (perception) of Resources and Demands (CARD), transactional model theorists classify teachers into three groups, namely, teachers who perceive classroom resources as greater than demands (labelled the resourced group), teachers who perceive classroom demands as equal to resources (labelled the balanced group) and teachers who perceive classroom demands as greater than resources (labelled the demands group) (Lambert et al., 2015:4). Therefore, according to the transactional model of stress and burnout, teachers who perceive classroom demands as greater than the resources (the demands group) are at high risk of stress and burnout (Lambert et al., 2015:4). The transactional approach theorists assert that teachers who perceive the highest levels of demands with regard to insufficient classroom resources are likely to experience behaviour related to complaints about undesirable learner behaviour, work dissatisfaction and little occupational commitment (Lambert et al., 2015:4).

The transactional model of stress and burnout hypothesises that when a teacher encounters life's challenges, there is always a subjective transaction in which the teacher weighs perceived demands of the event against perceived coping abilities (Ifeagwazi, Chukwuorji & Ugwu, 2013:485). It then follows that if the demands of the situation outweigh available resources to meet the challenges, stress and other psychopathological symptoms such as depression occur (Ifeagwazi et al., 2013:485). The transactional model of stress and burnout upholds a view that the transaction between the teacher and his/her environment determines whether the teacher may encounter stress or burnout (Ifeagwazi et al., 2013:485). There is disequilibrium when the teachers' work demands exceed available resources (Ifeagwazi et al., 2013:485). Ifeagwazi et al. (2013:485) postulate that the dynamics of a school entails that there could be excessive demands beyond the resources available to the teacher (Ifeagwazi et al., 2013:485). For example, Ifeagwazi et al. (2013:485) note that the current teaching realities might be inconsistent with teacher training and resources available at school, which might result in teacher stress and burnout (Ifeagwazi et al., 2013:485).

## **2.4 BURNOUT AS THE RESULT OF CHRONIC AND EXCESSIVE STRESS**

Burnout is the result of chronic and excessive stress (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:53). Stress as a factor for burnout is caused by a chain of variables such individuals'

changing social roles, disagreement among workers and bureaucratic working environments (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:53). When the stress of professional life piles up to difficulties and problems in the private lives of workers, it causes burnout which leads to serious problems both at individual and organisational level (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564).

#### **2.4.1 The concept of burnout**

Burnout is defined differently by different researchers. Koruklu, Feyzioğlu, Özenoğlu-Kiremit and Aladağ (2012:1823) define burnout as a function of stress which individuals feel in their social and professional life. It is also defined as a loss of aim, energy and idealism towards the job (Koruklu et al., 2012:1823). According to Utami and Nahartyo (2012:564) burnout means an inability to function effectively in the work environment as a consequence of prolonged and extensive work-related stress. Burnout is also defined as the response to chronic work-related emotional and interpersonal stressors that emerge from long-term exposure to demanding situations (Reddy & Poornima, 2012:112; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:564). In essence, burnout can be understood as the extreme result of the long-term effects of excessive stress representing a slow process of progressive loss of energy and enthusiasm (Bakker, Demerouti & Sanz-Vergel, 2014:390; Reddy & Poornima, 2012:112).

Aksu and Temeloglu (2015:220) observe that burnout is the last point of coping with chronic stress. Victims of burnout syndrome eventually encounter physical and mental problems (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:220). Victims of burnout are dangerous to society because they can reach a point of harming other people (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:220).

Burnout is a prolonged process, with its three related symptoms appearing sequentially (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566). The three dimensions of burnout are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. The manifestation of each of these dimensions of burnout is explained in paragraphs 2.4.4 to 2.4.10.

## 2.4.2 History of burnout

The concept of burnout was first introduced in the 1970s by Freudenberger (Bakker et al., 2014:390; Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46). Freudenberger used this term to describe the gradual emotional depletion and loss of motivation he observed among individuals who had volunteered to work for aid organisations in New York (Bakker et al., 2014:390). At the beginning the volunteers had worked with great dedication and enthusiasm for many months prior to the onset of the symptoms of burnout (Bakker et al., 2014:390). On the basis of his observations on the behaviour of those workers, Freudenberger defined burnout as a state of mental and physical exhaustion which he referred to as the extinction of motivation or incentive, where an employee's devotion to his/her work fails to produce good results (Bakker et al., 2014:390). According to Bakker et al. (2014:390) individuals who experience burnout deplete their energy and lose dedication to their work. In the 1970s research on burnout focused mainly on health workers with investigations initiated by researcher observation that discovered that after prolonged stress, employees exhibit physical exhaustion, losing motivation and dedication (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46). During this period, researchers determined that burnout among health workers was caused by heavy workloads and negative feedback which health workers received from their clients (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46).

During the 1980s, studies on burnout became more systematic and empirical (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46), with measurement scales developed for assessing the degree of burnout, such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46). The use of these measurement scales helped researchers to discover that work-related stress and burnout are associated with job dissatisfaction, frustrations and work conditions not conducive to general well-being (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:7; Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46).

In the 1990s, research on burnout widened its scope to cover other professions such as military commanders, priests and teachers (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46). During this period, measurement tools for measuring burnout were further improved and statistical methods of data analysis were predominantly used to analyse the data of burnout investigations (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46). During this period,

researchers also established that long-term effects of work stress predict burnout, resulting in the discovering of many effective methods of combating burnout (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46).

### **2.4.3 Characteristics of teacher burnout**

Burnout among teachers is manifested in the cognitive domain, on an emotional level, on a behavioural level, in interpersonal relationships, on a psychosomatic level, and with regard to work encounter (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:46; Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:220):

- In the cognitive domain, a teacher who is experiencing burnout exhibits behaviours such as low concentration, low self-esteem and apathy. He/she also experiences traumatic problems and is inclined to self-destruction attempts.
- On an emotional level, teachers suffering from burnout display feelings of weakness, guilt and anger. They experience fear, sadness, depression, intense mood swings and increased sensitivity towards matter and situations.
- On a behavioural level, victims of burnout are characterised by impatience, social withdrawal, sleep disorders and nightmares. They are also having eating disorders and are being more prone to accidents.
- With regard to interpersonal relationships, a teacher who is a victim of burnout is characterised by isolation, loss of interest in relationships, involved in interpersonal conflicts, and prone to loneliness and scepticism.
- On a psychosomatic level, a teacher who is a victim of burnout exhibits symptoms of shock, profuse sweating, dizziness and.
- With regard to work encounter, teachers suffering from burnout experience low morale, are demotivated and have constant negative attitudes towards work.

#### **2.4.4 Dimensions of burnout**

Burnout is a syndrome consisting of three dimensions, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment, with these dimensions experienced frequently among teachers (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014:296). Exhaustion involves a sense of lack of professional fulfilment among teachers, while depersonalisation is expressed by blaming learners and colleagues and other stakeholders whereas reduced personal accomplishment entails teachers' negative self-evaluation in relation to their job performance (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012:6, Bas, G. 2011:85). Bataineh and Alsagheer (2012:6) report that burnout among teachers is the feeling of professional failure as a result of the gap between the actual feelings of personal professional competence and the ideal competence to which the teacher must aspire. Bataineh and Alsagheer (2012:6) further postulate that the personal competence of teachers relates not only to teaching tasks and interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners but also to teachers' performance at the school setting. The dimensions of burnout are elaborated on next.

#### **2.4.5 Emotional exhaustion**

Emotional exhaustion is the starting point of burnout associated mainly with work stress (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). Emotional exhaustion refers to the situation that arises from extreme exhaustion caused by psychological and emotional demands (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). Individuals experiencing emotional exhaustion lose their sense of responsibility and as a result they end up either not going to work or are late for their work (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221; Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566). Victims of emotional exhaustion complain intensely about workload (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). Symptoms of exhaustion are stress, anger and uneasiness at home (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221).

#### **2.4.6 Manifestation of emotional exhaustion in the teaching profession**

Emotional exhaustion manifests itself in many different ways in the teaching profession. Emotional exhaustion is experienced when a teacher feels as though all

of his/her energy or emotional resources are used up (Bousquet, 2012:3). Teachers may experience emotional symptoms such as being nervous around the learners, having intrusive thoughts, panic attacks and bursting into tears (Shoaga et al., 2015:96). Teachers may also experience symptoms such as losing interest in things, neglecting their personal appearances and experiencing periods of confusion (Shoaga et al., 2015:96). Teachers may experience physical symptoms such as stomach upsets, dizzy spells and headaches (Shoaga et al., 2015:96). When experiencing emotional exhaustion, teachers avoid going to school and fail to work with learners which lead to a decline in learners' academic performance (Bousquet, 2012:7). A state of emotional exhaustion in the teaching profession is evident when teachers are chronically and physically absent or mentally unable to plan their work (Bousquet, 2012:7).

#### **2.4.7 Depersonalisation**

Depersonalisation relates to an employee's indifferent attitude towards clients (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221; Bakker et al., 2014:390). Depersonalisation entails a tendency to exert negative and uncaring attitudes toward other people (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566). It represents the tendency to treat service seekers as objects (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566). Depersonalisation at the workplace is portrayed by the state of the individual being perceived as bureaucratic, rude and impersonal (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221).

#### **2.4.8 Manifestation of depersonalisation in the teaching profession**

Teachers in a situation of depersonalisation display negative behaviours towards their colleagues at work (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). They see and treat learners as objects (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). When experiencing depersonalisation, teachers become indifferent towards their learners (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). They exhibit neglectful and cynical attitudes both towards their colleagues and learners (Yilmaz, Altinkurt, Guner & Sen, 2015:78). When in a state of depersonalisation, a teacher separates himself/herself from colleagues, family and friends (Bousquet, 2012:3). This separation/withdrawal is manifested both through physical isolation and through distancing oneself emotionally (Bousquet, 2012:3). A

teacher who is a victim of depersonalisation exhibits defence mechanisms and makes fun of other teachers (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221).

#### **2.4.9 Reduced personal accomplishment**

Reduced personal accomplishment is caused by a lack of recognition and positive feedback (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566). It represents the state of feeling unsuccessful and insufficient (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). Individuals experiencing reduced personal accomplishment have feelings of failure, inadequacy and experience a loss of self-respect (Yilmaz, 2014:785). It is characterised by a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:566).

#### **2.4.10 Manifestation of reduced personal accomplishment in the teaching profession**

Reduced personal accomplishment in the teaching profession is manifested in teachers who are inclined to assess themselves in a negative manner (Yilmaz et al., 2015:78). When facing the challenge of reduced personal accomplishment, teachers have a tendency of feeling a sense of decreased personal value and incompetency in their career (Bousquet, 2012:3). Reduced personal accomplishment is a state in which teachers feel that they are unsuccessful and insufficient in their teaching profession as the result of feeling estranged towards their duties (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221). A state of reduced personal accomplishment makes teachers experience problems such as low motivation, a lack of control, despair and a loss of self-respect (Yilmaz et al., 2015:78). In this state, teachers feel that executing any type of duty is a wasted effort and they feel guilty about everything which results in job dissatisfaction (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2015:221).

### **2.5 PROFESSIONS SUBJECT TO INTENSIVE STRESS AND BURNOUT**

Burnout is common amongst professionals who offer intensive help to groups of people and individuals (Çağlar, 2011:1842; Hussein, Al Faisal, Wasfy, Monsef, Abdulrahim, El Sawaf, Al Marzooqi, & Echtibi, 2015:24; Louw, George & Esterhuysen, 2011:1). Evidence demonstrates that professionals such as teachers, medical staff

and church ministers are at risk of having high levels of burnout due to their intense involvement with 'clients' (Hussein et al., 2015:24; Innstranda, Langballeb & Falkum, 2011:241; Louw et al., 2011:1). The teaching profession experiences similar burnout conditions as the conditions experienced in the pastoral and medical professions (Hussein et al., 2015:24). A discussion of burnout conditions experienced in the teaching profession follows a discussion of the conditions experienced in the pastoral and medical professions resulting in possible burnout.

Individuals in the pastoral profession are likely to be exposed to burnout because working as a church minister is mentally demanding (Innstranda et al., 2011:241). Church ministers are expected to be always available to others and they shoulder many responsibilities, including administration, preaching and counselling troubled persons (Innstranda et al., 2011:241). Church ministers are likely to be burned out since they help family members to deal with the emotional distress of grief and bereavement (Galek, Flannelly, Greene & Kudler, 2011:634). They also address a range of other emotional reactions of patients and families, including anxiety, depression, and loneliness (Galek et al., 2011:634). Because of the nature of their work, the clergy deal with a number of emotional issues on a more regular basis which may contribute to burnout (Galek et al., 2011:634).

With regard to the medical profession, according to Hussein et al. (2015:24) and Kizilci, Erdoğan and Sözen (2012:307) health-care professionals such as nurses and doctors are vulnerable to burnout because they fall into the category of human services professionals who work constantly one-on-one with people. The causes of burnout in the medical field include heavy workload, high stress, numerous responsibilities and critical decision-making (Darawad, Nawafleh, Maharmeh, Hamdan-Mansour & Azzeghaiby, 2015:15). Other stressors in this field pertain to interpersonal and emotional demands, which imply the exposure to suffering, grief and death of patients (Consiglio, 2014:70). According to Consiglio (2014:70), these social interactions with patients, the families of patients, and colleagues require hospital workers to exert mental, physical and emotional effort. Symptoms of burnout in the medical profession include psychopathological symptoms such as depression and anxiety, somatic symptoms and organic disorders (Craiovan, 2014:530). The burnout

syndrome among medical professionals affects individuals, the organisation, and patients negatively (Craiovan, 2014:529).

Professions involving extensive human contact such as church ministers, medical staff and teachers are at risk of burnout due to their intense involvement with 'clients' (Hussein et al., 2015:24; Innstranda et al., 2011:241; Louw et al., 2011:1). Church ministers, who are expected to be always available to others, serve congregants, the majority of which are underprivileged resulting in church ministers shouldering many responsibilities such as administration, preaching and counselling troubled persons (Innstranda et al., 2011:241). Medical workers are exposed to burnout because they carry huge responsibilities such as taking care of patients, counselling patients, taking part in community-related committee work, and engaging in clinical practices in hospitals (Kizilci, 2012:307). Teachers are prone to burnout because they execute many interpersonal-related activities within the school environment of which dealing with discipline problems in the classroom is a major and strenuous one (Munir & Mehmood, 2013:181; Pucella, 2011:53). Teachers therefore feel that they invest more in learners and the school system than they receive from them (Antoniou, Ploumpi & Ntalla, 2013:349).

## **2.6 THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND BURNOUT**

Teaching is a service providing profession which is associated with burnout (Tsigilis, Zournatzi & Koustelios, 2011:53). Studies reveal that organisational burnout intensity as a product of stress is very high in educational institutions because teaching involves interactions with learners which lead to teacher-learner conflicts (Çağlar, 2011:1843; Munir & Mehmood, 2013:181). Teachers are in constant interaction with learners throughout the day, managing the class, implementing new teaching techniques in order to enhance learning, dealing with difficult learners and counselling learners who have learning and personal problems (Munir & Mehmood, 2013:181; Pucella, 2011:53). All these makes teaching to be a stressful endeavour which causes much pressure and burnout to teachers (Çağlar, 2011:1843). Teachers are always under pressure to meet the needs and expectations of their learners, exposing them to both internal and external stressors which hamper their abilities in coping with feelings of exhaustion and strain (Shoaga et al., 2015:95). Teaching is a profession that is not

only intellectually demanding, but also emotionally exhausting because sometimes it requires teachers to interact with young children or with children having serious emotional problems due to home background circumstances such as, for example, family disintegration (Anusiem & Okoiye, 2015:10). In this regard, teaching is taxing as it is difficult to make a meaningful impact on the intellectual and character development of learners exposed to debilitating home conditions (Anusiem & Okoiye, 2015:10).

Teachers' interactions with troublesome learners lead to a situation in which teachers experience immense stress (Antoniou, Ploumpi & Ntalla, 2013:349). According to Antoniou et al. (2013:349), because of many roles which teachers play in relation to helping learners in the school environment, this makes teachers feel that they invest more in learners than they receive from them, which then make teachers face emotional, psychological and occupational difficulties. Assuming the role of *in loco parentis* (Amimo, 2012:341), represents a challenge and major stressor for teachers when learners are from deprived environments. The principle of *in loco parentis* requires teachers to assume parental responsibilities while learners are in their custody during school hours (Amimo, 2012:341). With deprived learners attending school on empty stomachs, custody of these children represents emotional stress for teachers. Because of family disintegration experienced more acutely in the twenty-first century, teachers are faced with more demands and challenges than the teachers in the previous centuries resulting in teachers experiencing *in loco parentis* more intensely (Bousquet, 2012:12). Teachers are not only expected to provide quality education but they are also expected to provide social work services to learners, act as health care providers and parents (Bousquet, 2012:12). All these factors lead to stress and burnout among teachers (Bousquet, 2012:5).

Teachers' interaction with learners who have problematic behaviour causes severe stress and burnout for teachers (Yazdanmehr & Akbari, 2015:2). Learners' unacceptable behaviour relating to disruption and violence have a huge effect on teacher stress and burnout (Yazdanmehr & Akbari, 2015:2). Yazdanmehr and Akbari (2015:2) report that teachers who have problems with class behaviour management and classroom discipline often exhibit high levels of anxiety and symptoms of burnout and as a result they are frequently ineffective in their teaching. Salami (2011:111)

observes that managing learner misbehaviour is a predictor of burnout. According to Bousquet (2012:11), learners' behaviour is unpredictable and, therefore, this unplanned and uncontrolled environment/behaviour which exceeds the teachers' capacity to adjust to it, taxes teachers physically and psychologically. This state of affairs allows teachers no time for rest and recovery of the body's resources and strength (Bousquet, 2012:11; Fisher, 2011:7). Additional to disruption and violence, more examples of learner behaviour which lead to teacher stress are hostility towards teachers, not paying attention during class and not engaging in homework assignments (Fisher, 2011:7).

Research on teacher stress and burnout shows that work environment characteristics such as lack of administrative and supervisor support contributes to stress and burnout among teachers (Badawy, 2015:103). Teachers who are not supported by their supervisors are more likely to be dissatisfied because they feel as if their supervisors contribute to put more burdens on their shoulders, and accordingly their stress and burnout levels are increased (Badawy, 2015:103). Lack of supervisor support result in teacher stress and burnout, influencing teachers to leave the profession (Morgan, 2015:4).

The constant interaction and close associations required among teachers and other stakeholders in the working environment cause stress which eventually results in organisational burnout (Antoniou et al, 2013:349; Louw et al., 2011:1; Munir & Mehmood, 2013:181). Negative interpersonal relationships between supervisors and teachers when supervisors use supervision as a means of control and exerting their power on teachers causes much stress for the mentee (Essiam, Mensah, Kudu & Gyamfi, 2015:2; Sharma, Yusoff, Kannan & Baba, 2011:214). In this regard, Sharma et al. (2011:214) point out that supervision can become a private cold war between supervisors and teachers when such supervision is characterised by a negative relationship between the two parties. Teaching, because of its nature necessitates that teachers should interact with education officers for the purposes of supervision and inspection of teachers' work (Essiam et al., 2015:2). This interaction can lead to teacher stress and burnout when unnecessary pressure is put on teachers by the education officers.

Another aspect of appraisal which leads to a stressful situation for teachers, is the appraisal by learners when this appraisal realises as a situation of one-way communication between teachers and learner appraisers (McCarthy, Lambert, Lineback, Fitchett & Baddouh, 2015:1). Appraisal, as a technique used to give a worker feedback about his/her performance at the workplace (McCarthy et al., 2015:1), should be a two-way process in which both the appraiser and appraisee discuss the worker's performance whereby the appraisee has a chance to give reasons for his/her underperformance if relevant (McCarthy et al., 2015:1). With regard to the teaching profession, appraisal becomes stressful to teachers when classroom demands exceed teachers' resources for coping with those demands resulting in stress and burnout (McCarthy et al., 2015:1). Lack of teaching facilities and inadequate teacher training opportunities as a state in which classroom demands exceed teachers' resources, hampers teaching (McCarthy et al., 2015:2). Salami (2011:111) notes that these conditions contribute to unfair appraisals by learners of their teachers' performance contributing to teacher stress and eventual burnout. This is particularly relevant when in-disciplined learners provide destructive feedback on their teachers, focusing subjectively on the humane weaknesses of their teachers (Salami, 2011:111).

An important factor associated with teacher stress pertains to teachers' close involvement with parents (Amimo, 2012:341). Interactions between teachers and parents lead to organisational stress which translates into burnout among teachers (Amimo, 2012:341; Tashi, 2014:72). Teachers are always exposed to the risk of stress and burnout as a result of the increased number of roles which parents demand from teachers (Salami, 2011:111). During the process of interactions between parents and teachers, parents usually complain about teachers not doing enough to help their children to succeed (Tashi, 2014:172). Despite the fact that teachers are providing more services to the learners, parents do not only continue to demand more from the teachers but they are rarely satisfied with the work of the teachers (Bousquet, 2012:12). These continual unreasonable demands from parents trigger chronic stress and eventual burnout (Bousquet, 2012:12). Problem parents continually and consistently complain about the failure of teachers (Bousquet, 2012:12). It becomes difficult and stressful for teachers to take pride in their work when their professionalism

is being questioned by ignorant parents who claim to be knowledgeable about the teaching profession (Bousquet, 2012:12).

Teacher stress is a consequence of work pressure because teachers experience huge work demands to be carried out in limited time, which results in high strain levels (Badawy, 2015:103). Badawy (2015:107) observes that high work pressure is attributed to the nature of the teaching occupation itself, relating to hectic working days with teachers having little time for rest and relaxation. The many tasks to be carried out by teachers within a limited time, includes, amongst other, preparation for teaching, copying learning material, attending staff and team meetings and attending to co-curricular obligations, all of which contribute to increased stress levels among teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015:184).

Pertinent to teacher stress is the lack of professional autonomy (Badawy, 2015:102). This entails a situation in which workers are not given a chance to participate in the decision-making processes of their organisation and a situation in which employees experience a high degree of control from their supervisors (Badawy, 2015:103). Tight managerial control resulting in a lack of autonomy imposes stress on teachers while high autonomy with low managerial control alleviates stress (Badawy, 2015:103; Malik & Shahabuddin, 2015). Autonomy is, therefore, a factor for teachers' well-being which implies worker empowerment due to engagement in decision-making resulting in positive work emotions (Badawy, 2015:103). According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015:184), lack of professional autonomy in the teaching profession involves lack of flexibility and the opportunity to choose what content to facilitate when and how within the parameters of the national curriculum prescriptions. Teachers are prone to stress when they are forced to do their lesson preparation in the staffroom during their free periods instead of at home because in the staffroom their lesson planning is interrupted by colleagues, the principal and by unplanned staff meetings (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015:184). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015:184) emphasise that flexible working hours for teachers, apart from adhering to the formal lesson time table arrangements, contributes to enhanced teacher well-being.

## **2.7 MODELS OF BURNOUT**

Burnout is a serious psychological syndrome which affects the lives of many teachers throughout the world (Bousquet, 2012:2). Today, there are many models which contribute towards researchers' understanding of the developing of burnout among workers (Foley, 2013:17). Three of these models entail the job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Moss, 2015:25), the job demand-control model (Foley, 2013:18) and the burnout cascade model (Frye, 2015:13). A discussion of how these models contribute towards an understanding of burnout development is presented next.

### **2.7.1 The job-demands-resources model of burnout**

The job-demands-resources model (JDR) of burnout was developed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (Moss, 2015:25). This model postulates that burnout develops from stress and that it is a product of two categories of work characteristics, namely, job demands and lack of job resources (Foley, 2013:19). Job demands refer to the aspects of work that require effort, for example, work pressure which results in psychological costs, such as burnout (Foley, 2013:19; Moss, 2015:25). Lack of job resources such as career opportunities, support from colleagues, professional autonomy and positive climate, hamper the achievement of organisational goals (Moss, 2015:25). The implication is that the availability of job resources not only assists workers to achieve work goals, but it also diminishes job demands and influences personal growth among workers (Moss, 2015:25). Job demands exhaust workers' mental and physical resources, leading to depletion of employees' energy, which eventually results in health problems (Foley, 2013:19). Job resources are important because its presence leads to work engagement while its absence causes a cynical attitude towards work (Foley, 2013:19).

### **2.7.2 The job-demands-resources model of burnout and the teaching profession**

The job-demands-resources model is a suitable model for predicting teacher burnout because work demands such as a heavy workload, an unfavourable physical work environment, irregular working hours and work pressure cause stress and increase

the risk of burnout, which results in the weakening of long-term well-being and health among teachers (Nislin et al., 2015:44). This occurs frequently in situations where meeting job demands requires high effort with insufficient time (Nislin et al, 2015:44). Alzyoud, Othman and Isa (2015:104) observe that job demands reduce teachers' mental and physical energy reserves which lead to tiredness and eventual burnout.

The JDR model may either predict or alleviate burnout among teachers (Alzyoud et al., 2015:104). The lack of job resources such as the support of co-workers and supervisors, performance feedback and professional autonomy increase burnout whereas the availability of job resources raises teachers' preparedness to work hard (Alzyoud et al., 2015:104). Job resources satisfy teachers' need for autonomy, competence and professional growth (Alzyoud et al., 2015:105). In this regard, coaching of a teacher by his/her supervisor improves the teacher's job competence (Alzyoud et al., 2015:105) whereas involvement of teachers in decision-making fulfils teachers' necessity for autonomy resulting in increased work engagement (Alzyoud et al., 2015:105). Job resources act as both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for teachers because in resourceful environments teachers are more successful in completing instructional tasks. Alzyoud et al. (2015:105) confirm that the sufficient supply of job resources enhances teachers' work engagement while deficiencies hinder goal accomplishment leading to a situation in which teachers develop cynical attitudes towards their work (Alzyoud et al., 2015:105).

### **2.7.3 The job-demand-control model**

The job-demand-control model (JDC) asserts that job burnout is caused by a combination of high job demands and low job control (Foley, 2013:18). Job demands refer to work overload and time pressure while job control entails an employee's potential control over his/her tasks or worker's professional autonomy at the workplace (Foley, 2013:18). Schmidt, Sieverding, Scheiter and Obergfell (2015:450) understand job demand as task requirements relating to time pressure and role conflict. Job control pertains employees' ability to control their work activities involving skill discretion and decision authority and latitude (Schmidt et al., 2015:450). The essence emphasised by the JDC model is that employees who have autonomy at their workplace are less likely to experience burnout. Therefore, the combination of high job

demands and a lack of job control are predictors of stress resulting in psychological burnout reactions such as high blood pressure and low job satisfaction.

According to the job-demand-control model, employees' ability to make work-related decisions pertaining to demands reduce burnout levels and increase creativity (Essiam et al., 2015:3). The JDC model postulates that when work demand and the level of control pertaining to employee's professional autonomy is high, employees are motivated to dedicated work performance (Essiam et al., 2015:3). This boosts workers' levels of creativity which in turn enables them to master challenging work-related skills resulting in reduced levels of burnout (Essiam et al., 2015:3). When the psychological demand of work is high and the level of control is low, burnout levels increase leading to high risks of psychological and physical illness (Essiam et al., 2015:3).

#### **2.7.4 The job-demand-control model and the teaching profession**

The application of the job-demand-control model to the teaching profession suggests that the demands of work, without equivalent control over their work activities, have a high propensity to aggravate teachers' burnout levels (Essiam et al., 2015:3). High work demands such as having to work under time pressure and experiencing role conflict with little room for teachers to make their own decisions in matters relating to their work, such as prescribed books to be included in the syllabus, are factors which influence teacher burnout negatively (Schmidt et al. (2015:451). Foley (2013:18) emphasises that teachers prefer having freedom to develop and deliver the curriculum as they see fit.

#### **2.7.5 The burnout cascade model**

The burnout cascade model developed by Jennings and Greenberg postulates that teachers experience increased levels of emotional exhaustion when they are confronted with difficult child behaviour (Jennings, Snowberg, Coccia & Greenberg, 2011:37). Teachers then resort to reactive and punitive measures against learners instead of practising constructive classroom management strategies which would contribute to a conducive classroom climate lessening problem behaviour by indisciplined learners (Frye, 2015:13).

### **2.7.6 The burnout cascade model and the teaching profession**

The burnout cascade model is applicable to the teaching profession emphasising the need for teachers to have a high degree of social and emotional competence in order to succeed in addressing the management, instructional and emotional challenges of the classroom (Jennings, Snowberg, Coccia & Greenberg, 2013: 376). Social and emotional competence as a personal resource comprises of five skills, namely, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and decision-making (Jennings et al., 2013:374). Jennings et al. (2011:37) note that lack of social and emotional competence among teachers endangers classroom management and lowers levels of on-task learner behaviour with related lowered academic performance. According to the burnout cascade model, as social interactions in the classroom deteriorate and conflict escalates, the demands on the teacher increase to trigger the cascading of teacher burnout (Jennings et al., 2015:376).

### **2.7.7 The job-demand-control-support model**

The job-demand-control-support model (JDACS) was coined by Karasek and Theorell who emphasised the relationship between job demand, job control, job support and burnout (Shirom, Toker, Alkaly, Jacobson & Balicer, 2011:268). This model includes three components, namely job demands, job control and job support (Badawy, 2015:102; Shirom et al., 2011:268). Job demands entail workload, time pressure and role conflict (Wei, Shujuan & Qiboc, 2011:857). Job control which is understood as decision latitude, refers to decision authority and skills judgment (Wei et al., 2011:857) which Shirom et al. (2011:268) define as a perceived freedom that permits workers to decide on how to meet job demands. Job support refers to supportive relations based on helpful social interaction between co-workers and between co-workers and supervisors (Badawy, 2015:102; Shirom et al., 2011:268). Shirom et al. (2011:269) explain the direct link between the JDACS model and burnout, namely that high levels of workload and supervisor control are associated with elevated levels of burnout, whereas a high degree of worker autonomy and high levels of support amongst peers and amongst workers and supervisors lead to reduced levels of burnout.

### **2.7.8 The job-demand-control-support model and the teaching profession**

The job-demand-control-support model is applicable to the teaching profession in that teachers experience stress in a situation where high job demand and low job control exists simultaneously (Wei et al., 2011:857). In contrast, a situation of high job demand and high job control contribute to motivated teachers (Wei et al., 2011:857). Social support as a component of the JDCS model and indispensable for the teaching profession confirms the applicability of the JDCS model for the teaching profession (Wei et al., 2011:857). Low social support results in increased stress levels whereas enough social support decreases stress levels enabling teachers to perform optimally (Wei et al., 2011:857).

## **2.8 MODELS OF STRESS**

Different models of stress serve as guide to explain and understand the syndrome of stress. Two of these models, applicable to this study on teacher stress, are the effort-reward-imbalance (ERI) model (Abbas et al., 2013:481) and the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:319).

### **2.8.1 The effort-reward-imbalance model**

The effort-reward-imbalance (ERI) model was developed by Siegrist in 1996 (Abbas et al., 2013:481) claiming that employees exchange efforts for rewards (Abbas et al., 2013:481). In this regard, the ERI model is based on the premise that work-related benefits depend on the reciprocal relationship between employees' efforts and the rewards they gain at work (Panatik, Rajab, Shaari, Saat, Wahab & Mohd, 2012:592). This implies that workers' effort for executing duties should be compensated by suitable rewards and that a mismatch between the two results in emotional stress and strain among workers (Abbas et al., 2013:481). Rewards can be in the form of adequate salaries, promotion prospects, respect and support and emotional security (Abbas et al., 2013:481; Siegrist, 2012:2). Efforts entail workers' commitment to their work in the sense of striving towards achieving organisational goals (Abbas et al., 2013:481).

The effort-reward-imbalance model claims that failure to reciprocate the efforts which workers exert in executing their duties elicit negative emotions and sustained stress responses among workers (Siegrist, 2012:2). Conversely, rewarding employees appropriately for work done well promotes well-being, good health and emotional survival (Siegrist, 2012:2). According to the ERI model, lack of reciprocity and disequilibrium between costs (high effort) and gains (low reward) manifest in the following conditions (Siegrist, 2012:2):

- Employees' contracts are poorly defined, or employees have little choice of alternatives at the workplace because of low skill levels and a lack of mobility (Siegrist, 2012:2).
- Employees accept the imbalance for strategic reasons such as the improvement of future work prospects (Siegrist, 2012:2).

### **2.8.2 The effort-reward-imbalance model and the teaching profession**

The effort-reward-imbalance model is applicable to the teaching profession in that a mismatch between costs (high effort) and gains (low reward) causes emotional stress and burnout among teachers, which results in cardiovascular risks, general poor health, sickness and absence from work (Kosi, Sulemana, Boateng & Mensah, 2015:2). The effort-reward-imbalance model is also linked to turnover among teachers because when teachers are not adequately rewarded for their efforts, they quit their teaching positions (Kosi et al., 2015:2; Panatik et al., 2012). There is also a link between the ERI model and job satisfaction because when teachers are rewarded according to the amount of work they do, they are satisfied, resulting in them being more creative and innovative in their teaching endeavours, initiating teaching and learning breakthroughs, which confirms increased job performance (Pan, Shen, Liu, Yang & Wang, 2015:12762).

### **2.8.3 The conservation of resources theory**

The conservation of resources theory (COR) suggests that people strive to obtain, retain and protect resources (Penner, 2012:13). The COR theory categorises resources into personal characteristics (high self-esteem and positive outlook), objects

(home and car), conditions (job, financial and emotional security), and energies (knowledge and time) (Pennonen, 2012:13). According to the COR theory, stress occurs when resources are lost or when individuals fail to gain resources (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320). The COR theory asserts that when resources are gained, those resources will be invested to obtain additional resources (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320). For example, after developing skills at work, workers invest those skills in work performance in order to acquire additional resources related to rewards and work status (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320). In this regard, COR theory suggests that employees invest resources in such a way that the invested resources maximise returns (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320).

The conservation of resources theory claims that resources are instrumental in helping workers to achieve work goals and reduce job demands because when workers have adequate resources, they are energetic, dedicated and passionate about their work (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320). Resources act as intrinsic and extrinsic motivators because they help individuals to meet their needs and they enhance individuals' growth and development (Suan & Nasurdin, 2013:320).

#### **2.8.4 The conservation of resources theory and the teaching profession**

The conservation of resources theory is applicable to the teaching profession insofar as examining the interface between teachers' work and non-work domains (Sorensen and McKim, 2014:118). An interface between teachers' work and life roles is traced to the concept of spill-over representing a state in which stress experienced in one domain of an individual's life results in stress experienced in the other domains of life for the specific individual (Sorensen & McKim, 2014:118). Hence, spill-over is a process by which teachers' attitudes, job strain, perceptions and behaviours carry over from one role to the other (Sorensen & McKim, 2014:118). That is, the teacher's attitudes, behaviours, job strain and perceptions experienced in teaching, spill over into other domains of his/her life such as being a friend, parent or spouse (Sorensen & McKim, 2014:118). Sorensen and McKim (2014:119) note that there are positive and negative spill-over perspectives. In the case of a positive spill-over perspective, spouse support, for example, enables a teacher to cope better with work stress

whereas the lack of spouse support as negative spill-over increases work stress and the possibility of eventual burnout (Sorensen & McKim, 2014:119).

The conservation of resources theory is applicable to the teaching profession insofar as that an unfavourable work situation threatens teachers' resources relating to self-esteem and a positive outlook on life, resulting in increased stress (Pennonen, 2012:13). In order to recover from such stress, employees arrange for adequate resources and the restoring of lost resources by having functional recreation activities to refill energy reserves contributing to restoring teacher self-esteem. In this regard, the COR theory affirms that teachers who possess positive psychological capacities to restore lost resources perform better in their teaching positions, experiencing high levels of job satisfaction and acceptable teaching performance (Hansen, Buitendach & Kanengoni, 2015:2).

## **2.9 TEACHER BURNOUT WITHIN THE LESOTHO CONTEXT**

In the context of Lesotho, causes of stress and burnout among teachers are mainly associated with increased workloads which is the result of ill-health of teachers themselves and their relatives which they have to take care of, or of their learners, which is all caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Ntaote, 2011:53). Other factors associated with stress and burnout within the Lesotho context include poor pupil discipline, poor school conditions due to low socio-economic status conditions in the external environment, and demotivating poor salaries for teachers (Chireshe and Shumba, 2011:116). In addition, these conditions causing stress and burnout are exacerbated by factors typical of African conditions such as generally unattractive work conditions relating to a lack of running water, electricity and adequate school buildings, which are accompanied by a lack of professional development opportunities for teachers (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:114).

With reference to pupils' ill-behaviour causing teacher stress and eventual burnout (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:114), unacceptable learner behaviour in Lesotho relates to bullying (Mosia, 2015:161). Mosia (2015:161) notes that although verbal bullying is the most common type of bullying in Lesotho schools, many instances of physical bullying also exist. Bullying is a huge problem for teachers because it occurs in

classrooms where teachers are always expected to be in total control of learners (Mosia, 2015:161). Two factors reinforcing bullying in Lesotho schools pertain to teachers being reactive instead of proactive in dealing with learners' misbehaviour and learners failing to report incidents of bullying, resulting in hampered learner well-being accompanied by hampered learning, which in turn causes increased teacher stress (Mosia, 2015:161).

In the context of Lesotho, teaching is considered stressful relating to poor school and working conditions because of deprivation and low socio-economic status conditions (Chireshe and Shumba, 2011:114). These conditions are like conditions in countries of sub-Saharan Africa such as Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe where the locations of most schools are in desolated rural settings with poor and inadequate infrastructure lowering teacher morale (Chireshe and Shumba, 2011:114; Mutune & Orodho, 2014:14). Teachers are concerned about their working environment for the sake of personal comfort and for the enhancement of work performance (Mutune & Orodho, 2014:14). For this reason, debilitating working conditions create despair amongst teachers (Mutune & Orodho, 2014:13).

Low teacher salaries make teaching a stressful occupation in developing countries such as Lesotho (Chireshe and Shumba, 2011:114). Poor salaries causing job dissatisfaction results in teachers quitting the teaching profession in pursuit of better work propositions (Mutune & Orodho, 2014:15). Acute low salaries accompanied by inadequate physical and emotional infrastructure lower the morale of teachers (Mutune & Orodho, 2014:15). In comparison with other professions in Lesotho, the teaching profession is the least paid profession with teachers receiving less remuneration than the nursing profession and other occupations in the public service (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:24). Comparing teacher salaries in Lesotho with teacher salaries in countries such as Botswana and Swaziland who share a similar history indicates that teachers in Lesotho are significantly less paid than teachers in Botswana and Swaziland (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:24).

Unattractive work conditions in Lesotho schools that are similar to conditions in other third world countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Zimbabwe,

also entail a lack of safety due to constant warfare internally executed. In Lesotho, the pupil-teacher ratio is as high as 80 learners per teacher resulting in much pressure for teachers to facilitate curriculum content effectively (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:5). The constant completing of school work at home after school hours makes teaching a continuous stressful occupation (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:114). The unattractive work conditions in Lesotho because of poor physical infrastructure are accompanied by a shortage of teaching-learning facilities and materials (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:27). Further, the regular unprofessional treatment of teachers and the arbitrary teacher deployment system resulting in a lack of work security as experienced in Zimbabwe, is also applicable to the Lesotho environment, making teaching a stressful profession in Lesotho (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:114).

Lack of professional development opportunities for teachers in Lesotho causing frustration and burnout among teachers represents a main reason for the exodus of teachers to greener pastures in South Africa (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:114). The lack of professional development opportunities for Lesotho teachers is exacerbated by the lack of up-dated library resources to support independent learning. The use of information technology as a crucial form of literacy for functioning in a knowledge-based society, is critically lacking in Lesotho (Ministry of Education and Training, 2013:11).

## **2.10 SUMMARY**

Burnout is the result of long-term stress. It impacts teacher motivation and job satisfaction negatively, representing a pertinent factor for teacher attrition. If left uncurbed, burnout is detrimental to teachers' health, school functioning and learner performance. Self-efficacy theory is one of the most applicable frameworks for conducting research on work stress and burnout. Individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are less affected by stress and burnout and are inclined to perform better than individuals with low levels of self-efficacy. Employers boost the self-efficacy levels of their employees by providing ample professional development opportunities and by practising supportive leadership. With regard to the teaching profession, self-efficacy is pivotal to the work of a teacher. Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy are committed to their work, having the ability to tolerate work-related frustrations, which

enhances teacher confidence in carrying out responsibilities. Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are retained in the teaching profession, benefitting teaching and learning because they are inclined to experiment with new teaching strategies.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **A LITERATURE STUDY ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN TEACHER BURNOUT AND PREDICTOR VARIABLES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Burnout hampers the efficiency of organisations (Aksu & Temeloglu, 2011:219). There are several problems which are caused by burnout, for example, it lowers the levels of well-being of employees, it causes workers to abandon or neglect their duties and it results in individuals abandoning their personal responsibilities such as taking care of their families (Borghei & Ghazliyar, 2015:139). Teachers who are the victims of burnout experience emotional and physical problems such as exhaustion, insomnia and headaches (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:131). Teachers who are prone to burnout tend to leave the teaching profession (Antoniou, Ploumpi & Ntalla, 2013:349). Researchers conceptualise burnout as a long-term work-related stress that has been left unaddressed (Koenig, 2014:4). When teachers are experiencing stress, they employ positive (constructive), negative (unconstructive) and neutral coping strategies (Kempf, 2011:13; Sprenger, 2011:43; Tompoidi, 2016:15). Positive coping strategies are most effective to manage stress while negative coping strategies are detrimental involving drug abuse with the potential of aggravating the intensity of stress (Kempf, 2011:13; Sprenger, 2011:58). Neutral coping strategies neither solve the stress-related problems nor make them worse (Sprenger, 2011:44).

#### **3.2 TEACHER AGE AND BURNOUT**

Studies on the relationship between teacher age and burnout reveal a significant relationship between the two variables in that younger staff report higher levels of work stress and burnout than older staff (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137; Tsigilis et al., 2011:56). This is attributed to the fact that as people grow older, they gain more experience and become more worldly-wise and, as a result, they are less likely to be affected by stress and burnout as compared to younger workers (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137). In terms of time management, working under pressure and controlling their emotions, older workers, unlike their younger counterparts, are more skillful making them less likely to be affected by stress and burnout (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137).

A further reason for older employees to be less affected by burnout is that older employees are more satisfied with life situations (conditions) than their younger counterparts (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137). Young teachers are more susceptible to burnout due to their tendency to be idealistic, often being anxious to perform and achieve professionally (Louw, George & Esterhuysen, 2011:2). Therefore, when they fail to achieve success with improved learner performance, they encounter their performance as being undervalued and unappreciated, resulting in anxiety and a feeling of inadequacy, which relates to reduced performance accomplishment as a dimension of burnout (Louw et al., 2011:2).

### **3.3 TEACHER GENDER AND BURNOUT**

A number of studies have been conducted on the relationship between burnout and gender (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:136-137; Tashi, 2014:76). Some studies consider burnout higher among female teachers (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:134) while other studies found burnout to be more prevalent among male teachers (Tashi, 2014:76). High levels of burnout among female teachers are attributed to the extra responsibilities of female teachers as home makers (Buyukbayraktar & Temiz, 2015:134). Female teachers' high levels of burnout are also attributed to their empathic nature towards learners with personal problems (Antonioni et al., 2013:350). High levels of burnout among male teachers are attributed to long formal working hours because men, more than women, depend on promotion and salary increases for making a living as opposed to women who are inclined to raise funds through income-generating projects (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:136-137).

Some studies suffice that gender is not a predictor of work-related burnout because men and women experience burnout in a similar manner (Foley, 2013:78; Louw et al., 2011:1), with differences only pertaining to the kind of stressors experienced (Louw et al., 2011:1). In this regard, for men the sources of burnout centre on the work environment, particularly when there is a gap between resources and job demands (Louw et al., 2011:1). For women, time management is their main source of burnout because of the challenges of calibrating family and career demands (Louw et al., 2011:1). According to the researcher's point of view, gender is a predictor of burnout. Burnout is likely to be higher among female teachers due to the multiple roles played

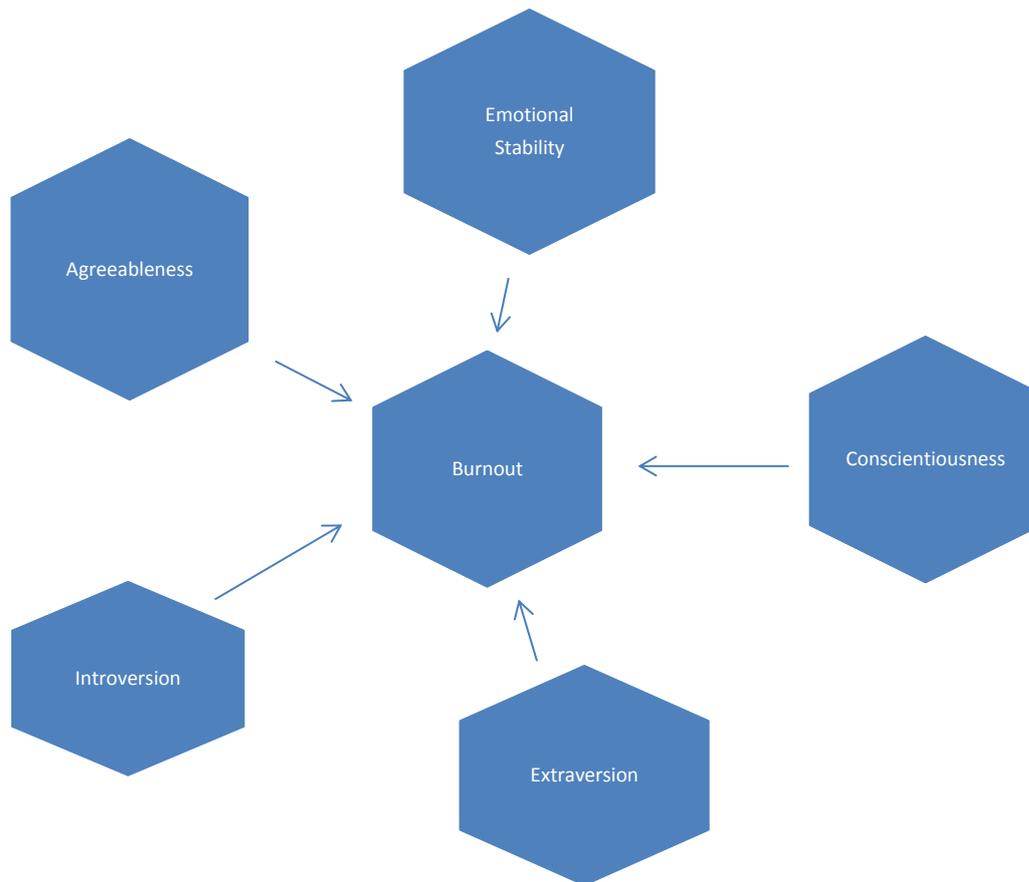
by female teachers. For example, at the work place, a female teacher plays a role of a worker while at home, she assumes a role of a mother who takes care of her children.

### **3.4 TEACHER PERSONALITY AND BURNOUT**

Studies on personality as a predictor of burnout reveal that burnout is higher among introvert teachers than extrovert teachers. This is attributed to the fact that introvert teachers are quiet and reserved while extrovert teachers are cheerful, optimistic and energetic and, as a result, they are more likely to engage in activities which can overcome stressful conditions (Sahni & Deswal, 2015:9). Teachers can tackle stressful situations by engaging in activities such as involvement in sports, touring and forming entertainment clubs.

#### **3.4.1 Personality dimensions**

With regard to the relationship between burnout and personality, a variety of definitions for the concept 'personality' exists. Kauts and Kumar (2016:2) define personality as the dynamic organisation of psycho-physical systems within the individual, which determine the individual's unique adjustment to his/her environment. The term 'personality' has been derived from the Latin word 'persona' referring to the masks which the Greek actors used to wear on their faces when they performed on stage (Kauts & Kumar, 2016:2). Mróz and Kaleta (2016:25) define the concept personality as a constant pattern of traits, tendencies and characteristics that make an individual's behaviour either stable or unstable. Yilmaz (2014:783) describes personality as a collection of characteristics that represent who an individual is. These characteristics are unique to that individual and separate him/her from other individuals (Yilmaz, 2014:783). Personality is also described as an individual's way of thinking, feeling and behaving (Törnroos, 2015:15). In this study on teacher stress and burnout, the relationship between teacher burnout and personality is highlighted in relation to the personality model of Costa and McCrae (Mróz & Kaleta, 2016:25). This model represents the Five-Factor Model also known as the Big-Five Model (Anvari et al., 2011:116; Mróz & Kaleta, 2016:25). The relationship between burnout and personality as depicted by Anvari et al. (2011:116) and Mróz and Kaleta (2016:25) is illustrated in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1: Burnout and the Five-Factor personality model**

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, all the dimensions of personality, namely introversion, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience and emotional stability are predictors of burnout among workers (Anvari et al., 2011:116; Mróz & Kaleta, 2016:25). The dimensions of personality as predictors of teacher burnout are discussed next.

### **3.4.2 Introversion**

Introvert individuals are quiet, reserved, shy and timid (Yilmaz, 2014:783). Introverts are also described as being distant, quiet and prefer solitude (Yilmaz, 2014:783). Introversion is linked to high levels of burnout as introvert teachers usually do not discuss their problems with other people which exposes them to burnout (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016:6; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:9).

With reference to the varied factors for burnout, the reasons for burnout among introvert teachers are the following:

- Introvert teachers are at a high risk of experiencing burnout due to their depersonalisation tendency relating to their nature of distancing themselves from other people (Larrivee, 2012:10).
- Introvert teachers prefer spending their free periods in their classroom because they prefer to spend their day behind closed doors, a behaviour which maximises their risk for burnout because they deprive themselves of an opportunity of decompressing the accumulated stressors of the day by talking with their peers (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016:6; Godsey, 2016:2).
- Much of introvert teachers' daily professional work is carried out in isolation, with introvert teachers being hesitant to social exchanges, resulting in them being more prone to burnout because of solitary life inclinations (Godsey, 2016:3).

### **3.4.3 Extraversion**

Extraversion entails the characteristics of being friendly, energetic, cheerful, excitement seeking and dominant (Yilmaz, 2014:784). Extravert individuals also portray characteristic such as being active, ambitious, energetic, enthusiastic, open-hearted and communicative (Yilmaz, 2014:783-784). Extraversion is linked to low levels of teacher burnout since extroverts are sociable and as such they have an ability to avoid burnout (Mróz & Kaleta, 2016:25). Furthermore, extroverts tend to experience life as joyous (Mróz & Kaleta, 2016:25).

### **3.4.4 Agreeableness**

A dimension of agreeableness is associated with characteristics such as individuals being cooperative, kind, trustworthy, caring for their physical appearance and forgiving (Yilmaz, 2014:784). Agreeable individuals are tolerant, helpful and reluctant to enter interpersonal conflicts (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They value compromise and avoid using power or creating pressure when resolving conflicts (Yilmaz, 2014:784). Being an agreeable teacher, therefore, is linked to the ability to avoid burnout (Pease & Lewis, 2015:159; Yilmaz, 2014:784).

### **3.4.5 Conscientiousness**

Individuals with high levels of conscientiousness are careful, organised, hard-working and achievement oriented (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They are also decisive, tidy, disciplined and prepared to deal with problems which make them avoid burnout (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They adhere to ethical principles and values and they can finish the tasks they are assigned to effectively (Yilmaz, 2014:784). Teachers with high levels of conscientiousness display high levels of job satisfaction and motivation with resulted low levels of burnout (Pease & Lewis, 2015:159; Yilmaz, 2014:784).

### **3.4.6 Emotional stability**

Individuals with high levels of emotional stability are mostly calm, content and have high levels of self-confidence (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They experience positive emotions and life satisfaction (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They usually make good decisions (Yilmaz, 2014:784). Emotionally stable teachers are open to criticism whereas emotional instable teachers are neurotic, tending to worry constantly and having feelings of insecurity (Törnroos, 2015:16; Yilmaz, 2014:784). Emotionally instable teachers are nervous and anxious and they need the approval of others because of being unsure of themselves (Yilmaz, 2014:784). They are inconsistent and impulsive, constantly experiencing mood swings (Yilmaz, 2014:784; Törnroos, 2015:16). Emotionally instable teachers experience high levels of stress and often resort to self-blame when confronted with negative feelings (Törnroos, 2015:16).

## **3.5 TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND BURNOUT**

Studies on the relationship between teaching experience and burnout report that burnout is higher among teachers who have less years of teaching experience than teachers with many years of teaching experience (Louw, George & Esterhuyse, 2011:2; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8). Some studies, however, found that burnout is higher among teachers with more years of teaching experience than those with less years (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:58; Tashi, 2014:76).

Reasons for burnout being higher among teachers who have less years of teaching experience relate to these teachers being novices who are anxious to perform and achieve professionally in order to overcome their lack of skills to deal with the huge demands of the teaching profession (Louw et al., 2012:2; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8). Reasons for burnout being higher among more experienced teachers relate to those teachers been engaged with teaching for many years, losing their professional enthusiasm. These teachers experience performance deterioration that relates to feeling unmotivated to deal with the same problems over and over. The accumulation of physical and emotional exhaustion increases with the number of years being engaged with teaching, resulting in experienced teachers becoming prone to burnout (Tashi, 2014:76).

### **3.6 STRESSORS AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

There is a positive correlation between burnout and stressors such as workload, role ambiguity and role conflict (Olivares-Faúndez, Gil-Monte, Mena, Jélvez-Wilke & Figueiredo-Ferraz, 2014:112; Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567). Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567) define 'role' as the part played by an individual in his/her relationship with others. A discussion of how workload, role ambiguity and role conflict predict burnout, follows next.

#### **3.6.1 Teacher workload and burnout**

There are various ways in which work overload causes burnout among teachers (Amino, 2012:341; Koenig, 2014:1). Teachers are overloaded with work and they have long working hours of intensive engagement with stakeholders, therefore, burnout is a huge possibility (Amino, 2012:341). Teachers' work does not end with statutory teaching hours but extends to preparation of lessons, and marking of assignments and tests (Amino, 2012:341). Teachers are also challenged with the carrying out of many additional roles and responsibilities such as being a motivator, a manager, an observer and a counsellor (Koenig, 2014:1). Teachers are also school leaders, resource providers, mentors for fellow teachers and active agents for school change (Koenig, 2014:1). Dealing with undisciplined learners is a burden and huge responsibility resulting in constant stress with possible eventual burnout (Amino, 2012:341).

These excessive demands pertaining to heavy workloads portray a major predictor of stress and burnout in the teaching profession (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:135). Factors relating to teachers' intensified teaching workloads include the expansion of teacher-learner ratios, which is the result of understaffed schools in the face of disturbingly high birth rates resulting in some schools having learner numbers in class of multiplied fivefold and tenfold magnitude (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:135). Some additional tasks added to teachers' job description are administrative in nature including the keeping of learner records, planning comprehensive school activities, fund-raising responsibilities, contributing to the developing of strategic development plans for their schools and attending different kinds of work-related meetings (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:135).

### **3.6.2 Role ambiguity and teacher burnout**

There are several ways in which role ambiguity causes burnout for teachers. For example, when teachers do not understand their roles, they spend time and energy seeking information about their roles with subsequent frustration leading to stress and burnout (Morgan, 2015:7). Role ambiguity is a multi-dimensional concept involving performance criteria including the judgement of individuals' work performance, the manner of completing assigned tasks, and the time spend on assigned tasks (Morgan, 2015:6). Olivares-Faúndez et al. (2014:111) define role ambiguity as the degree to which information does not relate to the expectations associated with the roles workers have to fulfil at the workplace. Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567) concur with the stressful condition of role ambiguity relating to employees' confusion about expectations of their job responsibilities. Role ambiguity is then prevalent when employees are unclear about their duties and actions (Moss, 2015:34).

Role ambiguity pertains to the uncertain expectations of employers in guiding the role behaviours of employees (Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567). The implication is that workers in a situation of role ambiguity experience a lack of information regarding their tasks and responsibilities (Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567). This lack of information involves unclear goals and directions which lead to continuous stress and eventual burnout because individuals operating under role ambiguity conditions require

excessive amounts of energy and mental resources to persevere with their tasks (Olivares-Faúndez et al., 2014:112; Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567).

### **3.6.3 Role conflict and teacher burnout**

Olivares-Faúndez et al. (2014:112) define role conflict as an incongruity of expectations associated with individuals' role at the place of work. In the teaching profession, role conflict occurs when teachers perceive their expectations and job demands to be incompatible and not possible to be satisfied simultaneously (Moss, 2015:34). The result is stress and eventual burnout (Moss, 2015:34). Role conflict occurs when workers are expected to act in ways that contradict their needs, capacity and values relating to gaps between organisational and cliental needs (Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567). Role conflict is then the result of productive employees being exposed to constraints that limit their abilities to carry out their duties effectively, impairing their effectiveness and efficiency at work (Moss, 2015:34).

## **3.7 LACK OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

Teachers are among those professionals with high levels of burnout because of a lack of career development opportunities (Simbula, Panari, Guglielmic & Fraccaroli, 2012:729), which is most prevalent in African societies (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013:5). A continuous lack of career development opportunities affect effective teaching and learning negatively and exposes inexperienced and incompetent teachers who are already subject to excessive work demands, to increased levels of stress, with the risk of eventual burnout (Simbula et al., 2012:729).

Amino (2012:342) asserts that personnel development is the best strategy to prevent stress and burnout. Continuous professional development activities create a sense of accomplishment and a more fully developed professional identity for teachers, which alleviate stress and possible burnout (Amino, 2012:342). Personnel development provides constant support, motivation and strength that enables teachers to appreciate and identify with the culture of teaching (Amino, 2012:342). Personnel development prevents stress and burnout because it increases efficiency and creates possibilities for promotion opportunities because of empowerment endeavours capacitating

employees to achieve organisational goals (Amino, 2012:342). In this regard, professional development is viewed as a solution to the challenges posed by burnout, the demands of a dynamic labour market, increased global competition and constant technological innovations (Van der Heijden et al., 2015:23). The lack of professional development opportunities causes burnout and represents a major reason for teachers to leave the teaching profession (Van der Heijden et al., 2015:23).

### **3.8 SCHOOL CLIMATE AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

Literature shows a positive relationship between school climate and teacher burnout because positive school climate conditions provide for work environments in which teachers feel satisfied and secured (Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8). In this regard, a study conducted by Pan and Wu (2015:1032) demonstrates the close relation between school climate and teacher burnout in that the more positive school climate is, the healthier is teachers' mental health with consequent increased work performance.

#### **3.8.1 The concept of school climate and teacher burnout**

School climate can either expose or protect teachers from stress and burnout (Bai, 2014:600; Pan & Wu, 2015:1030). Bai (2014:600) defines school climate as the underground set of norms, values, beliefs and traditions involving rituals built up over time as teachers work together to solve problems and confront challenges with teaching and learning (Bai, 2014:600). Some rituals are effective in decreasing teacher stress and burnout, functioning as a set of informal expectations and values shaping the way in which teachers think, feel and execute their work-related responsibilities (Bai, 2014:600; Gardazi et al., 2016:917).

School climate as the formal system of task and relationship reporting that controls, coordinates and motivates employees to work cooperatively in order to achieve organisational goals, promotes a constructive mental health environment for teachers in a direct and indirect way, resulting in manageable stress with less thread of possible burnout (Babu & Kumari, 2013:554; Pan & Wu, 2015:1030). This results in teachers working smart and confident, indulging in their supportive school climate settings (Pan & Wu, 2015:1030). School climate pertains to leadership focus and style, authority,

and responsibility entailing resources, policies, regulations and plans for implementation in pursuit of successful teaching and learning (Babu & Kumari, 2013:554). An unfavourable school climate is characterised by conditions relating to deconstructive leadership styles, inhumane policies, office politics, and task conflicts, all which serve as major stressors increasing possible burnout rates significantly (Gardazi et al., 2016:917).

School climate, which distinguishes one school from another, influences the behaviour of teachers and learners, with favourable environments arranged by dedicated school managers who work tirelessly towards improved and content functioning (Pan & Wu, 2015:1029). School climate directs teacher approaches, work procedures and classroom arrangements (Pan & Wu, 2015:1030). School climate also determines the conditions of libraries, laboratories and physical infrastructure in general, and individuals' attitudes towards work and towards interpersonal relationships (Pan & Wu, 2015:1030). Functioning as a burnout releaser, constructive school climate determines school success (Bai, 2014:600).

With an open school climate accommodating internal and external influences, teachers' psychological well-being and that of all stakeholders are positively influenced by a healthy school climate (Babu & Kumari, 2013:554). Such conditions are ensured by the school principal who fulfils a leading role in developing and maintaining a positive school climate focused on improved teaching and learning (Bai, 2014:600). School principals who establish and maintain a friendly and cooperative school atmosphere contributes to increased teacher satisfaction countering stress and possible burnout (Bai, 2014:600).

In summary, a positive school climate promotes effective teaching and learning by encouraging humanistic social relations and improved teacher performance. This improved performance is based on teacher motivation, which enhances self-efficacy levels, thus contributing to teacher well-being that serves as buffer against stress and burnout (Bai, 2014:600-601). Schools where good interpersonal relationships prevail amongst all stakeholders and where teacher collegiality is valued, teachers enjoy the opportunity of self-realisation to excel optimally in their profession (Babu & Kumari, 2013:565). This opportunity influences teacher attitude positively enhancing teacher

capacity to cope with stress effectively countering possible burnout (Gardazi et al., 2016:917).

### **3.8.2 Dimensions of school climate and teacher burnout**

The following are dimensions of school climate, which either serve to increase or decrease teacher stress and possible burnout:

- Structure, which includes school rules, regulations and procedures may be constraining contributing to increased stress and possible burnout when restrictive rules and regulations are imposed on teachers (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016:3; D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011:1609).
- Responsibility, which entails teachers perceiving their autonomy in decision-making as limited, has the potential of psychological harm, which increases stress levels and possible burnout (D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011:1609).
- Rewards, in the sense of rewarding rather than punishing, lessen financial burdens, which contributes to improved peace of mind and emotional stability enabling teachers to cope with stress constructively countering possible burnout (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016:3; Pan & Wu, 2015:1030).
- Risk, as teacher perception of the school environment exposing them to unacceptable working conditions and a lack of job security, contributes to stress and possible burnout (D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011:1608).
- Warmth, being teachers' feeling of friendly informal social groups prevailing at their school, represents a condition of stress relief countering possible burnout (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016:3; Pan & Wu, 2015:1030).
- Support, being teacher perception of the prevalence of peer and supervisor support at their school, decreases stress to prevent possible burnout (Lee, Esaki, Kim, Greene, Kirkland & Mitchell-Herzfel, 2013:595).
- Performance standards guide teachers to understand their school's goals, development strategies and standards for assessing performance (D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011:1608). Well communicated goals and performance standards lessen teacher stress and possible burnout because of having ascertained knowledge of the what and how of carrying out tasks and responsibilities (D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011:1608).

- Conflict as different, destructive opinions among teachers and managers increases stress and the possibility of burnout (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016:3).
- Identity, as teachers' perception that their school considers them as valuable members of a working team, enhances a sense of belonging, which reduces stress levels and possible burnout (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016:3).

### **3.9 SCHOOL CULTURE AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

School culture as the way in which things are done at the specific school, affects the way in which teachers interact with each other and with stakeholders (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:43). Ipek, Aytac and Gok (2015:9) define school culture as a set of philosophies, ideologies, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and expectations which hold the organisation together. According to Lunenburg (2011:3) organisational culture refers to a set of shared values, beliefs and norms which influence the way in which employees think, feel and behave at the workplace. Saudi (2014:71) defines this concept as a pattern of beliefs and learned ways of coping with experience that have been developed during the course of the history of a school. As there is a relationship between school culture and teacher stress and burnout, positive belief patterns lead to stress and burnout relief while negative belief patterns result in stress and possible burnout (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:43; Zamini et al., 2011:1965). Along the same lines, schools with ideological cultures that put emphasis on the decentralisation of power, leads to reduced stress levels and possible burnout, as decentralisation arrangements enhance teacher autonomy and satisfaction (Zamini et al., 2011:1965).

School culture is fundamental to binding members of the organisation together (Zamini et al., 2011:1965). This binding helps teachers to overcome obstacles and challenges encountered at school, hence, minimising the chances of burnout due to constant stress (Gligorović, Nikolić, Terek, Glušac & Tasić, 2016:232). A positive school culture, contributing to the development of good interpersonal work relations, represents a social reality created by the unique interactions between members of the organisation (Zamini et al., 2011:1965). In this regard, school culture is transmitted to new members of the organisation through socialisation, training, rites and rituals to represent four fundamental functions, namely, to give members a sense of identity, to increase

member commitment, to reinforce organisational values and to serve as a control mechanism for shaping member behaviour (Lunenburg, 2011:3).

There is a relationship between school culture and teacher burnout in that school culture guides school behaviour affecting the way in which members carry out their tasks (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:45). For example, the communication and leadership style used by the school leader affects school culture. In this regard, Zamini et al. (2011:1965) note that a management style characterised by inflexible rules, failure to ensure job security and failure to communicate promotion opportunities, increases teacher stress and possible burnout. The process of innovation, decision making, communication and performance measurement, which is influenced by school culture, is observable through teacher behaviour (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:45).

The direct link between school culture, work performance and possible stress and burnout pertains to the extent to which teachers understand their work environment (Montgomery et al., 2011:109). When teachers do not understand the changing needs and expectations of stakeholders, both internally and externally, the effectiveness of teaching and learning declines resulting in increased stress levels for teachers with the possibility of eventual burnout (Lunenburg, 2011:2). In this regard, schools which emphasise consistency, commitment to common values and transparency, are effective in providing a friendly work environment enabling teachers to satisfactory work performance resulting in lowered stress levels (Radford, 2015:30).

School culture directs work performance. In this regard, Selvaraja and Pihie (2015:132) emphasise a market-related school culture, which supports competition, achievement and effectiveness, all of which contribute to satisfactory work performance, the latter which counters unnecessary stress. A market-related school culture pursues the obtaining of sufficient resources and improved technology for school innovation. This serves as energy for entrepreneurial approaches relating to flexibility to enhance creativity and job satisfaction resulting in eustress and general well-being on an individual and whole-school basis (Selvaraja & Pihie, 2015:132).

Lunenburg (2011:2) explains the relation school culture, work performance, and decreased stress and burnout encounter by means of four reasonings. Firstly,

knowledge of their school's culture allows employees to understand both the organisation's history and current methods of operation which increases improved productivity and stress relief (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Knowledge of organisational culture provides workers with guidance about their expected future behaviours and thus improvement in work performance which results in the development of positive psychological well-being (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Second, organisational culture fosters workers' commitment to the organisation's philosophy and values (Lunenburg, 2011:2). This commitment creates shared feelings of working towards common goals and collaboration among employees which enhances worker wellbeing, because worker wellbeing, due to the solving of stress-related problems, is contingent on employees sharing common values (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Thirdly, organisational culture, through its norms, basic assumptions and shared beliefs, serves as a control mechanism in channelling employees' behaviour towards desired work operations and detours them away from undesired work behaviour such as conflict (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Hence, organisational culture is a stress and burnout releaser (Zamini et al., 2011:1968). Organisational culture guides managers in the recruiting, selecting, and retaining of employees whose values best fit the values of the organisation (Lunenburg, 2011:2). Finally, organisational culture is related to the effectiveness and productivity of the organisation insofar as preventing and addressing employee fatigue (Lunenburg, 2011:2).

### **3.9.1 Classification of school culture and teacher burnout**

There are many classifications of school culture, of which the first type relates to a power-oriented culture. A power-oriented school culture is a predictor of teacher stress and burnout in that the authority and power to make decisions are vested in an autocratic leader with employees, in a sense, fulfilling a slave role (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:53). A power-oriented culture causes teacher stress and burnout based on frustration because staff members are denied the autonomy and freedom to determine the activities crucial in performing their teaching tasks effectively (Pirayeh & Samavi, 2016:151). A second category of school culture relates to a role-oriented culture putting emphasis on the centralisation of power, resulting in a lessening of staff's psychological empowerment, serving as a factor for teacher stress and burnout (Zamini et al., 2011:1965). A role-oriented school culture, similar to a bureaucracy,

represents a specific framework of established posts in which people carry out their duties (Ipek et al., 2015:9). With this school culture, a structure of authority takes the shape of a pyramid with a number of workers decreasing towards the top of the pyramid (Ipek et al., 2015:9). In a role-oriented school culture each section is hierarchically connected to other sections and the roles and responsibilities of each position are pre-determined (Ipek et al., 2015:9). In the operation of this role-related bureaucratic culture, rational and legal regulations are the main sources of management activities (Ipek et al., 2015:9).

With the third type of school culture, namely the achievement culture or culture of duty, stress and burnout are alleviated by teachers experiencing work satisfaction and peace of mind (Iyer, 2016:36). The basis of an achievement culture is teamwork whereby the solving of problems involves teamwork endeavour with the success of goal realisation valued more than rules and duties whereby top management inspect subordinates (Ipek et al., 2015:9). An achievement culture responds effectively to the demands of environmental changes (Dimitrios & Konstantinos, 2014:53:57).

With a parochial school culture, the school as an organisation takes care of the needs of staff, therefore, this type of school culture acts as a stress and burnout releaser (Zamini et al., 2011:1965). Employees in a parochial culture setting carry out their tasks and responsibilities knowing that their organisation is securing their future needs without them having to prove their capabilities in carrying out their tasks constantly (Saudi, 2014:57). Based on a professional school culture, emphasis is placed on staff's authoritative competence, skills and knowledge acquired through professional training (Saudi, 2014:57). In this setting, employees are not solely dependent on the organisation for promotion and wellbeing, but arrange for their own development based on their own competencies in carrying out tasks outstandingly, which is then rewarded (Saudi, 2014:57).

In an open school culture, newcomers fit into the organisation more easily because of an accommodating approach allowing individuals leniency in implementing teaching strategies for successful learning (Saudi, 2014:57). An open culture, therefore, reduces stress and possible burnout because of harmonious working relations based on accommodating approaches, which results in cooperatively sharing ideas for a

better end-result (Huhtala, 2013:39). A closed school culture, in contrast, expose employees to stress and possible burnout because of not considering any suggestions from staff. With a closed culture, hesitance prevails to change the way of doing things, resulting in improvements occurring very slowly (Saudi, 2014:58). In a school culture of loose control, staff are not necessarily disciplined, they do not perform cost-effectively, they are not efficient with time management, and they do not experience an urgency to make vital decisions for improved teaching (Huhtala, 2013:39; Saudi, 2014:58). The result is questionable outcomes resulting in stress and eventual burnout for all stakeholders involved. Staff teaching in a school culture of tight control appreciate urgency and time management promoting a high level of efficiency based on diligence and perseverance (Saudi, 2014:58). This results in good quality outcomes contributing to improved wellbeing for all stakeholders and lower levels of stress and possible burnout for teachers.

A normative school culture emphasises the importance of organisational procedures and regulations with strict adherence, regardless whether this adherence inhibits the most efficient way of executing tasks (Saudi, 2014:58). Employees operating in such a situation is prone to stress and possible burnout as they are deprived of a sense of professional liberty (Iyer, 2016:36). In contrast, with a pragmatic school culture emphasis is placed on the performance of the workers for achieving the most effective outcomes (Saudi, 2014:58). Meeting the needs of staff and clients is a priority, even if this might be at the expense of breaching organisational procedures. The result is alleviated stress and possible burnout because teachers perceive the meeting of their needs as fair treatment contributing to improved wellbeing (Huhtala, 2013:39).

### **3.9.2 Levels of school culture and teacher burnout**

Organisational culture, which exists on three levels, is characterised by a top level, representing artefacts to encompass the visible and observable activities and behaviours of the members of that organisation (Dimitrios & konstantinos, 2014:45). Artefacts include an organisation's space layout, buildings, dress code, the way of communication, file records, written rules, philosophy, manufactured products and developmental programmes, which are all geared towards influencing teacher stress with possible burnout in a positive or negative way (Dimitrios & konstantinos, 2014:45).

Well-functioning artefacts espouse values and assumptions which lay down an appropriate environment setting for resolving staff problems, thus reducing stress with possible burnout (Montgomery et al., 2011:110). Dysfunctional artefacts relating to aspects such as, for example, workplace bullying increases stress and burnout. The level of norms and values regulate and shape the way in which staff and other stakeholders behave and accomplish their tasks and responsibilities. The bottom level of organisational culture encompasses basic assumptions of members, representing the essence and core of the culture of that organisation. Basic assumptions are invented, discovered, developed and internalised by members while coping with the work environment to carry out tasks and duties (Yesil & Kaya, 2013:429). Basic assumptions and agreement with these assumptions are crucial to individual and organisational functioning with the extent of adherence to these assumptions determining the level of stress and possible burnout for individual members (Yesil & Kaya, 2013:429).

### **3.10 TYPE OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

School type is a predictor of stress and possible burnout. In comparison with teachers teaching in private schools, public school teachers encounter increased levels of stress and burnout relating to uncomfortable working conditions such as shortages of classrooms and furniture and dirty and unsafe buildings (Genç, 2016:9). The researcher's point of view is that uncomfortable working conditions in the form of shortage of classrooms and furniture, dirty and unsafe buildings, create a feeling of insecurity in the mind of a worker which possibly may result in stress and burnout. Further, teachers teaching learners with special needs face specific challenges demanding specialised understanding and prolonged dedication and perseverance resulting in subconsciously experiencing increased levels of stress (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:57). Teachers working in schools where the teaching/learning approach is based on an arrangement of spoon-fed learner/ teacher dependence experience high levels of stress and burnout because of having to cope with excessive amounts of written assignments marked explicitly, guided reading carried out constantly, and intensive supervised studies (Mukundan et al., 2015:30).

### **3.11 ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND TEACHER BURNOUT**

There is a relationship between organisational commitment and teacher stress and burnout insofar as that when teachers who are highly committed to their schools experience a state of unfulfilled expectations and aspirations, this leads to stress and burnout representing a vicious circle of low morale and neglected responsibilities resulting in ever increasing levels of stress (Werang et al., 2015:828).

#### **3.11.1 The concept of organisational commitment and teacher burnout**

Matin et al. (2012:48) define organisational commitment as the extent of individual loyalty to the specific work, realising in psychological belonging and dependency to the specific organisational arrangement. Employee loyalty to the organisation direct aspirations to preserve membership of that organisation. Employees who are committed to their organisations have a strong emotional attachment to their organisations leading to job satisfaction and stress relief (Sajid, 2014:30). Experiencing a sense of being accepted by the organisation, employees become committed, functioning on a basis of having peace of mind, all of which counter stress and possible burnout (Werang et al., 2015:828).

#### **3.11.2 Types of organisational commitment and teacher burnout**

There are three types of commitment to the organisational work environment, namely, affective, continuance and normative commitment (Werang et al., 2015:827). Affective commitment relates to the worker's positive emotional attachment to and involvement in his/her organisation (Werang et al., 2015:827). Teachers who are strongly committed to their schools clearly define the school's goals and effectively implement those goals (Sajid, 2014:30). There is a direct relationship between organisational commitment and teacher stress and burnout because when schools are not committed to the needs of their teachers, this leads to high levels of stress and possible burnout. Continuance commitment develops from employees' perceived gains verses losses of working in the specific organisation (Sajid, 2014:30). In this regard, employees feel more committed towards their organisation perceiving the high cost of losing organisational membership, which relates to economic costs such as pension

accruals, social costs such friendship ties with colleagues, and emotional and physical security at the place of work (Pirayeh & Samavi, 2016:151). Normative commitment as an obligation to remain with the organisation, involves an employee's sense of loyalty and commitment because he/she is convinced that it is the right thing to do to be loyal and committed to the organisation (Sajid, 2014:30). Combined with acknowledgement, organisational commitment fosters teachers' loyalty to their school contributing to alleviated stress when teachers experience a sense of self-fulfilment when their efforts are appreciated by their school (Pirayeh & Samavi, 2016:152). In this regard, normative commitment develops from the internal pressures derived from the norms, values and expectations of the organisation that encourages workers' extended commitment to the organisation and the need to cooperate harmoniously (Werang et al., 2015:828). Employees derive organisational norms, values and expectations which encourage loyalty to the place of work from the socialisation process with members of their families and the surrounding cultures, all of which contribute to employees' capacity to cope with stress in order to counter possible burnout (Werang et al., 2015:828).

### **3.12 COPING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY TEACHERS TO COUNTER STRESS**

When teachers are under stress, they employ coping strategies either to change the nature of the situation as a way of making it more manageable, or to reduce its negative effects (Ninh & Thao, 2012:19). Coping is defined as cognitive and behavioural efforts used to manage, by means of reducing or mastering, specific internal and external demands which are perceived as exceeding or taxing an individual's resources (Montero-Marin, Prado-Abril, Demarzo, Gascon & Garcí'a-Campayo, 2014:2). Normally, a worker becomes psychologically vulnerable to a particular situation if he or she does not possess sufficient coping resources to handle that situation (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:2). Coping strategies, referring to the defence mechanisms used by individuals in order to protect themselves from the harmful effects of stressors, represent both behavioural and psychological efforts to master, tolerate, reduce and minimise stressful events (Ereno, Andrade, Miyauchi, Salinda, Arevalo & Reyes, 2014:150). Coping strategies as ways in which people respond to stressful situations, play an important role in reducing stress and increasing

work performance (Ereno et al. (2014:150). It is, therefore, imperative that workers possess the necessary coping strategies derived either from their mental training as a way of sustaining positive thinking, or from their organisations as means to help stressed workers to cope with the effects of work stress to counter possible burnout (Ereno et al., 2014:150).

### **3.12.1 Constructive coping strategies**

Teachers use constructive coping strategies to alleviate stress, which relates to problem solving, social support, stress-buffering hypothesis and environmental coping resources (Kempf, 2011:14; Wang et al., 2014:2). Constructive coping strategies allow individuals to restore emotional balance in order to regain control in changing stressful environmental conditions (Antoniou et al., 2013:350). This affects teachers' outlook on stressful situations, altering their perception of stress as possible to cope with (Sprenger, 2011:18).

### **3.12.2 Problem solving as a teacher strategy to cope with stress**

According to Ncube and Tshabalala (2013:18,22), problem solving as a strategy of coping with stress entails individuals keeping themselves at bay from stressful circumstances and learning to adopt the principle that, if they cannot remedy nor escape from what is bothering them, they should flow with it and try to use it in a productive way. Problem solving involves a situation in which victims of stress define the problem and cause of their stress, identify alternative ways of solution, evaluate the alternatives in terms of costs and benefits, and then implement the best choice for stress relief (Antoniou et al., 2013:350). Problem solving as strategy for stress relief, functions as a buffer against behavioural disengagement enabling individuals to cope with previously uncontrollable situations in a constructive manner (Montero-Marin et al., 2014:2).

### **3.12.3 Physical exercise as a teacher strategy to reduce stress**

Physical exercises such as, for example, indoor games, gym, aerobics and yoga are effective ways to counter stress and prevent possible burnout. Ninh and Thao

(2012:19) argue that incorporation physical exercises as part of the regular lifestyle, reduces anxiety and depression. Discharging negative emotions and stress hormones through physical activity help employees to gain a relaxed state of mind. With regard to the teaching profession, physical exercise assist teachers with stress reduction in the following ways (Needs-Focused Teaching, 2016:21):

- Physical exercise distracts teachers from their worries and negative self-image.
- Physical exercise increases blood flow to the brain, release feel-good hormones, stimulate the nerve system and lead to the development of a positive approach to life.
- Physical exercises improve teachers' competencies to accomplish their daily tasks and achieving their goals in all spheres of living.

#### **3.12.4 Social support as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

When under stress, teachers rely on social support in the form of seeking support from family members, friends and colleagues to receive advice and to vent their concerns, relying on these groups of people for emotional support, sympathy and understanding (Sprenger, 2011:18; Wang et al., 2014:2). Teachers who have strong social support networks regain self-esteem and self-efficacy successfully thereby capacitating them to resist the generating of negative emotions responsible for increased stress levels (Wang et al., 2014:4). The use of social support is more common amongst women, with women benefitting more from social support intervention than their male counterparts (Laireiter et al., 2012:132). The reason for gender differences in the use of social support to counter stress is attributed to the fact that men and women interact differently influencing the way in which social support networks are built and perceived (Rattelade, 2016:12). Gendered socialisation allows women to be dependent on people and men to be independent engendering females' tendency to benefit more from aid in the form of emotional support, advice and practical assistance to address needs and concerns (Rattelade, 2016:12).

#### **3.12.4.1 The concept of social support**

Social support refers to the care and help from other people which an individual can feel, notice and accept for improved wellbeing (Wang, Cai, Qian & Peng, 2014:1). Social support is regarded a critical resource in protecting mental health thereby acting as a buffer against the negative impact of psychological and physiological stress (McTernan et al., 2016:3). Social support, fulfilling an important role in teachers' personal and professional development, includes emotional support such as empathy, concern, caring, love and trust, professional support such as mentoring and guidance, and practical support such as explicit assistance with the completion of tasks or lending money to make ends meet (Jairam & Kahl, 2012:313).

#### **3.12.4.2 Models of social support**

Social support theorists view social support as a feedback system which offers validation of the self and satisfaction through social relationships (Rattelade, 2016:9; Tsay, 2012:31). Models of social support which emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s postulate that specific behaviours are supportive and thus, experiencing those behaviours, represents social support facilitated through everyday interactions amongst people (Gregorowicz, 2015:19). Social support theorists acknowledge that, through communicative actions, individuals work together to create a shared understanding of interactions, shared experiences and emotions with these mutual understandings realising as supportive stress buffers (Rattelade, 2016:9).

#### **3.12.4.3 Direct effects model of social support**

The direct effects model of social support suggests that social support reduces the level of strain regardless of the intensity of the stressors experienced by individuals (Renner et al., 2012:131; Wei et al., 2011:859). According to this model, social support has a protective buffering function against the effects that stressful life events have on psychological functioning and mental health (Renner et al., 2012:131). The direct effects model of social support assumes that social support directly and indirectly buffers the effects of stress, such as anxiety and depression by influencing the relationship between stress source and stress degree (Wei et al., 2011:859).

According to this model, the belief that other people will provide necessary resources may help an individual to redefine the degree of potential harm in a given situation (Tsay, 2012:46). This belief bolsters one's perceived ability to cope with the imposed demands of life events so that stress does not produce negative outcomes (Tsay, 2012:46). With regard to the teaching profession, Wei et al. (2011:859) note that social support is very important, more especially from teachers' colleagues and mentors assisting novice teachers to carry out their teaching tasks in an effective way (Wei et al., 2011:859). According to the direct effects model of social support, even if novice teachers are optimistic about their teaching challenges, they cannot solve their problems efficiently if they do not experience social support (Wei et al., 2011:859). Lack of social support leaves young teachers hopeless reducing their capability to cope with stress in a constructive way (Wei et al., 2011:859).

### **3.12.5 Stress-buffering hypothesis as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

According to the stress-buffering hypothesis, the perceived availability of social support protects teachers from the pathogenic effects of stress (Gregorowicz, 2015:20). Perceived support is described as the degree to which individuals perceive other individuals as playing an important, facilitating and communicating role in their lives (Martins, Peterson, Almeida & Costa, 2011:2113; Tsay, 2012:30). The positive relationship between perceived availability of social support and stress reduction pertains to having the capacity to develop protective qualities against the effects of stress thanks to social support (Gregorowicz, 2015:20). Hence, the more individuals perceive the availability of social support, the more successful they are in coping with stress. The model of stress-buffering hypothesis postulates that social support protects employees from the adverse effects of stressful events, which in turn improves physical and emotional health and general wellbeing (Creswell, 2014:3). According to the model of stress-buffering hypothesis, social support provides solutions to life problems by reducing the negative effect of perceived problems by tranquilising the neuro-endocrine system so that individuals are less reactive to perceived stressors (Jairam & Kahl, 2012).

### **3.12.6 Active planning as a teacher strategy to alleviate stress**

According to Sprenger (2011:18), active planning enables teachers to take their mind off stressors and focus on their work. Active planning involves developing a plan, generating strategies to achieve objectives and taking action to implement planning for goal realisation (Sprenger, 2011:18). With regard to the teaching profession, active planning entails taking steps to do what has to be done in order to keep teachers' attention on their learners rather than on their stressors (Sprenger, 2011:18). Active planning represents the scenario of teachers thinking about how to cope with stressors by drawing action strategies, thinking about what steps to take and how best to handle those stressors (Esia-Donkoh et al., 2011:294).

### **3.12.7 Restorative coping experiences as a teacher strategy to reduce stress**

The restorative coping experiences strategy refers to the ability of teachers to release stress in situations away from the school environment (Sprenger, 2011:19). Places of stress release exhibit features that are helpful in offsetting the effects of stress. These places are, for example, the home environment, nature-related outdoor places, city entertainment centres, churches and restaurants providing sensory conditions, social contact and props to assist with stress alleviation (Li & Sullivan, 2016:150; Sprenger, 2011:19). The restorative coping experiences model asserts that exposure to nature, such as green and tranquil landscapes, supports psycho-physiological stress repercussions recovery, which results in reduced blood pressure and lower levels of stress hormones (Li & Sullivan, 2016:150). Berto (2014:397) emphasises that restorative coping experiences as stress reduction in environments away from the school setting is most effective in alleviating teacher stress. Exposure to stress relieve environments produce positive mood changes prompting positive emotions relating to calming physiological and psychological responses to capacitate teachers to cope with stress in an effective way (Berto, 2014:399).

### **3.12.8 Environmental coping resources as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

Common environmental resources to cope with stress include time, money, social ties, and counselling (Sprenger, 2011:19). When faced with excessive stress, employees alleviate that stress by spending time with friends and family (Iqbal & Kokash, 2011:141). According to the environmental coping resources strategy, the provision of counselling resources in schools promotes the psychological wellness of teachers and act as buffer against disorders relating to frustration, anxiety and depression (Aycock, 2011).

### **3.12.9 Control as a teacher strategy to alleviate stress**

The term 'locus of control' is described as a combination of values, beliefs, cultural influences and past experiences which influence behaviour (Gangai, Mahakud & Sharma, 2016:56). Control comprises constructs relating to mastery, internal locus of control and self-efficacy (Aycock, 2011:8). Mastery pertains to the condition of internal locus of control relating to the perception that individuals' stressful events are under their own control rather than under the control of external forces (Aycock, 2011:8). As such, individuals who perceive themselves as having a high degree of mastery over their environmental forces tend to perceive themselves as being highly-resourced for coping with stressful demands (Aycock, 2011:8). The positive effect of perceived internal locus of control are associated with high levels of life satisfaction, low levels of psychological distress, and positive mental and physical health (Aycock, 2011:9).

A state of internal locus of control is rated the most effective strategy for alleviating deleterious effects of stressful life events among both young and older teachers (Aycock, 2011:9). Teachers with a high degree of internal locus of control use effective coping strategies to manage stress, they believe that they can control whatever happens to them and they assume high-levels of responsibility in their schools (Demir et al., 2014:254). Teachers possessing internal locus of control solve their problems successfully prompted by the affirmation that their achievement depends on their own

free will relating to having freedom of choice and control over their circumstances (Cascio et al., 2014:150).

In contrast, when individuals' locus of control is external, they believe that whatever they experience is out of their control and as such they attribute incidents that happen to them to fate, other people or chance (Demir et al., 2014:254). Teachers with external locus of control perceive themselves to have little or no control over their lives, which expose them to stress-related anxiety and depression (Cascio et al., 2014:150). In this regard, external locus of control as the belief that control is outside of oneself residing either in the hands of other people, fate or chance, hampers the development of constructive strategies to cope with stress in order to prevent possible burnout (Gangai et al., 2016:56).

### **3.12.10 Mindfulness-based stress reduction as a teacher strategy to alleviate stress**

Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) relates to an intervention programme applicable to people who are stressed and who are experiencing mental health difficulties (Kuyken, Weare, Ukoumunne, Vicary, Motton, Burnett, Cullen, Hennelly & Huppert, 2013:1). MBSR as a systematic intervention programme of developing enhanced awareness of moment-to-moment experience of the own mental process, realises in classes normally taught by physicians, nurses, social workers and psychologists (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:79). Mindfulness pertains to maintaining a moment-to-moment awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and surrounding environment manifesting as meditation that utilizes present-moment awareness to reach a state of focus and tranquillity. Mindfulness entails paying attention to one's own thoughts and feelings in a non-judgmental manner (Cullen, 2011:1; Dacher et al., 2016:1). Mindfulness-based stress reduction training as a structured programme covering a period of eight weeks engage participants in the following activities serving to relieve stress:

- maintain attention to thoughts and feelings without reacting impulsively (Cabrera-Caban et al., 2016:123).

- reflect on the internal and external environment with openness, curiosity, awareness and non-judgmental acceptance (Cabrera-Caban et al., 2016:123; Chiesa & Serretti, 2011:83).
- Engage in physical exercises which enable minds to relax (Cullen, 2011:3).
- Engage in meditation to alleviate mental and physical suffering associated with physical, psychosomatic and psychiatric disorders (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:79).

The MBSR programme provides stress victims with information about stress, depression and cognitive therapy-based exercises that link thinking and feelings which result in stress reduction mechanisms (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:79). With MBSR classes individuals are taught ways of dealing with everyday stressors and understanding the causes and effect of stress (Kuyken et al., 2013:1). MBSR serves as an effective technique of reducing stress, depression and anxiety among teachers benefitting teachers in nurturing positive thoughts and creating positive images (Cabrera-Caban et al., 2016:123).

### **3.12.11 Progressive muscle relaxation as a teacher strategy to cope with stress**

The technique of progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) reduces stress, depression and anxiety by alternately tensing and relaxing muscles (Malky, Atia & El-Amrosy, 2015:16; Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:75). This technique was developed in the early 1920s by the American physician Edmund Jacobson (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:75). Proponents of PMR argue that muscle tension accompanies anxiety and as such an individual can reduce anxiety by relaxing muscular tension (Malky et al., 2015:16; Patel, 2014:37). PMR entails both physical and mental components with the physical component involving tensing (stretching) and relaxing muscle groups over the legs, abdomen, chest, arms and face (Patel, 2014:41; Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:75). The mental component entails a state in which the focus is on distinguishing between feelings of tension (pain) and relaxed comfort to reduce tension in order to create a pleasant mental state representing stress alleviation (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:75). The following are benefits for teachers participating in the progressive muscle relaxation technique (Patel, 2014:41; Varvogli & Darviri, 2011:76):

- Reduction of anxiety and stress.
- Decreased blood pressure.
- Decreased headaches.
- Improved concentration in duty execution.
- An increased feeling of control in personal life endeavours.
- Good sleep and rest.
- Enhancement of warm or cool body parts.
- Enhanced performance of physical activities.
- Enhanced body and mind relaxation.
- Enabling individuals to maintain a balance between work and other activities.

### **3.12.12 Praying as a teacher strategy to alleviate stress**

Teachers buffer stress through praying (Thenga, Mutshaeni & Masshau, 2015:24). Prayer is viewed as the strongest coping strategy for teachers with high personal religious commitment (Thenga, Mutshaeni & Masshau, 2015:24). Prayer enhances individuals' belief and hope to God and as such gives them courage to tackle their problems (Thenga, Mutshaeni & Masshau, 2015:24).

## **3.13 LESS CONSTRUCTIVE COPING STRATEGIES**

Some teachers employ less constructive coping strategies in order to alleviate stress (Sprenger, 2011:58). Less constructive coping strategies relieve stress temporarily but may cause more damage eventually by aggravating the intensity of stress (Sprenger, 2011:58). Thus, less constructive coping strategies represent unhealthy behaviours relating to disengagement and suppression of competing behaviours which are dysfunctional and counterproductive to general wellbeing (Tompoidi, 2016:15). Examples of less constructive coping strategies entail putting school work aside and excessive sleeping (Sprenger, 2011:20).

### **3.13.1 Disengagement as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

Disengagement as a less constructive coping strategy refers to a situation in which individuals reduce their efforts to deal with stressors or even give up all attempts to

resolve the stressful situation (Sprenger, 2011:20; Tompoidi, 2016:15). Teachers who indulge in disengagement resort to negative actions such as ignoring the stressors, putting school work aside, habitual television viewing and focussing more on trivial things rather than engaging with their actual teaching responsibilities (Sprenger, 2011:58). Disengagement manifests in day dreaming and excessive sleeping providing a short-term solution to the stressor (Sprenger, 2011:20). Disengagement results in teachers having cumulative workloads, feelings of lowered self-esteem and helplessness (Sprenger, 2011:20). According to Antoniou et al. (2013:350) teachers adopt the disengagement coping strategy when they perceive their stressful environmental situation as unresolvable.

### **3.13.2 Suppression of competing behaviours as a teacher strategy to cope with stress**

Suppression of competing behaviours refers to a condition in which employees put aside all activities in their lives so that they can concentrate solely on their work (Esia-Donkoh & Yelkper, 2011:294; Sprenger, 2011:20). Suppression of competing activities may also refer to the attempt of putting aside all activities that may cause distraction from coping with stress, thus concentrating exclusively on resolving a stressful situation. Sprenger (2011:20) notes that teachers tend to prevent distraction (suppress competing activities) by focusing more on work tasks as a means of preventing outside interferences, the latter which may create stress. Thus, lessening the demand of other aspects of life and only concentrating on work helps teachers to experience a decreased perception of stress levels (Sprenger, 2011:20).

### **3.13.3 Avoidant strategy as a teacher technique to alleviate stress**

Khan (2013:3) defines the avoidant coping strategy as the act of evading or distancing oneself from the source of stress, such as troublesome people. Avoidant strategy involves engagement in activities such as sleeping, cleaning and eating that enable individuals to avoid feelings of stress (Jensen et al., 2016:283). Eating as a stress reliever often includes the consumption of excessive quantities of junk food, resulting in over-eating (Sprenger, 2011:59). Making use of avoidant strategies make individuals feel better and distracts them from their stressors, however, it causes more

stress eventually relating to obesity, incomplete work and low self-esteem (Sprenger, 2011:59).

#### **3.13.4 Procrastination as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

Procrastination is defined as a behavioural trait of postponing or delaying performing a task or making a decision (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014:226). Teachers engage in procrastination when they are facing stress-related problems which they think are difficult to solve (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014:226; Sirois, 2013:2). Procrastination provides temporary stress relief but aggravate the stressor in the long run (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014:226). Procrastination influences psychological well-being negatively and is associated with high levels of stress, anxiety and depression affecting individuals and the workplace (Sirois, 2013:2). Applying a strategy of procrastination to cope with stress results in the following problems:

- Self-handicapped behaviour that leads to wasted time, poor work performance and increased levels of stress (Beheshtifar et al., 2011:62).
- Increased feelings of anxiety and stress (Sirois, 2013:2).
- Constant tension and job dissatisfaction (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014:226).
- Time constraint resulting in working under pressure with aggravated levels of stress (Beheshtifar et al., 2011:62).

#### **3.13.5 Defence mechanisms as a teacher strategy to eliminate stress**

Teachers alleviate stress by resorting to defence mechanisms (Thenga, Mutshaeni & Masshau, 2015:24). The most popular defence mechanisms adapted by teachers when facing stressful situations involve threatening and confronting other people (Thenga, Mutshaeni & Masshau, 2015:24).

### **3.14 NEUTRAL COPING STRATEGIES**

Venting is a neutral coping strategy often used by employees to reduce stress by venting their anger to friends, family and colleagues (Sprenger, 2011:44). Often victims blame their friends, family and colleagues for self-inflicted problems (Sprenger,

2011:44). In the process of venting, victims tend to vocalise their mind spontaneously resulting in expressions hampering interpersonal relationships causing increased levels of stress. Expressions often vented are the following:

- I do not want your advice (Kempf, 2011:13).
- I do not want your questions (Cabrera-Caban, Garden, White & Reynoldson, 2016:122).
- You know a solution but you do not want to help me (Cabrera-Caban et al., 2016:121).
- I just want you to listen to me (Sprenger, 2011:44).

'Me-time' or spending time alone as a neutral coping strategy is often applied to manage stress (Sprenger, 2011:44). When using the strategy of time alone, individuals express their thoughts as follows:

- I want to be alone, please give me a minute of privacy (Sprenger, 2011:44).
- I will be back, please, stop following me (Kempf, 2011:13).
- I have a lot of work to do and I need some time to be alone (Cabrera-Caban et al., 2016:121).

### **3.15 SUMMARY**

Excessive stress with related burnout syndrome is a major problem which threatens the work life of teachers. This syndrome is a physical and emotional danger to teachers and the school as an organisation. Stress and burnout negatively affect the lives of teachers and the academic performance of learners. Burnout is the result of a long-term chain of stressful experiences for teachers. There are a variety of factors such as teachers' age, teachers' gender, teachers' personality, teachers' experience, roles to be fulfilled by teachers, role ambiguity and excessive workloads which play a role in the occurrence of stress and burnout syndrome among teachers. In an effort to counter stress with the aim of preventing burnout, teachers employ different coping strategies. Although constructive coping strategies such as regular physical exercise and social support are most successful in alleviating teacher stress, some teachers resort to less

constructive coping strategies such as disengagement and procrastination which, in the long run, aggravate the effects of stress.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The following is the main research question for this study:

- How can teachers be equipped to cope with stress in order to prevent work-related burnout?

This main research question was answered by collecting data through employing an empirical investigation.

The principal research question is divided into the following five sub-questions:

- What are the relationship between stress and burnout? This research question was answered by collecting data through conducting an empirical investigation.
- What is the stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers? This research question was answered by conducting a literature review, but it was further explored contextually through the empirical investigation.
- What are the consequences of burnout among teachers? This research question was answered by conducting a literature review, but it was further explored contextually through the empirical investigation.
- What strategies can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout? This research question was answered by conducting a literature review, but it was further explored contextually through the empirical investigation.
- What roles can the Ministry of Education and Training play as a way of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout? This research question was answered by collecting data through conducting an empirical investigation.

Departing from the perspectives of positivist, interpretivist and critical purists, the mixed-methods research design was adapted for the empirical investigation by means

of which numeral and qualitative data were collected. The sample was drawn from the population using probability/random sampling and non-probability purposive sampling. The stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the sample for the quantitative study while the quota sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the qualitative research. Inferential statistics was used to analyse quantitative data while the inductive process was used to analyse qualitative data.

## **4.2 RESEARCH AIMS**

With the empirical study, the stress coping strategies which are employed by primary school teachers in order to prevent burnout were investigated. The empirical study aimed to:

- To establish the main stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers.
- To determine the consequences of burnout among teachers.
- To establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout.

## **4.3 RESEARCH PARADIGMS AND RESEARCH APPROACHES**

Adopting positivist, interpretivist and critical research paradigms as the philosophical frameworks for this investigation, the study adapted a mixed-methods research approach. Positivism, interpretivism and critical research philosophies were suitable research paradigms to use in order to investigate the phenomenon of teacher burnout and stress coping strategies using the mixed-method research design. Using these three research philosophies to carry out a research study by means of a mixed-methods research approach, a more complete and comprehensive understanding of teacher stress was achieved. For example, positivism offers standard quantitative methods which are based on deductive reasoning in which inferential, descriptive and experimental research techniques are used not only to examine but also to test the causal and other forms of relationships among a number of variables (Krauss, 2015). Hence, quantitative hypothesis-deductive research in this study was based on a positivist research paradigm. Interpretivism, on the one hand, encompasses inductive

reasoning predominantly using qualitative research methods (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25). This research paradigm was suitable for this particular study since the researcher wanted to understand teacher stress and burnout as experienced and shared by participants themselves based on the collection of qualitative data. The critical research paradigm on the other hand is a research philosophy which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies for a critical juxtaposition of possible variables and opinions (Krauss, 2015:761). Hence, within a critical research paradigm framework, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies are complementary used to critically interpret all possible data on the topic of study for a thorough understanding of the nature of the studied phenomenon (Krauss, 2015:761). In this investigation, mixed-methods research approach was adapted for the purpose of complementarity, gaining insights into the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data collection in order to understand the final product better.

#### **4.3.1 Research paradigms**

In conducting research, researchers adopt theoretical research paradigms in order to ensure strong and appropriate research designs (Levers, 2013:3). In this investigation, the three research paradigms, namely, positivist, interpretivist and critical realism were adopted to ensure a solid foundation for data collection. Research paradigm is defined differently by different scholars (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:24). Ruben de Villiers and Fouché (2015:126) define research paradigm as a model or pattern containing a set of legitimate assumptions and a design for collecting and interpreting data. Alghamdi (2015:78) describes research paradigm as the researcher's basic set of beliefs that guide the researcher through the development of the research. Krauss (2015:28-29) defines research paradigm in two different ways. Firstly, as a set of common beliefs and agreements shared by scientists about how problems are identified, understood and addressed (Krauss, 2015:28). Secondly, Kraussj (2015:28-29) defines research paradigm as a comprehensive belief system, world view and framework which guides research and practice in a field. Shemi (2012:xvii), on the other hand, defines research paradigm as a set of beliefs about the nature of the world and the individual's place in the world. Considering these different features for a research paradigm, a research paradigm can be understood as a scientific practice comprising law and theory which

guide researchers to adopt appropriate models during the process of conducting research. Terrell (2012:258) describes research paradigm as a philosophical framework which works for a particular research problem under investigation. Thus, a research paradigm is a cornerstone of scientific research because it does not only eliminate researchers' biases but it also helps the researchers to remain emotionally detached from the participants of a study (Terrell, 2012:257). As such, research paradigms provide the researchers with a methodological approach or a model to approach and address problems and solutions in a specific way during the research process (Bahramnezhad, Shiri, Asgari & Afshar, 2015:18). A research paradigm is therefore not only a theoretical framework but it is also a guiding structure of thought which provides the researcher with a vision of reality (Levers, 2013:2). In any kind of research investigation, research paradigms are important not only in showing the most appropriate ways of linking the research methodology to the applicable research methods but also to guide the entire research design and conduct of the research study (Levers, 2013:2-3).

A research paradigm is underlined by four salient components, namely ontology, epistemology, methodology, and method (Scotland, 2012:9; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:24):

- Ontology represents a view of reality and being (Levers, 2013:2). The ontology component is concerned with the nature of existence and reality, describing reality as perceived by the specific philosophy (Smith, 2011:3). Ontology in research also includes the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming and existence, and thus ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, the human being in the world and how people understand existence. Thus, ontological assumptions are concerned with the theories of existence, the concern with what constitutes reality, representing the ontological question 'what is?' (Scotland, 2012:9). In this regard, the researcher's task in the process of conducting research is to take a position of perceiving how things really are and how things really work (Scotland, 2012:9-10) which, in the case of this study, relates to what stress really is and what is the way of coping with this stress reality.

- Epistemology represents the nature of knowledge and a view of how an individual acquires knowledge (Krauss, 2015:5). Epistemology therefore embodies the theory of knowledge and it raises the question of what counts as valid knowledge (Smith, 2011:3). Therefore, the main focus of epistemology is on the process and methods of gaining or gathering knowledge about social reality and the validity of such knowledge. Hence, the epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge is created, acquired and communicated (Scotland, 2012:9). Being the study of knowledge, epistemology focuses on the ways of understanding and explaining how an individual knows and what an individual knows (Levers, 2013:2). Thus, an epistemological inquiry looks at the relationship between the investigator and the knowledge, and thus raises the question of how an individual can know the world (Shemi, 2012:74). Therefore, epistemology is concerned with how the researcher views make meaningful sense of his/her world (Levers, 2013:2-3) which, in the case of this study, relates to how teacher stress is interpreted and perceived as a valid phenomenon influencing teacher well-being and valid ways of coping with this stress.
- Research methodology, as the principles and ideas on which researchers base their research procedures and strategies, represents the strategy or plan of action which lies behind the choice and use of a particular research method (Scotland (2012:9; Smith, 2011:4). Research methodology is concerned with why, where, when and how data are collected and analysed with methodological assumptions guiding researchers to determine appropriate research methods and research techniques for the collection of valid empirical evidence (Scotland, 2012:9; Shemi, 2012:75), which with this study relates to understanding the magnitude of teacher stress and how to cope successfully with this stress.
- With regard to research methods as the techniques and procedures used to collect, analyse and interpret data (Scotland, 2012:10), research methods include the collection of data either by means of a qualitative or quantitative approach, or by means of incorporating both approaches (Scotland, 2012:10). With this study both quantitative and qualitative research approach methods were employed to cover the broad scope of teacher stress, the

influence thereof on successful functioning, and constructive coping mechanisms.

#### **4.3.2 A positivist research paradigm**

In this investigation, a positivistic view on reality was adopted as one of three research paradigms applicable to the study on teacher stress. The rationale behind the use of a positivist research paradigm is the fact that a positivist research paradigm confirms anticipated findings by predominantly using quantitative research methods (Smith, 2011:3). Therefore, a quantitative hypo-deductive research approach in this study is based on a positivist research paradigm in which the researcher is explanatorily confirming the relationship between burnout and its predictor variables.

Characteristics of a positivist research paradigm are the following and these characteristics relate to this study on teacher stress:

- In collecting data positivists use surveys (Shemi, 2012:77) which are applicable to this investigation because data for the quantitative part of this study were collected through the use of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES) (Steyn, 2015:134) and Stress, Depression, and Coping Scale Instrument (Kumar, 2011:146; Sprenger, 2011:27).
- A positivist paradigm focuses on the collection of quantitative data numerically interpreted by means of statistical methods of data analysis using inferential statistics relating to multiple regression, chi-square and t-test to analyse and report on the quantitatively collected data (Scotland, 2012:10; Smith, 2011:5).
- A positivist paradigm employs cause-and-effect relations and the significance of association of both linear and non-linear relationships among a number of variables (Najmaei, 2016:24). The cause-effect feature is applicable to this study which is focused on determining the significance of association between the predictor and the predicted variables.
- Positivist studies are characterised by hypotheses testing as a means of drawing inferences about a natural phenomenon (Shemi, 2012:76), such as that teacher stress as a natural phenomenon influences work performance negatively, but which can be countered by constructive coping strategies.

#### **4.3.2.1 The assumptions of a positivist research paradigm**

The positivist research paradigm also known as the scientist research paradigm thrived during the seventeenth century with the point of departure the fact that scientific knowledge which comes directly from studying observable and measurable events is the highest form of knowledge (Shemi, 2012:76; Smith, 2011:4). According to the scientific research paradigm other forms of knowledge such as knowledge based on religious assumptions are imperfect because such knowledge is not derived from observable experiences (Shemi, 2012:76). According to a positivist point of view, the universe consists of laws and principles that are discovered through direct observation (Smith, 2011:5). It postulates that the best way of conducting research is to study, measure and directly observe subject matter more closely (Shemi, 2012:76).

The ontological assumption of a positivist research paradigm is that reality is objective and that it is independent of the interpretations of the researcher because the researcher and the researched phenomenon are independent entities (Scotland, 2012:10; Smith, 2011:5). According to this assumption, the meaning and nature of the researched matter resides solely in the researched matter and not in the conscience of the researcher (Scotland, 2012:10). The implication is, for example, that a tree is a tree, regardless of whether the knower is aware of its existence or not. As an object of that kind, the tree carries the intrinsic meaning of 'treeness' and when the knower (human being) recognises the phenomenon as a tree, he/she is simply discovering a meaning that has been lying in wait for him/her all along (Scotland, 2012:10-11). A relating assumption of the positivist research paradigm is that reality is captured through the five human senses based on observations and experimentation as crucial activities in positivist research (Madondo, 2015:5).

An underlying epistemological assumption of the positivist research paradigm is that phenomena have an independent existence which can only be discovered through research (Shemi, 2012:77). During the process of research, in order to discover absolute knowledge about an objective reality, the researcher should be detached, neutral and objective generating knowledge deductively from a theory or hypothesis (Scotland, 2012:10).

As the main aim of positivist research methodology is to explain the relationships between variables, the aim is to identify the causes which influence outcomes so as to formulate laws to help in yielding a basis for prediction and generalisation of research findings (Scotland, 2012:10; Smith, 2011:5). As positivist researchers view their research methodology as scientific and as value neutral, the generation of knowledge is considered to be value neutral (Scotland, 2012:10-11). Positivist researchers assume that large-scale sample surveys and controlled laboratory experimental designs are suitable research methods because these methods enable researchers a certain amount of control over data collection and analysis via the manipulation of research design parameters and statistical inference procedures (Shemi, 2012:76). Collected data are therefore analysed on the basis of testable hypotheses with the sole aim of providing an opportunity for either confirming or falsifying the research findings (Shemi, 2012:77).

#### **4.3.2.2 The strengths of a positivist research paradigm**

A positivist research paradigm is conceptualised as having an objectivist epistemology by means of which human biasness is removed resulting in the discovery of authentic knowledge through observable and measurable facts based on a scientific philosophical framework for conducting research (Levers, 2013:3; Scotland, 2012:10). Employing research methods that offer objective and precise information produces good research results that are based on selecting participants randomly for representative data (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26).

Knowledge produced by means of a positivist research paradigm has wide transferability and generalisation value which is useful to policy makers who tend to fund positivist research because of the scientific and objective characteristics of a positivist research approach (Scotland, 2012:12; Smith, 2011:5).

#### **4.3.2.3 The limitations of a positivist research paradigm**

Positivist researchers use inferential statistical tests in analysing data which are generally difficult to apply and therefore frequently misused with research results often misinterpreted (Scotland, 2012:11). In some cases, positivist researchers select

incorrect statistical tests such as, for example, when data are not evenly distributed and an inexperienced researcher uses a parametric test, instead of a non-parametric test (Scotland, 2012:11-12). Further, positivist researchers collect data through rigid methods eliminating the opportunity of flexibility in the choice of data collection, analysis and interpretation (Najmaei, 2016:25).

#### **4.3.2.4 The application of a positivist research paradigm to this study on teacher stress**

A positivist research paradigm is applicable to this study. It is most commonly aligned with quantitative research methods of data collection such as questionnaires, scales, tests and checklists and also uses numerical data obtained from a sample in a population (Alghamdi, 2015:79; Ruben de Villiers & Fouché, 2015:126), which makes this research paradigm applicable to this study as the researcher did not only use surveys such as Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey and Stress, Depression and Coping Scale to collect data from a sample of 500 participants but also dealt with qualitative data as this study adopted a mixed-methods research approach. The other feature of a positivist research paradigm which makes it applicable to the study on teacher stress is the fact that this research paradigm uses quantitative methods of data analysis such as descriptive and inferential techniques, hence the characteristic feature which makes this research paradigm to be applicable to this investigation is the researcher uses the statistical methods of data analysis such as multiple regression, chi-square and t-test to analyse quantitatively collected data in this study. A positivist research paradigm is an approach based on a belief in insistence on objectivity and neutrality in a research process following the natural science approach by testing the hypotheses (Ingham-Broomfield, 2012:36; Smith, 2011:4). Quantitative hypothesis-deductive research on teacher stress is based on these facts. Positivist research methodology is directed at explaining relationships between the variables with the aim of attempting to identify causes which influence outcomes (Scotland, 2012:10; Sefotho, 2015:29), which is exactly the aim of this research on teacher stress. Thus, the purpose of the quantitative part of this study is to determine the relationships between burnout and the predictor variables such as teachers' overload, organisational commitment, lack of staff development and role ambiguity.

### **4.3.3 An interpretivist research paradigm**

The interpretivist research paradigm which is based on a qualitative research approach was relevant for this study on teacher stress because of the following reasons:

- For the sake of gaining an in-depth understanding of teacher stress and ways to cope successfully with stress the researcher, as a proponent of the interpretivist view, used open-ended interviews which are considered the best way of capturing the actual experiences of participants on the specific phenomenon under study in the participants' own words (Creswell, 2012:433; Scotland, 2012:12).
- Data collection techniques from an interpretivistic point of view also involve observation which is complementary to interviewing in the sense of it providing a more comprehensive understanding of what participants reveal through interviewing by understanding their sharing of experiences within their context (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:2). This ensures a situation in which the researcher knows both the experiences, opinions and beliefs of participants and the social context in which they live (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:27). This condition of comprehensive knowing relates to the intention of this study which aimed to understand the experiences and perceptions of a group of teachers regarding the stress they encounter and the coping strategies they employ in order to prevent burnout.
- In analysing data, interpretivist researchers use coding to interpret the analysed data collected through narrative and descriptive methods (Najmaei, 2016:24) which in the case with this study on teacher stress ensured that all relevant categories and themes emerged from data analysis.

#### **4.3.3.1 The assumptions of an interpretivist research paradigm**

An interpretivist research paradigm, also known as a constructivist research paradigm, relativist research paradigm and a phenomenological research paradigm, assumes that reality is subjective and that it is constructed through the interpretations of the researchers (Scotland, 2012:11; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26). As this reality is

subjective, differing from person to person, the implication is that there are various pictures of the same reality, with individuals' knowledge of reality gained through differing social constructs such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents and tools (Levers, 2013:3; Shemi, 2012:78). With an interpretivist point of view, social reality is shaped by the perceptions of the participants, but also in combination with the values and aims of the researcher so that the values, beliefs and ideologies of both the researched and researcher represent the research process (Creswell, 2012:429; Smith, 2011:8). In contrast to a positivist research paradigm, with an interpretivist view, complete neutrality and objectivity are impossible to achieve in the process of research (Smith, 2011:8). Interpretivist researchers, therefore, stress the importance of the meanings ascribed by the participants in the study because they believe that the researched should not be treated as the objectives of research but as important participants whose roles and opinions in the research process are crucial (Creswell, 2012:429).

Regarding an interpretivist researcher's ontological assumptions, reality is individually constructed and there are as many realities as there are individuals (Scotland, 2012:11). Interpretivists believe that language does not passively label the objects but does actively shape and mould reality which is subjective and which consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world (Levers, 2013:4). Due to the subjectivity of reality interpretivists understand that there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge with human beings acting as the creators of realities (Shemi, 2012:79). Accordingly, a tree is not a tree without a human being calling it a tree which implies that a specific reality is constructed through the interpretations of the researcher who represents a human being (Najmaei, 2016:23). Interpretivist researchers, therefore, use qualitative research methods because these methods enable researchers to get insight and information from participants about the meaning participants ascribe to a certain social problem (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26). In the process of data collection, interpretivist researchers use data collection methods that yield text messages, reflective conversations, participants' diaries, audio data and visual data that reflect the actual experiences and views of the researched (Creswell, 2012:429).

#### **4.3.3.2 The strengths of an interpretivist research paradigm**

There are many advantages of abiding by an interpretivist research paradigm such as that interpretivist researchers use qualitative research approaches which provide rich reports for a deep understanding of the studied context (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25). These rich reports are based on thorough and detailed personal accounts of the studied problem representing multiple perspectives for a holistic understanding of the social situation that is studied (Miner-Romanoff, 2012:7). This holistic understanding is arranged through interview techniques which enhance participants' comfort and openness resulting in a provision of on-going clarification on issues which require further clarification (Miner-Romanoff, 2012:12). Interpretivist researchers therefore focus on establishing a trusting relationship with their participants which motivates participants to 'talk-back' as participants are encouraged to point out irrelevant issues introduced by the researcher during the interview process (Shemi, 2012:80). This enhances the quality of the data that are collected.

An interpretivist research paradigm enables researchers to decide about the aspects to be included in the study and to rely on their personal values, experiences and priorities with the study (Creswell, 2012:430). Simultaneously interpretivist research methodology enables researchers to understand a phenomenon from the participants' perspectives which relate to the capturing of authentic data (Scotland, 2012:12). These authentic data are elicited and understood through the interaction between the researcher and participants with participants' perspectives not dominated in the research process (Scotland, 2012:12-13).

#### **4.3.3.3 The limitations of an interpretivist research paradigm**

Despite its many advantages the interpretivist research paradigm also has some shortcomings. These shortcomings relate to aspects such as that interpretivist researchers do not use research methods that offer objective and precise information, but accept multiple meanings and ways of knowing the studied phenomena (Smith, 2011:8; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26). This results in a situation in which no objective reality can be captured (Levers, 2013:3). The knowledge produced by interpretivist research paradigm studies has limited transferability as this knowledge is usually

fragmented and not unified into a coherent body (Scotland, 2012:12). For that reason, and as a result of a lack of generalisation possibilities that are useful in the formulation of policies, policy makers are reluctant to use the results of interpretivist research paradigm studies to formulate policies and they are also reluctant to fund interpretivist research studies (Scotland, 2012:12).

As a result of reality being subjective and differing from person to person, it is difficult to reach consensus in interpretivist research studies because participants and researchers do not share the same interpretations (Shemi, 2012:80). The danger also exists that participants' autonomy and privacy are compromised due to intimate and open-ended data collection procedures that may facilitate the unintended discovery of secrets, lies and oppressive relationships (Shemi, 2012:80; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26).

#### **4.3.3.4 The application of an interpretivist research paradigm to this study on teacher stress**

An interpretivist research paradigm is aligned with qualitative methods of data collection such as interviews, observations and focused group discussions (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:220; Madondo, 2015:6), thus making this research paradigm applicable to this study since the researcher collected qualitative data by interviewing twenty participants. An interpretivist research paradigm subscribes to a view that research should be directed at understanding phenomena from the perspectives and experiences of the participants (Sefotho, 2015:29; Starman, 2013:31). This research paradigm, therefore, allowed the researcher to investigate the study on teacher stress through the perceptions and experiences of the teachers which resulted in constructing and interpreting data in a meaningful manner. Interpretivist researchers believe that there are multiple realities of the same phenomenon (same data) and these realities differ across time and space (Najmaei, 2016:23; Nieuwenhuis, 2013:60). Adopting an interpretivist research paradigm enabled the researcher to investigate the phenomenon of teacher stress holistically.

An interpretivist research paradigm helps researchers to explore participants' practical concerns of everyday living and examining the way people develop interpretations of their life in relation to their experiences (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015:36). Hence, an

interpretivist research paradigm is the most applicable framework to investigate a phenomenon of teacher stress which affects teachers on a daily basis. Thus, this research paradigm enabled the researcher to find lasting solutions to the problem of teacher stress.

#### **4.3.4 A critical research paradigm**

The third research paradigm adopted in this study on teacher stress, namely, a critical research paradigm, was adopted because it allowed the researcher to use both inductive and deductive reasoning through various combinations of qualitatively and quantitatively collected data (Carlsson, 2011:720). In this study on teacher stress, the researcher adapted a mixed-methods research design which connects with critical realism in the sense that the critical research paradigm researchers assume that a more complete picture is obtained by mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods (Najmaei, 2016:27; Smith, 2011:15). This complete picture is considered to be more desirable than the parts created by either method of qualitative and quantitative research (Najmaei, 2016:27-28).

With a critical research paradigm, the understanding obtained by using a qualitative research approach is expanded and explained by the quantitative research approach, and vice versa (Carlsson, 2011:721). A weakness such as a small sample size that is used with collecting data via a qualitative research method can be compensated for by also applying a quantitative research method incorporating a larger sample size (Levers, 2013:3). In this regard the credibility of inferences from using a qualitative research method was assessed by the credibility of inferences from applying a quantitative research method (Najmaei, 2016:27). Therefore, a critical research paradigm is a response to both the interpretivist research and positivist research paradigm as it attempts to overcome the reduction of positivist research and the conservatism of the interpretivist research paradigm (Alghamdi, 2015:79; Carlsson, 2011:720). A critical research paradigm encourages researchers to critique the subject of a particular study under investigation from an experienced perspective and it also encourages researchers to share knowledge (Alghamdi, 2015:80).

#### 4.3.4.1 The assumptions of a critical research paradigm

As developed in Germany in the 1930s the ontological position of the critical research paradigm is that reality is a social phenomenon which is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values (Carlsson, 2011:720; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25). Reality which is a socially constructed entity is under constant human influence in the sense that it is historically constituted and is continuously produced and reproduced by human beings (Scotland, 2012:12). As with an interpretivist research paradigm, language actively shapes and moulds reality and is very important because language embodies power relations and can be used to empower or weaken individuals (Scotland, 2012:13). As with positivist research thinking, critical research paradigm researchers value rigour, precision, logical reasoning and attention to physical evidence as crucial in the process of conducting research (Levers, 2013:3).

With a critical research paradigm, it is assumed that reality is alterable by human action especially as this human action relates to power structures and social inequalities in which the disempowered members of society are dominated and oppressed both by powerful members of the society and by social problems prevailing in the specific society (Scotland, 2012:13). Critical research paradigm researchers believe that the only way of understanding and changing social reality is by means of identifying and applying the practical and theoretical research work of the social sciences (Carlsson, 2011:270). As knowledge is inseparable from everyday practice, critical research paradigm theorists talk about praxis as theory-in-practice which sensitises people about their situation and the possibility of changing the *status-quo* through praxis as repeated action informed by critical reflection (Scotland, 2012:13). Contrary to a positivistic view, a critical view assumes that knowledge implies values and facts that are intertwined and that are hard to disentangle (Carlsson, 2011:271).

The aim with research from a critical theorists' point of view is to emancipate people from their social problems through being scrupulous in conducting research in order to avoid possible bias which might affect research findings (Shemi, 2012:81). By analysing data through thematic interpretation and statistical analyses critical research paradigm researchers pursue the objectivity of their findings (Scotland, 2012:13; Shemi, 2012:82). Critical research paradigm researchers assume that both

participants and researchers have a dialectical task of unveiling reality, critically analysing it and recreating that knowledge (Sefotho, 2015:33). Consequently, critical research paradigm researchers advocate involvement of participants in the research process, for example, designing research questions, collecting data, analysing information and benefiting from research (Scotland, 2012:14).

#### **4.3.4.2 The strengths of a critical research paradigm**

With a critical research paradigm, researchers have flexibility in the research process because the process accommodates a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods allowing a pragmatic approach in order to understand research problems as best as possible (Najmaei, 2016:24). As researchers and participants are jointly involved in the research process, transformation is carried out with the participants who are encouraged to give their own views relating to their own situation in the world in which they live (Carlsson, 2011:272). There, accordingly, with a critical research paradigm an emancipatory role is carried out in the lives of participants in the sense of addressing participants' issues of social justice and marginalism (Scotland, 2012:13).

#### **4.3.4.3 Limitations of a critical research paradigm**

A critical research paradigm is criticised as being elitist because it labels participants as a marginalised group who needs to be emancipated (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:62). Critical research paradigm researchers assume that at some stage they have been emancipated; therefore, they are well-equipped to analyse the problems of the researched participants and thereby transform the lives of those participants (Ruben de Villiers & Fouché, 2015:137). Scotland (2012:14) assumes that the majority of leading authors of a critical research paradigm are males who prompt and provoke feminist researchers to criticise a critical research paradigm as excluding the voices and concerns of females. Critical research paradigm researchers are criticised for putting emphasis on a political agenda and thus failing to be objective and neutral researchers (Carlsson, 2011:272).

#### **4.3.4.4 The application of a critical research paradigm to this study on teacher stress**

The critical research paradigm underpins both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection such as questionnaires, interviews, scales, tests and checklists and also uses numerical data (Miner-Romanoff, 2012:7; Najmaei, 2016:25), thus making this research paradigm applicable to this study since the researcher collected qualitative data by interviewing twenty participants and collecting quantitative data by administering a questionnaire to 350 respondents. Therefore, the purpose of adopting a critical research paradigm in this study was to take advantage of using the data and results of the qualitative study in order to provide rich explanations of the findings from the quantitative data and results. Hence, the critical research paradigm allowed the researcher to employ a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning in this study on teacher stress.

#### **4.3.5 Research approaches**

A mixed-methods research approach was chosen as the approach which guided this study on teacher stress. With mixed-methods research as mixing of different research methods with related research approaches and research paradigms, an integration of results from these different methodologies results in a more comprehensive and better understanding of the studied context (Terrell, 2012:255). Mixed-methods research is applicable in disciplines such as nursing, psychology, education, sociology, library and information science, information systems and political science (Terrell, 2012:259). This study on teacher stress as an education-related study was meaningfully conducted by means of a mixed-methods research approach.

##### **4.3.5.1 The application of a mixed-methods research approach to this study on teacher stress**

This study on teacher stress adopted a mixed-methods research approach because it provides an opportunity to understand a complex phenomenon such as teacher stress that involves social and economic problems more thoroughly. Employing a mixed-methods research approach for this study entails a quantitative investigation that is

focused on the relationship between burnout which is a dependent variable and teacher-related variables such as teacher age, gender, personality and experience, work overload, role ambiguity, lack of staff development, organisational climate, organisational culture, type of school and general organisational commitment (Appendices H, I and J). Related to a quantitative investigation, independent variable aspects such as work overload, role ambiguity, type of school, lack of staff development opportunities, general organisational commitment, organisational climate and organisational culture were considered (Appendices F, G, H and I). With the qualitative investigation the focus was on important stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers and strategies to prevent burnout (Appendix J).

Apart from providing a better understanding of the research problem and answering the research questions by building on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data, a mixed-methods research approach ensures the obtaining of more detailed information than can be obtained from the results of statistical tests only or from interviewing only (Creswell, 2012:535). A mixed-methods research approach therefore caters for an alternative perspective on a studied phenomenon such as numeric information accompanied by stories on the issue (Creswell, 2012:536). As quantitative research provides closed-ended data and qualitative research open-ended data, and as both forms have strengths and limitations, combining them naturally promotes a stronger understanding of the research problem while countering the limitations of each type of research approach (Creswell, 2014:215). The collection of quantitative and qualitative data provides more complete information and a broader description of a problem that is researched and, as such, allows the researcher to make more informed decisions about how to answer the formulated research question satisfactorily (Ponce and Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:116). Mixed-methods research enables the researchers to investigate a multifaceted phenomenon, thus addressing the complicated research questions and hypotheses with a possibility of tackling a broader range of issues by synthesising both inductive logic and deductive logic (Najmaei, 2016:25). By applying a mixed-methods research approach to this study on teacher stress, different aspects of complexity can be explored with regard to teacher stress encounters and coping strategies to alleviate harmful stress.

#### **4.3.5.2 Models of a mixed-methods research approach**

Two models are determined for the implementation of a mixed methods research approach. The first model that was operationalised prior to the 1990s pertained to the application of both a qualitative and quantitative research approach in the same study without connecting, integrating and combining the data for a joint interpretation of data right from the start of the research process (Mertens, Bazelely & Niglas, 2016:2). Combining and integrating the respective data is done only at the end of the study to answer the formulated research questions (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:116). With the second model that emerged in the 1990s data collected from a qualitative and quantitative research approach are jointly interpreted at the analytical and results stages of the research (König, 2016:181; Mertens et al., 2016:3).

Whether the first or second model is used for applying a mixed-methods research approach, the advantages of this approach relates to being flexible, allowing researchers to be more liberal in conducting their research (König, 2016:181). As a critique against quantitative research which had dominated health, education, economic, and social science research for several decades, researchers started to understand that many research problems comprise complex phenomena that can only be understood at a more profound level by using mixed-methods research approaches (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:115).

The fact that mixed methods research designs bring about a more complete picture and general view of the issue at hand relates to quantitative approaches that generate information about an “if” of the problem while qualitative approaches provide information about the “how” and “why” of the problem (Terrell, 2012:258). Answering the “if” and the “how” and “why” of the problem at the same time confirms a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the studied phenomenon (Terrell, 2012:259). In this study, the researcher adapted the convergent parallel research design. This design is explained in detail in paragraph 4.3.5.3.

#### **4.3.5.3 The different structures for a mixed-methods research design**

Three basic structures for integrating quantitative and qualitative research approaches relate to a sequential phases design, a convergent parallel design, and a concurrent nested design (König, 2016:182).

A sequential phase design starts with a qualitative phase, being phase I, and uses these findings to design a quantitative study, being phase II (König, 2016:183). On the basis of the findings of the qualitative study, hypotheses are developed and a questionnaire constructed for a large quantitative survey (Najmaei, 2016:27). Sequential phases design enables researchers to use a research approach to study a research problem in-depth thereby using the findings of the first phase to design the second phase (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:117). A sequential phases design may also start with a quantitative phase to examine facts and then add a qualitative strategy to explore the feelings and perceptions which have not been explored by the quantitative approach (Smith, 2011:19).

With a convergent parallel research design, quantitative and qualitative research approaches are simultaneously carried out to study the problem in an integrated manner from the angles of both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:117). Thus, a convergent parallel research design is a form of mixed-methods research design in which a researcher merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014:15). With a convergent parallel study, the main objectives relate to studying the research problem in its entirety and in all dimension, considering different perspectives to cross-validate the data and results by means of assessing the credibility of inferences from a quantitative research approach with the emerged categories from a qualitative research approach (Najmaei, 2016:27). With a convergent parallel study two closely interlinked research questions can be answered for the purpose of achieving completeness (König, 2016:182).

A concurrent nested research design complements one approach with the other by supporting and specifying research results with the qualitative research approach being the dominant approach and the quantitative research approach being nested

within the qualitative research approach (Terrell, 2012:270). With this design, priority is given to the primary data collection approach while less emphasis is placed on the nested approach, however, with an integration of data during the data analysis phase (Najmaei, 2016:26). With the concurrent nested design, the one research approach counters the deficiencies of the other while gaining a broader perspective than could be gained from using only the dominant data collection method (Ponce and Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:120; Terrell, 2012:271).

In this study on teacher stress the researcher adapted the convergent parallel research design to give equal priority to both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Quantitative data were collected to assess the degree of burnout amongst the respondents and also to measure the degree of experiencing the three dimensions of burnout, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment. Qualitative data were collected to understand the factors responsible for teacher stress within context and to determine strategies for coping with teacher stress in order to prevent burnout.

#### **4.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

The population for this study on teacher stress comprised of 600 primary school teachers who were pursuing a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education at the National University of Lesotho. This is a part-time programme offered by the University for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education. From this population a sample of 350 teacher respondents were drawn for the quantitative investigation using random sampling. The researcher stratified the population into females and males because the population reflected an imbalance insofar as that there were more females than males in the population. Stratification of the population was relevant because the number of female respondents in the population was substantially higher than that of their male counterparts. The number of females was 440 while the number of males was 160 which represented only 27 percent of the total population. Therefore, if stratified sampling was not applied, this would have resulted in the selection of more females than males which would have led to a collection of non-representative data, thus leaving out the views of the male respondents while they were already a minority group in the population. By employing stratified random sampling, the strata, for

example, male and female, are represented in the sample in the proportion in which they exist in the population thus avoiding yielding fewer respondents in the gender category (Creswell, 2012:535).

The sample for the qualitative part of the study comprised 20 teacher participants. The quota sampling technique was used to draw the sample of 20 teachers from the population because of the significant majority of females in the population implying that quota sampling contributed to a representative gender sample. Apart from ensuring a proportional number of male and female participants relative to the population, quota sampling confirmed the representation of minority strata within the population and avoided the possible over-representation of strata (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:154). Thus, in this study on teacher stress, quota sampling enabled the researcher to select a sample which had the same proportion of males and females as the total population in order to collect data which represented the characteristics of all the groups under investigation in the proportions in which the characteristics were found in the wider population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:156).

#### **4.5 DATA COLLECTION**

Data were collected by means of a mixed-methods research approach employing the convergent parallel design. The convergent parallel design was applicable in this study on teacher stress as it enabled the researcher to give equal priority to both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The convergent parallel design was more advantageous for use in this study due to the following reasons:

- The convergent parallel design enabled the researcher to handle and collect qualitative and quantitative data at roughly the same time (Terrell, 2012:264) and as such it saved the researcher's time.
- The convergent parallel design enabled the researcher to transform one type of data, for example, qualitative data, into the other type of data, for instance, quantitative data (König, 2016:182), hence this design allowed the researcher to be flexible in manipulating data when a need arose.

#### **4.5.1 Quantitative data collection**

For the quantitative part of the study, data were collected through the use of the second version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, called Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' Survey (MBI-ES) (Appendix E). This instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher located this instrument in a study which had been investigated by Steyn in 2015. The main aim of using this survey to collect data was to establish whether teachers encounter burnout in Lesotho and also to measure the degree of burnout among the respondents. The MBI is a structured questionnaire which addresses three subscales of burnout, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment (Appendix E). Currently, there are three distinct versions of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, namely, Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS), Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' Survey (MBI-ES) and Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) (Won-Sun, Jamaiah, Ching-Sin, Wymen, Sit-Fong & Mohd, 2014:20). The Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey as the original form of the Maslach's Burnout Inventory measures burnout among the professions that involve demanding interpersonal interactions with clients such as the healthcare professions and the social work profession (Bria, Spânu, Baban & Dumitrascu, 2014:103). These professions are prone to burnout because they are continuously dealing with clients' anger and frustrating or embarrassing emotions (Won-Sun et al., 2014:21). The Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey measures burnout among workers across different professions (Steyn, 2015:134).

##### **4.5.1.1 Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' survey**

The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' survey (MBI-ES) was developed to measure burnout specifically among primary and secondary school teachers (Bria et al., 2014:103; Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016:7). With the MBI-ES instrument the word "recipients" is replaced with the word "students" (Koenig, 2014:20; Steyn, 2015:134). The MBI-ES has 22 items from three subscales, namely emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and depersonalisation (Appendix F). The subscale emotional exhaustion refers to the development of a feeling of fatigue as a result of overextended emotional energies, personal accomplishment assesses

educator achievement in contributing to students' development and depersonalisation assesses the degree to which educators experience negative feelings about their students (Won-Sun et al., 2014:21).

#### **4.5.1.2 Demographic and Personality Questionnaire**

The Demographic and Personality Questionnaire was also used to collect quantitative data (Appendix F). This tool measures variables such as demographic and personality data. Demographic data in this case relate to age, gender and number of years of teaching experience of respondents. Personality data relates to personality of respondents such as introversion, agreeableness, emotional instability and extroversion. This instrument was developed by the researcher. The validity and reliability of this instrument were ascertained by discussing the questionnaire with colleagues.

#### **4.5.1.3 Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scale**

Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scale is another instrument which was used to collect quantitative data (Appendix G). This scale collects data on measures of role conflict, role ambiguity and overload. The instrument was developed by the researcher. The validity and reliability of this instrument were ascertained by discussing the instrument with colleagues.

#### **4.5.1.4 School Environmental Questionnaire**

Quantitative data were also collected through the use of the School Environmental Questionnaire (Appendix H). This instrument collects measures taken from variables such as personnel development, organisational climate, organisational culture, school type and organisational commitment. The instrument was developed by the researcher. The validity and reliability of this instrument were ascertained by discussing the instrument with colleagues.

#### 4.5.2 Qualitative data collection

For the qualitative study, data were collected through the use of a semi-structured interview guide entitled Interview Schedule on a Relationship between Stress and Burnout, Consequences of Burnout among Teachers, Teacher Stress and Depression Coping Strategies and the Roles that can be Played by the Ministry of Education and Training as a way of Equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to Prevent Burnout (Appendix I). This guide was used to collect data on issues such as how participants (teachers) define burnout and the relationship between stress and burnout, and effects of burnout on the well-being of teachers and on teachers' work. This guide was also used to measure variables such as stress, depression and coping strategies employed by teachers when facing stress. The interviews were conducted in one of the offices in the National University of Lesotho. The researcher is a part-time lecturer in the university and it was easy to take an advantage of using that office. The average length of the interviews was fifteen minutes.

There are many advantages of using a semi-structured interview for collecting data in qualitative studies. In this study on teacher stress, a semi-structured interview was used for the following reasons:

- A semi-structured interview enabled the researcher to probe participants in events in which participants withhold some important information (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87).
- A semi-structured interview allowed participants to describe their personal information in a detailed manner while at the same time the researcher had a better control over the type of information he needed (Creswell, 2012:218).
- A semi-structured interview enabled the researcher to request participants to clarify their answers while at the same time, participants had an opportunity to request the researcher to clarify some questions which were not clear (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:87).

## 4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The focus of this section was on quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Quantitative data analysis was based on a positivist philosophy in which descriptive statistics was used to establish cause-and-effect relations and the significance of association of relationships among the variables of interest on this study on teacher stress. The term 'descriptive statistics' refers to a collective name for a number of statistical data analysis methods which are used to organise, summarise and interpret numerical data in a meaningful way with a purpose of enhancing an understanding of the properties of such data (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:183). Qualitative data analysis, on the other hand, was based on an interpretivist philosophy with the aim of establishing how participants (teachers) make meaning of the phenomenon of teacher stress by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, values, feelings, knowledge, understanding and experiences of their construct of the phenomenon of teacher stress (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:99).

### 4.6.1 Quantitative content data analysis

Two sets of data were analysed in this study on teacher stress, namely, quantitative data and qualitative data. The statistical data analysis methods of multiple regression, chi-square and independent sample t-test were used to analyse quantitatively collected data. Multiple regression was used to analyse data with a purpose of predicting burnout from teachers' work overload, organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict. The respondents' scores on burnout were regressed on their scores of work overload, organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict. The following multiple regression model was employed to predict burnout from work overload, organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate and organisational culture (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:246; Overton, & Van Diermen, 2014:663):

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + b_7X_7$$

The Chi-square was employed to establish whether variables such as teacher's age, personality, work experience and type of school have an influence on teacher burnout. The following chi-square formula was used to determine whether the predictor variables such as teacher's age, gender, personality, work experience and type of school have potential of predicting burnout among teachers (Bolboacă, Jäntschi, Sestraş, Sestraş & Pamfil, 2011:530; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:508):

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

For the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in a contingency table where:

$\chi^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\sum$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in this case, the number of cells involved teachers' scores on their age, personality, work experience, type of school).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

A t-test was used to determine whether female and male teachers are affected by burnout in the same way, or whether burnout is higher among female or male teachers. The following t-test formula was used to check whether a degree of burnout is higher among female or male teachers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:510):

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s\sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

In this case, analysing data using a t-test, the researcher handled data in which:

t was t-test statistic.

$\bar{x}_1$  was the mean of female respondents.

$\bar{x}_2$  was the mean of male respondents.

$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$  was the standard error of the difference in the means of both female and male respondents.

#### 4.6.2 Qualitative content data analysis

In this study on teacher stress, qualitative data were analysed using the inductive approach with the aim of examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data which eventually allowed the research findings to emerge from the frequent and dominant themes inherent in the raw data (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:99). In this section, in the process of data analysis, the researcher proceeded through the following steps which are commonly used in analysing qualitative data:

- The first step of data analysis in qualitative data, after the recorded interviews have been transcribed, entails data organisation which takes different forms such as developing a matrix, organising data by type, participant and site (Creswell, 2014:197; Nieuwenhuis, 2013:104). The researcher developed a table in which interview responses of each participant were written. That is, the researcher organised data by participant.
- The second step of data analysis in qualitative data involves exploration of data or preliminary exploratory analysis in which a researcher explores data with the purpose of obtaining a general sense or idea of the data (Creswell, 2012:243). In the preliminary exploratory analysis, the researcher explored the interview notes and out of those notes, the memos or short phrases, ideas and concepts were written.
- The third step of data analysis in qualitative data entails coding of data in which a researcher engages in dividing data into meaningful analytical units called segments (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:105; Steward-Withers, Banks, McGregor & Meo-Sewabu, 2014:76). In this study on teacher stress, the researcher analysed data following a series of steps which involved coding data, namely, reading the transcribed interviews, dividing the transcribed interviews into analytical units or segments, labelling the segments with codes, reducing overlaps and redundancy of codes and finally collapsing

codes into themes or categories (Creswell, 2012:244). Thus, qualitative data were analysed through the use of coding transcribed data into themes for the purpose of uncovering and understanding the phenomenon of study (McAteer, 2013:84).

- The fourth step of data analysis in qualitative data involves structuring of the themes (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:110). At this stage, the researcher structured the themes with the purpose of establishing the links and contradictions between the categories as this aided explanation of the data. The researcher also drew diagrams and graphic devices such as frequency tables, bar charts, pie charts and graphs as a way presenting data. All these enabled the researcher to clarify the meaning of the data and eventually enabled the readers to easily follow patterns and interpretations of data.
- The final step of data analysis in qualitative data entails interpretation and description of data (Creswell, 2012:247). At this point the researcher described and explained the summaries of what participants had said. Description and explanation of data here involved answering of the research questions. Creswell (2014:200) observes that interpretation in qualitative research takes many forms, for example, a meaning derived from a comparison of the findings with information gleaned from literature (thus, establishing whether the findings confirm past information or refute it), suggesting new questions raised by data and analysis that a researcher had not foreseen earlier in a study and asking “what were the lessons learned by a researcher?” Therefore, in analysing qualitative data in this study on teacher stress, the researcher considered all these options.

#### **4.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

The criteria for choosing a good instrument for data collection depend on the validity and reliability of such an instrument (Creswell, 2012:158). Validity as evidence that a selected research instrument measures what it purports to measure must relate to reliability in terms of confirming the dependability, consistency and replicability of a research instrument (Cohen et al., 2011:199). According to Creswell (2012:159), reliability represents the stability and consistency of scores from a data collecting instrument.

#### 4.7.1 Validity and reliability of the quantitatively collected data

Validity is an important feature of quantitative research and is usually based on determining whether the research findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, participants and readers (Creswell, 2014:201). In this study on teacher stress, the researcher ensured validity through the following procedures:

- Face validity referring to the extent to which an instrument looks valid or appears to measure what it is supposed measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:217). As a way of ensuring a degree of face validity, the researcher and his colleagues scrutinised the instruments. Colleagues in this case refer to experienced lecturers at Lesotho College of Education. These people are holders of doctoral degrees who are acquainted with data collection techniques.
- Content validity refers to the extent to which an instrument fairly and comprehensively covers the content or items that it purports to cover (Cohen et al., 2011:199). In this case, the researcher discussed the questionnaires with experienced researchers. These people are research experts who are employed as research fellows in the National University of Lesotho.
- Looking for evidence of validity by locating previous studies that have used the instruments to collect data (Creswell, 2012:162). Thus, the researcher established how often the instruments have been used by other researchers in collecting data for their studies. That is, the more an instrument is used by researchers to collect data, the more an instrument is valid. During the process of reviewing the related literature, the researcher came across a number of studies where these instruments were used by previous researchers in collecting data for their studies.
- Proper sampling also enhances validity in quantitative studies (Cohen et al., 2011:179). In this study, the researcher ensured validity through the use of appropriate sampling approaches that relate to probability sampling techniques which usually ensure representativeness of data. Probability sampling is particularly relevant in this study on teacher stress since the population reflects an imbalance as that there are more females than males in the population.

Reliability is another important key to effective investigation in quantitative research. Reliability of an instrument means that if the same instrument is administered to different respondents from the same population at different times, the findings will be the same (Cohen et al., 2011:199; Creswell, 2014:201). There are different ways of establishing reliability of an instrument but in this study the researcher ensured reliability of the questionnaires through the following strategies:

- Test-retest reliability which is determined by administering an instrument to the same participants on two or three different occasions (Creswell, 2012:161). To ascertain reliability of the questionnaires, the researcher conducted a pilot study, the questionnaires administered to the same participants (teachers) at two different times but at a reasonable or sufficient time interval. The researcher then compared the first set of scores with the second set of scores by both calculating the mean scores and correlation coefficients of the two sets of scores. The researcher's pilot study revealed a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.70,  $N = 25$  ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- Split-half reliability is obtained by dividing the question items of the same instrument into two halves, forming two separate instruments (Cohen et al., 2011:201). For example, the even-numbered items form one instrument and the odd-numbered items form the other instrument (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:216; Thomas, 2011:54). In this study, the researcher ensured the split-half reliability by conducting a pilot study where the even-numbered items formed the first questionnaire and the odd-numbered items formed the second questionnaire. The researcher then compared the scores of the two separate questionnaires by calculating their means. The researcher's pilot study revealed a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.65,  $N = 25$  ( $p < 0.05$ ).

#### **4.7.2 Trustworthiness and transferability of the qualitatively collected data**

Trustworthiness is very important in qualitative research as it enhances data collection, data analysis, findings and conclusions (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:113). There are many ways of enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative studies but in this study on teacher stress, trustworthiness was ensured through the following procedures:

- Member checking which is used to determine the accuracy of research findings, involves taking data, interpretations and conclusions back to the participants for their feedback on the accuracy and the overall confirmation of the data (Jarmon, 2014:40). To ensure trustworthiness of the qualitatively collected data, participants were asked to review transcripts of their interviews to make corrections, deletions or additions to the data. Furthermore, the themes associated with the transcripts were shared with the participants to determine if they believed the findings are accurate.
- Peer reviewing is a strategy used when peers read and comment on the findings, thus, basically peer reviewing involves asking colleagues to scan some of the raw data and assess whether the findings are plausible based on the data (Creswell, 2014:202). The researcher requested fellow doctorate students at Lesotho College of Education to be peer reviewers for this study.
- Verifying raw data which entails informal conversations with the participants with the aim of enabling the participants to verify gathered data in earlier interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:112). During subsequent interviews, the researcher requested participants to verify data with the purpose of correcting errors.
- Spending prolonged time in the field (spending sufficient time in the field) is another procedure which the researcher used in order to ensure trustworthiness. This procedure helped the researcher to establish trust with participants, which resulted in influencing the participants to provide data freely and willingly. Spending prolonged time in the research site does not only enable researchers to collect detailed data but it also helps researchers to develop an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon under study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013).
- Controlling for bias is a self-reflection exercise which helps researchers to avoid their interpretations of data to be influenced by their backgrounds (Creswell, 2014:202). In this study, the researcher ensured trustworthiness by avoiding his interpretations of the findings to be influenced by variables such as his culture, gender and socio-economic background.
- Trustworthiness also was ensured through engaging an external auditor to review the main aspects of this thesis. Thus, the researcher requested a

research professor from the National University of Lesotho for soundboarding assistance in order to ascertain the soundness of the findings.

Transferability is another procedural perspective which is recommended in qualitative research. This procedure refers to the extent to which the findings of one study may be applicable to other similar research settings or groups (Bengtsson, 2016:13). The researcher ensured transferability through the following techniques:

- The researcher ensured transferability by employing quota sampling of participants. Quota sampling does not only negate chances of researcher's bias in the selection of participants but it also helps to ensure that any "unknown influences" are distributed evenly within the sample (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs, 2014:4).
- The researcher also ensured transferability by using thick description when writing up the findings of this study. Thick description entails a situation in which a researcher provides a detailed description of participants, descriptions of a setting for the study, offering many perspectives about themes and examples of raw data such as direct quotes from the participants (Creswell, 2014:202). Hence, this procedure is important because it allows readers to make an informed judgment about whether they can transfer the findings to their own situation (Houghton et al., 2013:16).
- Selection of the most appropriate method of data collection is essential in ensuring transferability in qualitative research (Elo et al., 2014:3). Thus, the researcher ensured transferability in this study on teacher stress by choosing the best data collection method which is a mixed methods research approach that combines quantitative and qualitative techniques of data collection in the same research inquiry (Ponce & Pagán-Maldonado, 2015:113). Hence, this method enabled the researcher to manipulate both quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of having a deep understanding of this study on teacher stress.

## 4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Carrying out research is always guided by research ethics and research principles. As ethics is a philosophy which deals with the dynamics of making decisions concerning what is right and wrong, research ethics involves requirements on daily work, the protection of the dignity of the participants and the publication of the research results (Fouka & Mantzourou, 2011:4). Thus, when conducting research, researchers need to abide by important research ethics considerations. In the course of conducting this study on teacher stress, the researcher abided by and was guided by the following ethical guidelines:

- **Informed consent:** The researcher solicited the consent of the participants by stating the purpose of the study from the outset (Harriss & Atkinson, 2013:1025; Gardner, 2011:5; UNISA, 2014:13). As prescribed by the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics, the researcher requested the participants to provide their assent in writing or verbally (UNISA, 2014:13). According to Fouka and Mantzourou (2011:4) informed consent is the major ethical issue in the process of conducting research because it enables the participants to show their consent knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently without any form of coercion from the researcher.
- **Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity:** The researcher considered the participants' entitlement to their privacy, confidentiality and anonymity (Gardner, 2011:7; UNISA, 2014:15). The confidential and anonymous treatment of participants and the data collected from them was maintained as the principal rule during the course of this study (Terrell, 2012:276).
- **Beneficence:** The researcher adhered to ethical principle of beneficence by conducting research in a professional and effective manner for the purpose of serving and promoting the welfare of the participants in the quest of understanding the researched phenomenon clearly. The welfare of the participants relates to participants understanding the potential benefits of the study (Terrell, 2012:276).
- **Openness and disclosure:** The non-disclosure of information was obeyed at all costs in this investigation on teacher stress (Gardner, 2011:6; UNISA, 2014:14). Deception was avoided while openness and disclosure were

pursued as the ethical means of securing the participants' voluntary informed consent (Gardner, 2011:6).

- Participants' right to a research copy: The researcher informed the participants that they had the right to receive a copy of the study if they so wished (Terrell, 2012:276).
- Right to withdraw: For the fact that the participants have a right not only to refuse to participate but also to withdraw from the research, it was the researcher's obligatory duty to inform the participants about the right to withdraw their participation from the research for any valid reason or for no reason whatsoever (Gardner, 2011:6, Harriss & Atkinson, 2013:1025).
- No-bias presentation and analysis of data: The researcher ensured that data analysis and presentation were free of bias towards any group, as these groups relate to age, class and gender for this study on teacher stress (Terrell, 2012:276).
- Fabrication of evidence: In relation to deception, the researcher avoided any form of fabrication of evidence (Creswell, 2012:475).
- Capturing the details of the research: The details of this investigation were thoroughly captured and explained in the actual report with the aim of allowing the readers an opportunity to judge the ethical quality of the study (Terrell, 2012:276).
- Respect potential power imbalances: During the process of interviews, the researcher withheld sharing personal impressions as failure to do so can intimidate participants, avoided leading questions as a way of showing respect for the knowledge of participants and encouraged participants to share their experiences freely, thus, in a nutshell, the researcher involved participants as collaborators (Creswell, 2014:94).
- Avoid 'going native': the researcher avoided siding with participants (going native) which entails reporting only the results that place participants in a favourable light but the researcher reported a full range of findings (multiple perspectives) including findings that may be contrary to the researcher's themes (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014:179).
- Avoid collecting harmful information: The researcher avoided collecting harmful and intimate information from participants since it is not only

unethical but it is also a duty of a researcher to protect all the individuals who participate in a study (Creswell, 2014:99).

- Do not pressure participants to sign consent forms: When collecting consent for this study, the researcher did not force participants to sign the informed consent forms because individuals' participation in a study should always be voluntary (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014:164; Creswell, 2014:97).
- Consent of gatekeepers: Prior to a process of data collection, the researcher requested permission to collect data from the Coordinator of the Bachelor of Education Programme at the National University of Lesotho. The procedure of obtaining permission from organisational structures is in line with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics (UNISA, 2014:14).

The UNISA Policy on Research Ethics stipulates that prior to data collection a researcher should apply for ethics clearance (UNISA, 2014:5). In this regard, the researcher considered the following procedures in the process of ethics clearance:

- Application to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee (CEDU REC): The researcher completed the application form entitled Application for Ethics Review and Clearance: 2016 (Appendix A). This application was then submitted to the CEDU REC through the researcher's supervisor.
- A letter requesting permission to conduct research: For the purposes of gaining access to the study sites and participants, researchers need to obtain approval from the authorities (Creswell, 2014:96). The researcher wrote a letter to the Coordinator of Bachelor of Education Programme at the National University of Lesotho requesting permission to collect data. This document was entitled a Letter Requesting Permission to Conduct Research (Appendix A).
- Participant information sheet and consent form: For the purpose of voluntary involvement in a study, participants need to give their consent. In this regard, the researcher wrote a letter to participants, in which participants were informed about the purpose of the study, that their participation was voluntary, data would be treated in confidentiality and that they were free to withdraw at any time. This letter was labelled Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (Appendix B).

- Letter Requesting an Adult to Participate in an Interview: The researcher wrote a letter requesting participants to participate in interviews. The other contents of the letter covered the purpose of the study, confidentiality of information and length of the interviews. This document was entitled: Letter Requesting an Adult to Participate in an Interview (Appendix C).
- Covering letter for a questionnaire: Questionnaires are usually accompanied by covering letters. In this study on teacher stress, the researcher wrote a covering letter to participants informing them that their participation was voluntary, no envisaged risks associated with completion of instrument and sampling strategy which resulted in their selection as part of the sample. The instrument was labelled Covering Letter for the Questionnaire (Appendix D).

#### **4.9 SUMMARY**

This study adapted a mixed-methods research design. Positivist, interpretivist and critical realism were adopted as theoretical paradigms. The aim of this investigation was to collect quantitative and qualitative data to answer formulated research questions. Quantitative data were collected through the use of the Burnout Inventory-Educators' Survey while qualitative data were collected through the use of the Interview Schedule on Teacher Stress and Depression Coping Strategies. The population for the study reflected an imbalance as there were more females than males. This could have resulted in a collection of non-representative data if appropriate sampling approaches were not employed. In order to tackle this problem, stratified sampling was used to draw a sample for the quantitative investigation and a sample for qualitative research was selected through the use of quota sampling. Quantitative data were analysed through the use of statistical analysis methods while qualitative data were analysed through the use of the inductive approach.

Observance of ethical issues is imperative in the process of conducting research. As a way of guarding against violation of both the Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa and the rights of participants, data were collected after ethical clearance was granted and permission sought from the gatekeepers of the research site with adherence to the principle of autonomy of research participants.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS ON DATA QUALITATIVELY COLLECTED**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the analysis of qualitatively collected data. These data were collected from twenty participants. The analysis of this qualitative data involved a series of actions and steps, including frequency tables, bar charts, pie charts and the coding of transcribed data into themes for the sake of interpretation resulting in research findings. Data were analysed keeping the research question in mind relating to strategies to equip teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent work-related burnout. An analysis of the data revealed that stress coping strategies relate to the relationship between stress and burnout, the stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers, the consequences of burnout among teachers, the strategies employed by teachers to prevent burnout and the roles that the Ministry of Education and Training fulfil in equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout. Before discussing the research findings, the researcher provides background information on the research site and research participants.

#### **5.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH SITE**

The research site for this study, namely, the National University of Lesotho, is situated in the valley of Roma in Lesotho. Roma valley is an isolated area, which is 35 kilometres from the capital city of Lesotho named Maseru. The origins of the National University of Lesotho are traced back to 8 April 1945 when Pius XII University College was established by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of Southern Africa (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:1). The college prepared its students to enrol for degrees at the University of South Africa (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:1). On 27 September 1954, the University of South Africa (UNISA), having satisfied itself that Pius XII College was an academically viable institution, agreed to enter into a formal agreement with the college and Pius XII University College was granted an 'Associate College' status by UNISA (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:1). However, in the early 1960s, Pius

XII University College forfeited its affiliation status when it experienced academic and financial difficulties (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:1).

On 1 January 1964 Pius XII University College became a non-denominational institution named the University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland (UBBS). The denominational character of Pius XII University College had made it difficult for international organisations and agencies to fund it as an institution of higher learning (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:2). In 1966 UBBS became the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:2). During the independence in 1966, the names of Basutoland and Bechuanaland changed into Botswana and Lesotho. Therefore, to be in line with the chosen names during the independence in 1966, UBBS became the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:3). On 20 October 1975 UBLS became the National University of Lesotho (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:2). The reason for the name change was that Botswana and Swaziland had established their own universities (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:3).

In terms of surface area, the university has 90 hectares and had a population of 12,000 students and 501 lecturers for the 2018 academic year. When Pius XII University College was established in 1945, the number of students was five (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:2). In 1959, the College had 171 students (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:1) and in 1963 the College had 180 students (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:2). The National University of Lesotho offers certificates, diplomas, undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees. The university caters for the students who study education, technology, science, health sciences, social work, business studies, law, economics, agriculture and sociology (National University of Lesotho Public Affairs Office, 2012:11-12). There are seven different faculties at the research site catering for the different student needs related to the Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Humanities and Faculty of Science and Technology.

### **5.3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

The population for this study on teacher stress comprised of 600 primary school teachers who were pursuing a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education at the National University of Lesotho. Bachelor of Education in Primary Education is a part-time programme offered by the university for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education. The sample for the qualitative part of this study comprised of 20 teachers. The quota sampling technique was employed to select the sample of 20 teachers from the population. For this particular investigation, there were more females than males in the population. Therefore, the use of quota sampling led to a selection of representative data. Hence, the use of quota sampling ensured that the selected sample had a proportional number of male and female teachers relative to the population. For the qualitative part of this study, twenty participants were interviewed. Fifteen participants were female teachers and five participants were male teachers. The demographic features of female participants are shown in Table 5.1 and male teachers in Table 5.2. There accordingly, the stress levels of both female and male participants range from moderate to substantial. The stress levels of the participants were revealed by the results of the interviews. In terms of age, the youngest female participant was 32 and the oldest 43 with the corresponding figures for male participants 31 and 43. Pertaining to participants' teaching experience, it varied between twelve years and sixteen years.

Apart from teaching, participants had extracurricular responsibilities relating to administrative duties such as ensuring that learners had learning materials, counselling of learners and fundraising undertakings. The fundraising undertakings pertained to organising the selling of uniforms and agricultural projects and ensuring the smooth running of the daily feeding scheme at the respective schools. With regard to the feeding scheme, teacher responsibility related to supervising cooks on nutritionally balanced food for learners on a daily basis. Participants were also involved in the financial management of their schools and they all had sporting and cultural activity responsibilities. Sporting activity responsibilities included the supervision and coaching of learners with netball, soccer, volleyball and athletics. Cultural activities included responsibilities with regard to music and Sesotho traditional dances. The main criterion for participant selection was participants' teaching experience in the

education system of Lesotho. The minimum teaching experience which served as a criterion for selection was three years. Participants were qualified primary school teachers who were pursuing a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education at the National University of Lesotho. Bachelor of Education in Primary Education is a part-time programme offered by the University for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education.

**Table 5.1: Demographic features of female teachers**

Participants	Teaching Experience	Age	Stress Level	NO. of Grades Taught	Responsibilities
P1	9	38	Substantial	2	Administrative
P2	11	42	Moderate	4	Welfare issues
P3	4	33	Substantial	5	Feeding
P4	13	35	Substantial	2	Sports, Feeding
P5	9	32	Moderate	1	Feeding
P6	10	35	Substantial	2	Sports
P7	20	42	Substantial	1	Fund-raising
P8	7	34	Substantial	4	Treasurer
P9	7	34	Moderate	1	Feeding
P10	7	34	Moderate	1	Counselling
P11	16	34	Moderate	1	Sports
P12	12	32	Substantial	1	Feeding
P13	13	38	Moderate	2	Sports
P14	9	33	Moderate	1	Culture
P15	16	43	Moderate	1	Culture

Table 5.1 provides information about the demographic features of female teachers relating to teaching experience and age. The table also provides information pertaining to participants' levels of stress, teachers' extracurricular responsibilities at their respective schools and the number of grades each teacher taught.

**Table 5.2: Demographic features of male teachers**

Participants	Teaching Experience	Age	Stress Level	N0. of Taught	Grades	Responsibilities
P16	19	43	Substantial	1		Sports
P17	7	31	Substantial	1		Sports
P18	15	34	Substantial	7		Sports
P19	13	33	Moderate	4		Culture, Sports
P20	14	36	Substantial	1		Culture, Sports

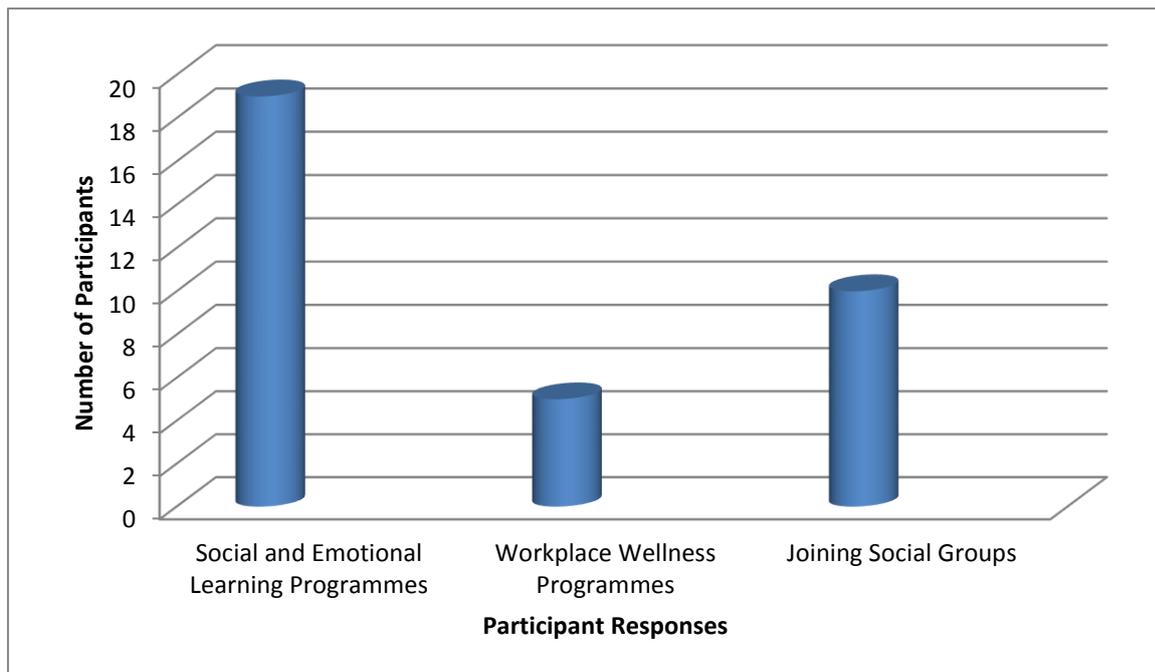
Table 5.2 contains the information about the demographic features of male teachers relating to teaching experience and age. The table also provides information pertaining to participants' levels of stress, teachers' extracurricular responsibilities at their respective schools and the number of grades each teacher taught.

#### **5.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Data were collected with reference to an interview schedule (Appendix I). With regard to an interpretation of the analysed data collected with interviewing, the researcher organised the research findings into six themes which are categorised into four main classes, namely, programmes to equip teachers to cope with stress, relationship between stress and burnout, stressors causing burnout among teachers and the stress coping strategies employed by teachers to prevent burnout. In reporting on the research findings with inclusion of verbatim excerpts from the interviews as illustration, teacher participants are distinguished as P1, P2, P3, and so on as an adherence to the principle of confidentiality.

##### **5.4.1 Programmes to cope with stress**

The results of the interviews revealed different ways in which teachers are equipped to cope with stressful situations with the purpose of buffering burnout. The stress coping programmes are categorised into three different groupings, namely, social and emotional learning programmes, workplace wellness programmes and joining social groups. These three groupings are depicted in Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5.1: Stress coping programmes for teachers**

As derived from the interviews with participants, the three determined programmes for coping with stress in order to counteract burnout are as follows:

- Social and emotional learning programmes: Eighteen participants indicated that one way of equipping teachers to cope with stress entails the establishment of social and emotional learning programmes at school based on mutual support and encouragement by motivational speakers. In this regard P1 explained that *“school management can assist teachers to cope with stress by encouraging them to form social and emotional learning programmes. Then motivation speakers can be invited to teach and help teachers to develop skills to identify and solve their personal problems.”* Interviewees observed that social and emotional learning programmes are effective techniques of coping with stress and preventing burnout because these programmes enable individuals to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions. In support of this view, P8 noted that *“teachers need the services of counsellors”*. These counsellors can assist to enable teachers *“to grapple with their negative feelings, to transform negative feelings into positive feelings”* (P8). The ability to

transform feelings *“should help teachers to develop positive self-images and resilient coping behaviours”* (P11).

According to interviewees, benefits of social and emotional learning programmes include self-awareness, which entails the ability to recognise specific emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour and the skill of self-management to control these thoughts and emotions. P13 argued that through social and emotional learning programmes teachers develop an understanding of their self-awareness *because “they gain knowledge of who they are, what is their personality, what is their ability and what is their potential”*. This self-awareness enables teachers to cope with stress in order to be capacitated to control their own lives. Regarding self-awareness, P14 emphasised the important value of social and emotional learning programmes, namely, to enhance teachers’ ability to identify their own emotions, thoughts, values and also *“to understand how emotions, thoughts and values guide behaviour.”* In this regard, social and emotional learning programmes are effective techniques to equip teachers with self-management skills *“to deal with stress under different situations”* (P15).

- Other benefits of social and emotional learning programmes pointed out by participants as stress amelioration virtues include relationship skills enabling teachers with the ability to maintain good relationships with colleagues, learners and parents and responsible decision making about acceptable personal behaviour. P16 asserted that social and emotional learning programmes assist with interacting skills which improve opportunities *“to develop interpersonal skills to enhance good working relations.”* Ensuring good working relations at school, P17 distinguished the importance of social and emotional learning programmes as programmes that *“enable a teacher to develop an ability to communicate effectively, listen to parents and learners and cooperate with colleagues”*. Effective communication skills counter misunderstanding which often results in *“inappropriate social pressures causing unnecessary stress”* (P17). With regard to the omnipresent prevalence of conflict in the workplace, P20 pointed to the value of social and emotional learning programmes as *“the best way of stress alleviation since these programmes can help teachers to negotiate conflict*

*and make responsible decision-making*”, with these decisions pertaining to conflict resolution and interpersonal relationship restoration.

- Workplace wellness programmes: A constructive way of equipping teachers to cope with work stress is the establishment of workplace wellness programmes at school. Many teachers are unnecessarily exposed to stressful situations because of a lack of being alert to their own well-being. Workplace wellness programmes *“have the potential of influencing teachers to take care of their lives and thus relieving them from stress”* (P2). It was clear from the interviewees that these workplace wellness programmes offered on a regular basis encourage teachers to engage in screening of health risk assessments such as blood glucose, blood pressure, body weight, cancer, psychological stress and general physical health. These workplace wellness programmes as techniques of equipping teachers to cope with stress are arranged *“by inviting nurses from a nearby clinic to our school”* (P18). These nurses then screen health risk assessments in crucial health conditions such as *“high or low blood pressure, body weight and blood glucose”* (P18). At the school of P19, stress is countered by inviting health workers to conduct health risk assessments in risks pertaining to *“prostate and breast cancer twice a year.”*

The workplace wellness programmes enhancing general well-being that are related to good health serve as stress relievers because *“poor health is a risk which exposes individuals to stressful situations”* (P3). Related to workplace wellness programmes which serve to alert teachers to health risks, is the virtue of adopting healthy lifestyles. These healthy life styles are associated with avoiding alcohol and drug abuse and to rather participate in fitness programmes. The fitness programmes also assist with weight control in that people do not eat while they exercise, which contributes to avoiding obesity risks. In this regard, physical exercise, which decreases the time available for compulsive eating, assists with the adopting of a healthier lifestyle. This contributes to *teachers “losing weight and feeling better about themselves”* (P3), which, in turn, influences their ability to cope with stress positively.

- Joining social groups: Nine participants indicated that encouraging teachers to join social groups is the least demanding and therefore most effective way

of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent potential burnout. Groups that teachers can join include religious, social, friendship and support groups. Religious groups in the case of the Anglican Church of Lesotho pertain to guilds such as Anglican Women's Fellowship, Mothers' Union, St. Bernard Mizeki, Youth and Brotherhood of St. Andrew. According to St. Eli Apostolic Faith Mission, religious groups relate to guilds such as women's guild, men's guild and youth while in the case of the Lesotho Evangelical Church of Southern Africa, religious groups relate to women's guild, men's guild and youth. Religious groups in the case of the Roman Catholic Church pertain to sodalities such as Women of St. Ann, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Conception of Mary and Legion of Mary. Social groups refer to people who interact with one another, have similar interests and collectively have a sense of unity. Friendship groups refer to two or more people who are united by friendship and these people share their problems and joys. With regard to support groups, members provide each other with various forms of help, for example, teachers with the same problem can come together for sharing strategies of either resolving or coping with the problem.

Participants pointed out that social groups nurture and take care of their members. Joining social groups buffers burnout because it enables individuals to share their feelings and to discuss their problems. Therefore, encouraging teachers to join social groups is an excellent strategy to equip them with enduring stress coping strategies. The satisfaction of social needs *"boosts teachers' resilience to fight stress, a lack of meeting their social needs, affect them negatively emotionally"* (P4). When social needs are not met promptly, negative feelings develop and snowball to debilitate the individual's stress coping abilities. In support of the view that joining social groups equips teachers to cope with stress, P5 explains that she attends concerts with a group of friends on a regular basis. She emphasised that attending exciting events with trusted friends is not only uplifting, but it also makes her to forget her personal problems.

P6 shared another example of friendship group activity, namely that of having lunch together. *"Having lunch with friends is inspiring"* (P6) because of the opportunities to

share feelings and thoughts with them. Along the same lines, P7 distinguished the soundboard value of friendship group gatherings such as *“having dinner and listening to what my friends say and make them hear what I say, this refresh and rejuvenates me.”* It was clear from the interviews with participants that joining social groups serve to alleviate stress in different ways such as *“feeling a sense of comfort when discussing personal problems with caring and supportive people”* (P10), *“enjoying the advice of experienced friends who were in the same position as I am in now”* (P11), and *“learning ways from friends to tackle personal problems creatively”* (P13).

#### **5.4.2 Relationship between stress and burnout**

With regard to the relationship between stress and burnout, the researcher wanted to determine what the participants’ understanding of the concept ‘burnout’ is. With the individual interviews, the participants were approached to share their understanding of this concept. Participants defined burnout in the following twelve different ways:

- Burnout is a state in which individuals are exhausted to such an extent that they can no longer perform their tasks effectively because *“I am just too exhausted, I cannot lift my hand”* (P1).
- Burnout is a state of psychological confusion, which results in a lack of cooperation among employees at the place of work. P5 understood this state of psychological confusion resulting in not being cooperative at work as a condition of *“I am too stressed to control myself and to participate in activities with my colleagues”*.
- Burnout is stress experienced at its highest level resulting in a total breakdown and uncontrollable behaviour. In this regard, P20 understands burnout as stress that has escalated into uncontrollable responses *“making a person to be irrational and not caring about how the consequences of his actions affect himself or other people”*.
- Burnout is a state in which individuals are so burdened with stress that they are not able to solve their personal problems all by themselves. For P7 this is a matter of *“my decisions are not in my own hands any longer”*.

- Burnout results in a situation in which stress is at a level, which makes it difficult for an individual to sustain focus at work. Under this circumstance, P4 noted that *“I am so stressed out and upset, I cannot focus”*.
- Burnout is a condition of losing interest in one’s own work as a result of constantly unbearable stressful situations. In this regard P10 describes burnout as a situation in which a worker is no longer satisfied with his/her job because of problems at the work place. It is a state in which a person is not emotionally and physically fit, causing *“coming to work with no purpose at all”* (P10).
- Burnout is a state in which a person is experiencing painful feelings to the extent that these feelings cause physical discomfort affecting the ability to make rational decisions. These decisions can be *“dangerous”* (P13) in the sense of affecting a person’s financial position unwisely.
- Burnout results in a state of emotional instability and a condition in which a person is unable to control his/her mind positively causing constant irritation. This results in a situation in which *“I am never happy”* (P17).
- Apart from emotional instability, burnout also represents a state of psychological non-logic thoughts. P8 associated this condition with irrational thinking such as *“I will kill this bastard that crowds me in the queue at Kentucky”*.
- Related to the psychological non-logic thoughts associated with burnout, acute excessive stress causing burnout can result in non-logic behaviour such as harming other people. Engagement in unacceptable actions as a result of being psychologically confused, teachers suffering from burnout *“may hurt learners”* (P18).
- Excessive stress causing burnout may result in people resigning from work. In this regard P2 explained that at a stage, *“everything becomes just too much and I rather quit my job.”*
- Burnout can cause a person to lose complete control with regard to emotions, actions and reasoning. This can result in a tragic situation of *“ending one’s own life”* (P14).

With regard to the relationship between stress and burnout, participant responses are summarised in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: Relationship between stress and burnout**

Number of participants	Responses
8	Burnout is a type of psychological stress.
5	Burnout is a result of continual and prolonged stress.
7	Some of the causes of stress and burnout overlap.
2	Burnout is a product of stress.
1	Stress is a result of depression and burnout is a product of both depression and stress.
11	If stress continues to operate at full scale for a long period, there is an increase in burnout.
12	It is difficult to know where normal stress stops and where normal burnout begins.
14	Stress is a starting phase of burnout.
1	Both stress and burnout affect an individual emotionally.
1	Stress like burnout affects an individual's efficiency negatively.
6	Some signs and symptoms of stress and burnout overlap.
1	Stressful situations happening repeatedly result in burnout.
1	Both stress and burnout cause discomfort and unhappiness in an individual.

As is evident from Table 5.3, participants understood stress and burnout as having a close relationship. Eight participants indicated burnout as relating to psychological stress. In this regard, P12 said that *“burnout is a breakdown of the psychological defences which an individual use to cope with job stress.”* P10 supported this view by concurring that *“both stress and burnout are psychological problems.”* For P16 the main feature of stress and burnout as a psychological problem is the fact that stress and burnout *“make a person believe that she is a failure, she cannot control her life.”* Five participants suggested that burnout is a result of continual and prolonged stress. P1 noted that *“burnout is caused by long term stress and this makes a person to be defensive”* “and constantly emotional” (P14). Eleven participants reported that if stress continues to operate at full scale for a long period, without any action being taken to

redress a situation, a net result of the situation will be burnout. In this regard, P9 observed that *“if an individual is attacked by stress for a long period, the person will crack”* which pointed to a situation resulting in burnout. Seven participants illustrated that the causes of stress and burnout overlap such as *“unbearable workloads”* (P4), *“depression”* (P6) and *“absenteeism from work and social events”* (P7). Along the same lines, P9 determined *“continual tiredness and a low resistance to illness”* as the first sign of the close relationship between stress and burnout.

Participants were well acquainted with the fact that burnout is a product of stress because *“emotional stress leads to burnout”* (P13) as *“stress is a source of burnout and burnout is a result of stress”* (P17). Participants understood continuously excessive stress as being the first stage of burnout and therefore *“if an individual does not look for means of managing stress, this problem can result in burnout”* (P18). With regard to the fact that *“both stress and burnout impact negatively on a person’s emotions”* (P3), participants understood both stress and burnout as psychological problems that *“diminishes an employee’s performance and vigilance”* (P2). It was clear from the interviews with participants that a victim of stress resulting in burnout is not productive at work because the victim is debilitated to plan and execute tasks, resulting in goals of the organisation not being achieved. Because of the fact that it is difficult to determine where stress stops and burnout begins, *“some people view stress and burnout as the same thing”* (P19). It is important to know when stress changes to burnout because of the harm of burnout for the individual and the organisation. Burnout needs immediate treatment and teachers must be equipped with skills which enable them to effectively cope with stress in order to prevent burnout.

#### **5.4.3 Stressors causing burnout among teachers**

The results of the interviews suggested many stressors, which trigger burnout among primary school teachers in Lesotho. These stressors are categorised into the following groups of factors, namely factors related to the work itself, factors related to learners’ poor academic performance, factors related to poor school board management, factors related to lack of teacher development, factors related to teachers having poor interpersonal relations and factors related to teachers’ family conflicts. Table 5.4

depicts the main stressors causing burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho.

**Table 5.4 Stressors resulting in burnout among teachers**

Number of participants	Stressors
9	Work overload
7	Role ambiguity
8	School organisational climate
10	School organisational culture
8	Type of school
2	Learners' poor academic performance
4	Learners' indiscipline
10	Lack of personnel development
3	Lack of organisational commitment
4	Role conflict
3	Failure to implement a new curriculum
2	Learners' family background conditions
2	Teachers' financial problems
1	Truancy
1	Teachers' family conflicts
3	Lack of prompt teacher remuneration
3	Poor management of schools

Table 5.4 reveals the main stressors which participants determined as the primary causes of the stress encountered at their respective schools. The stressors relate to teachers' work overload, role ambiguity with the allocation of work, a school organisational climate not conducive for healthy teaching and learning relations and an accompanying debilitating school organisational culture. Participants opined the type of school, learners' poor academic performance, learners' indiscipline and a lack of teacher development as factors representing stressors at their schools. A lack of school organisational commitment to teachers' needs and welfare, role conflict for teachers and failure to implement the new curriculum successfully caused substantial stress at the different research sites. Learners' family background conditions, teachers' financial problems, learner truancy and teachers' family conflicts were highlighted as stressors hampering effective work performance. Finally, a delay in the prompt paying of teachers' salaries and a general poor management of schools resulting in insecurity for teachers and learners represented significant stressors at the different schools acting as research sites. Participants viewed these factors as main

stressors because these stressors impact negatively on teachers' efficiency and effectiveness. These stressors are discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### **5.4.3.1 Work overload**

As illustrated in Table 5.4, burnout is a syndrome at school which is caused by a variety of stressors of which work overload is one of the main causes. Participants related their work overload to massive class sizes and teaching many different grades.

Participants complained about teaching many grades and many learners. For example, P16 stated that in his school, there are seven grades, which are taught by only three teachers. P16 teaches 223 learners which is a heavy load, especially when examination scripts have to be marked at the end of each quarter. In illustrating work overload as a pertinent stressor which causes burnout and the reason for this stress associated with overload, P2 explained as follows:

*"I teach five grades. This situation puts me under pressure to achieve my goals. It is stressful because some learners fail because of me not being able to reach every one of them".*

Teaching large class sizes is exacerbated by teaching different grades. In this regard P13 emphasised that *"teaching many grades is problematic and stressful with burnout inevitable under this circumstance"*. A high teacher-learner ratio which is a burden in itself to ensure effective teaching results in successful learning, is worsened during examination times when *"the marking of many learners is a laborious work"* (P18). Participants complained about teaching many subjects which was attributed to teacher shortage, especially, in the rural areas. In this regard, P16 had to teach nine subjects in his school. P16 reported as follows on his predicament:

*"I am overloaded with work. I teach nine subjects. I sometimes feel bad because some learners do not understand what I am teaching them and there is nothing I can do. It is impossible to help them individually because of the number of subjects I teach in my school."*

The lack of enough teachers in rural areas caused teachers to teach for long periods of time without any free periods in between for a minute of rest. The time needed for preparation for following lessons is time consuming when teaching many grades. P3 explained her position as follows: *“I teach five grades every day of the week. I do not have enough time for resting. Preparing for five groups of learners is a huge challenge.”*

#### **5.4.3.2 Role ambiguity**

Participants identified role ambiguity as a cause of burnout relating to the individual not understanding some of the roles with related tasks he or she must fulfil. Participants pointed to the fact that sometimes classroom teachers are required to carry out administrative duties in the absence of the school principal. One of the participants stated that her school principal had retired from the teaching service and she had been requested by the school board to act as school principal. A problem was that she had not been given any form of training about managing a school and that in order to execute some of the tasks in the office, she had to go to the nearby schools to seek information. She reported that this wasted her time and energy, which was intensified by the fact that *“I am not even getting an allowance for acting in this position”* (P1). In this regard, P3 concurred that *“if teachers do not understand their roles, they spend much time and energy seeking information about the roles. This causes frustration which eventually results in burnout.”*

It was clear from the interviews with participants that the majority of examples on role ambiguity experiences related to fulfilling managerial positions, which were anticipated to be rather the responsibility of the school principal. In this regard, P6 acknowledged that *“there are duties which one perceives as the duties of the principal but the principal demanding teachers to execute those tasks”*. A problem arises then when the teacher fulfilling the school principal’s role makes a mistake because the teacher would be having *“no standing to defend him or herself”* (P6). Participant P7 felt strongly about role ambiguity being a stressor causing severe burnout because of her own experience with that. She explained that there is no deputy principal at her school and that she therefore has to act as school principal in his absence. The stress she experiences with this arrangement relates to the fact that *“I have not been given any*

*form of orientation about the duties and tasks of a principal*" (P7). Role ambiguity causing stress and eventual burnout also related to teachers having to execute some duties of an administrative nature at their own cost. In this regard P16 explained that *"some teachers incur some expenses as a result of role ambiguity"* resulting in them experiencing discomfort with the use of their own finances. Considered in summary, however, role ambiguity which is associated with delegation causes teacher burnout when this delegation is not accompanied by *"readiness and preparedness"* (P19) *for the delegated assignment*. Participants agree that delegation must be accompanied by the principles of being capacitated for the delegated work or else *"an individual fumbles"* (P19). It was clear that role ambiguity is a stressor which causes burnout because it violates the principles of readiness and preparedness for the delegated task.

#### **5.4.3.3 School organisational climate**

As reflected in Table 5.4, teacher participants perceived the organisational climate at their schools to be unfavourable. Participants described the climate at their schools in terms of leadership style dimensions relating to the school principal being directive, not providing support when required, and being restrictive with regard to not allowing teachers to exercise their professional autonomy as school principals have a tendency of maintaining close control over the teachers and general school activities.

With regard to the school principal being directive, participants had agreement that their school principals have a tendency of maintaining close and constant control over teachers and school activities. Participants stated that their school principals rule oppressively with an iron rod, monitoring everything and *"principals impose policies on teachers"* (P4). The problem with imposing policies on teachers is that in many schools policies are developed without teachers being involved in the process. Policies then merely serve to control teachers resulting in organisational climate triggering burnout. P6 proclaimed that *"some principals are troublesome, knowing that teachers are hesitant to object to such behaviour because of regulations and you can be expelled."* In this regard the management styles of some school principals expose teachers to burnout because school principals' management styles limit teachers' professional autonomy.

P2 emphasised that she is “a professional” and that she needs “to exercise her professional autonomy”. The fact that the school principal has a tendency to suggest the teaching methods which teachers should use when they teach, causes teachers to feel as if they do not exist. Participants equate such a directive management style with *centralisation, which they evaluate as “a bad management style leading to teacher burnout”* (P2). Participants also complained that teachers are not involved in the decision-making processes at school, including those processes that involve teachers directly such as the grades that teachers would teach for the following year. In this regard, P8 explained that their school principal forces teachers to teach one grade, such as a lower grade for a couple of years without providing teachers with the “opportunity to rotate and teach other grades” (P8) which they would like to do to enhance their competencies. This lack of input to their professional conduct and development results in stress and eventual burnout.

With reference to the school principal not providing the necessary support to teachers, it was clear that this lack of support relates to transport money for workshop attendance. Participants noted that teachers do not get support from school principals with regard to money for transport which results in unnecessary stress causing eventual burnout because of having to pay for school affairs from their own pockets. P7 reported that at her school, the school principal requests teachers to attend workshops without arranging for money for their transport. When teachers complain about this state of affairs, the school principal would answer that attending workshops is part of teachers’ responsibility. P7 proclaimed this unfair practice causing frustration and desperation for teachers who need to find money for transport to workshops, all of which eventually “leads to burnout.”

Apart from having to pay for their own transport to workshops, participants also complained about teachers not being protected from unreasonable community and parental demands. An incident was mentioned in which a parent came to school and threatened a female participant with a gun because the parent’s child had failed at the end of the term. The school principal neither confronted that parent nor reported the case to the school board regardless of the fact that the parent, while holding the teacher at gunpoint, motivated his emotional outburst with illogic reasoning such as that “his child failed because I hate him [the child]” (P17). Participants also complained

about their school principals practising favouritism in the sense that if a favourite teacher of the school principal comes late to work, the school principal does not take any action, *“but he takes immediate action when other teachers are late”* (P5). Unfair practice always causes tremendous stress, eventually resulting in burnout. Related to unfair practice associated with favouritism is the lack of constructive criticism from school managers. Constructive criticism relates to school principals being open to teachers’ suggestions and respecting teachers for their input with the necessary assistance to refine meaningful inputs to outstanding conduct. Participants complained about the most unfortunate situation of school principals failing to contribute to such constructive endeavour. The lack of support from their school principals exposes teachers to burnout and it has a lowering effect on teacher morale to engage passionately in teaching efforts. In this regard P12 proclaimed that her school principal’s lack of support for passionate teaching has had a *“diminishing effect on my teaching morale”*.

School principals’ restrictive behaviour causes teacher burnout because restrictiveness hinders, rather than facilitates good conduct. In this regard, participants complained that their school principals burden them with routine duties which interfere with their teaching responsibilities causing tremendous stress with eventual burnout. The routine duties and unexpected conduct relate to unplanned, lengthy staff meetings and the supervision of learners during the cleaning of the school grounds, learners having their meals as part of the feeding scheme arrangement and the supervision of learners during sporting activities. With all of these activities, participants understood that these activities are important and part of a teacher’s task description. Their complaints, however, related to the unplanned nature of these activities in that nothing is planned in advance and staff members are haphazardly and with short notice assigned to these tasks. P1 explained that in her school, *“staff meetings are not scheduled”*. Unplanned staff meetings are not only stressful, but they waste time in that staff attend these meetings unprepared and stressed. Their stress relates to being concerned about the lessons they have prepared for the day and which they realise will not be presented effectively because of the unplanned staff meeting inhibiting optimal instruction time. P1 emphasised that they *“are unable to focus on our [their] primary duties because of the unplanned meetings.”* P2 pointed to the haphazard assigning of additional duties to her extra-curricular responsibilities. She emphasised

that she has her extracurricular responsibilities such as coaching “*volley ball, netball and athletics*”, but that she has haphazardly also been assigned with the supervision of the feeding scheme resulting in her evaluation, namely “*the climate of my [her] school is not conducive at all.*”

#### **5.4.3.4 School organisational culture**

As shown in Table 5.4, participants observed that their schools’ organisational culture is a stressor causing burnout. The organisational culture of a school entails the values and attitudes of stakeholders in that organisation expressed as how-things-are-done-here. Participants described the culture of their schools relating to values, beliefs, norms, relations and attitudes in terms of the dimensions of collegiality, social support and professional behaviour.

With regard to collegiality, participants were concerned about the lack of collegiality causing burnout among teachers because a lack of collegiality is not supportive of open and professional interactions among teachers. From the interviews with participants it was clear that in many primary schools in Lesotho, interpersonal relations among teachers are not healthy exposing teachers to a high risk of burnout. Troublesome teachers instigating constant conflict bring about these unhealthy interpersonal relations. Participants confirmed that “*there are many kinds of conflict among teachers in our schools*” (P5) caused by “*troublesome characters*” (P17) resulting in “*stressful and destructive conduct*” (P2) snowballing to “*unavoidable burnout among teachers*” (P11). P20 pointed to the lack of professional collegiality at her school because of poor work relations among staff which “*hampers our work operations in this school.*” Participants identified the essence of poor work relations resulting in a lack of collegiality as pertaining to some teachers who are not enthusiastic about their work. These teachers do not put a high premium on professional competence and they, therefore, do not appreciate and respect the professional competence of their dedicated colleagues. Because of the fact that some teachers do not accomplish their work with passion and vigour, “*teamwork is impossible*” (P15), brought about by *teachers who are not dedicated to their work* (P15).”

A lack of empathetic social support is brought about by incohesive and weak networking amongst staff causing teacher burnout. Participants pointed out that the relations amongst teachers are characterised by distance and suspicion culminating in unnecessary disagreements and conflicts. P15 proclaimed that *“the interpersonal relations among teachers are characterised by lack of cooperation and trustworthiness”* resulting in being isolated from one another with no tolerance for each other’s ideas and opinions.

Related to not being dedicated, participants coined the concept of disengaged professional behaviour referring to teachers’ lack of work ethics and focus in professional activities. In this regard, participants complained that some teachers are lazy and negligent, needing close supervision from the school principals because they *“dodge classes when the principal is not at school”* (P19). Participants noted that some teachers enter their classrooms without any lesson preparation regardless of policy from the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training prescribing that teachers should scheme the topics they cover in a school quarter and record the work they have covered at the end of every week. P4 proclaimed that some teachers do not scheme and record their work and, *“above all, they do not plan their lessons.”*

Related to impromptu staff meetings is the lack of a well compiled and well thought through agenda resulting in meaningless and time-consuming staff meetings. Participants pointed out that with these staff meetings *“teachers ramble”* (P8), *“it is difficult to reach consensus”* (P1), and *“there are unnecessary disagreements and conflicts”* (P2). Participants concurred that this behaviour is frustrating, causing burnout for those teachers who are responsible and motivated to do their teaching tasks. The fact that *“failure to reach consensus in staff meetings leads to divisions and burnout”* (P8) and the *“incompetence of teachers leads to underperformance”* (P17), results in a decline in learner performance causing stress for the whole staff.

#### **5.4.3.5 School context**

Participants pointed to the specific school context as a main stressor. Conditions typical of a stressful school context include a poor physical work environment and teaching resource constraints.

With regard to a poor working environment, participants had agreement that the physical working environment in schools is hazardous because “*we use a church hall as a classroom with all the learners from Grade 1 to 7 taught in the same hall, at the same time*” (P4). Exacerbating this unfortunate arrangement is the fact that “*the hall is dusty, we sprinkle the dusty floor with water every Wednesday*” (P4). It was clear from the interviews with participants that dust was the main factor causing discomfort with the physical teaching environment. This dust caused the physical classroom environment to be “*unhealthy and frustrating*” (P18) making it “*impossible for one to have peace of mind while working*” (P20). While P15 complained about “*the staffrooms and classrooms that are dusty*”, other participants stated that there are no staff rooms in their schools and that they use classrooms as staff rooms.

A common theme repeatedly raised by participants was the acute shortage of classrooms to the extent that teachers teach learners under the trees. P1 explained that at her school, there are seven grades while there are only three classrooms resulting in learners being taught “*under the trees, when it is cold, children do not come to school*” (P1).

With regard to a lack of teaching resources as a discomforting condition, participants identified the lack of basic teaching resources such as chalk boards, stationery and exercise books and basic teaching equipment for Physical Science. Participants pointed out that they spend their own money to buy teaching resources such as chalk, pens, textbooks, preparation books and files for their schemes of work and records on completed work. Apart from basic didactic materials, participants also determined the lack of didactic furniture relating to a “*shortage of desks and chairs*” (P14).

From the interviews with participants it was clear that typical third world problems relating to excessive birth rates naturally accompanied by impoverished living conditions resulted in constrained school contexts resulting in increased stress for teachers. Teaching large learner numbers in dusty classroom conditions, or under trees, without sufficient basic teaching and learning resources is stressful resulting in burnout for the concerned teacher.

#### **5.4.3.6 Learners' poor academic performance**

As illustrated in Table 5.4, learners' incompetence relating to poor academic achievements caused stress for teachers with eventual burnout. Participants pointed out that when learners do not understand what they are taught and they get low marks, teachers become frustrated and depressed. Because of ever increasing birth rates with an exponential tendency due to adequate medical services, participants pointed to the fact that since 2000 the enrolment of learners in the primary schools increased substantially. This has led to many more academically incompetent learners entering the primary schools. Participants identified learners' lack of interest in learning as the main cause of their academic incompetence. Learners do not want to spend enough time and energy on their schoolwork and often blame their teachers for their poor academic performances. Learners' lack of interest in their school work is an acute stressor resulting in teacher burnout. Participants described learners' aversion for academic engagement as follows:

*“Most learners in Lesotho primary schools are not able to do anything by themselves. This is a problem which is experienced even by learners in senior grades such as grade six and grade seven” (P2). “Learners do not have interest in their academic work, hence learners' incompetence causes teacher burnout” (P15). “Teachers feel bad when learners do not understand what they are taught and fail at the end of the year” (P16).*

#### **5.4.3.7 Learner indiscipline**

A major stressor causing teacher burnout as illustrated in Table 5.4 relates to undisciplined learners. Participants argued that learners' misbehaviour has many undesirable effects on teaching and learning and on teachers' stress levels. Undisciplined learners result in teachers feeling frustrated, humiliated, and completely depleted of any energy to persevere with teaching.

Pupils' disruptive behaviour, which in many instances is accompanied by violence, *“frustrates me”* (P12) as valuable teaching and learning time is consumed by handling

disruptive behaviour. Unacceptable pupil behaviour is humiliating when this behaviour relates to disrespect for teachers. In this regard P14 proclaimed that unacceptable pupil behaviour *“is a torture to teachers”* causing teachers to hate teaching and resulting in acute stress for teachers with eventual burnout.

Dealing with difficult learners is tiresome causing teachers to spend a lot of energy and time on discipline issues. Difficult learners have a negative effect on teachers' physical and emotional health with the risk of constant emotional exhaustion because *“dealing with uncontrollable learners is taxing”* (P17). Participants stressed the strenuous situation of large classes that are accompanied by undisciplined learner behaviour and the negative effect of this time waster on successful teaching and learning. Apart from being frustrated, humiliated and depleted of all energy to teach, teachers' stress levels are increased with the realisation that they are not covering the full curriculum due to ill-disciplined learner behaviour.

#### **5.4.3.8 Lack of teacher development**

Participants stated that primary school teachers in Lesotho do not have sufficient chances for professional development such as, for example, furthering their studies on a full-time basis, which implies terminating their contracts. Participants noted that the lack of opportunities for personnel development results in them feeling insecure as they are not obtaining advanced teaching knowledge and skills to distinguish themselves as expert teachers.

The lack of personnel development therefore makes teachers feel insecure and incompetent, leading to a situation of burnout. The lack of opportunities for personnel development results in *“jealousy, if a particular teacher notices that other teachers are efficient”* (P2) and he or she does not have any prospects of becoming more competent through professional development possibilities. Such a lack of personnel development, impeding teachers to acquire new teaching skills and knowledge of emerging issues in education, causes acute stress and eventual burnout especially as *“teachers are denied an opportunity of refresher courses”* (P11). This snowballing situation results in teachers *“hating teaching”* (P4) because of a lack of possibilities to acquire new skills.

A lack of propositions for personnel development results in teachers not being able to teach their subjects properly as a result of not being able to acquire new teaching skills for the effective facilitation of subject content. In this regard, P6 proclaimed that teacher burnout is caused by *“teachers who may fail to use appropriate teaching approaches as a result of a lack of personnel development”*. This situation is worsened when a new curriculum must be implemented because *“it is difficult to implement a new curriculum and syllabi without in-service training”* (P7). A new integrated curriculum was introduced in the primary schools of Lesotho in 2011 without teachers *“being given formal training about the implementation of the new curriculum”* (P13). The opinion of participants on the influence on teachers’ stress levels of a lack of proper opportunities for professional development is summarised by P19 as follows:

*“A lack of personnel development causes burnout because it hinders teachers to take advantage of refresher courses and any form of in-service training. There is no way that a teacher can approach teaching in a professional manner without personnel development.”*

#### **5.4.3.9 Role conflict**

In relation to role ambiguity (par 5.4.3.2), participants said that teachers in primary schools are assigned many roles which are in conflict with one another. They noted that this situation results in teachers feeling insecure and confused about all the different roles they have to fulfil resulting in excessive stress and eventual burnout. The conflicting roles that teachers have to fulfil are of a pedagogic, administrative and managerial nature.

With regard to teachers’ pedagogic role, participants stated that teaching being the primary duty of every teacher, teachers are expected to teach expertly which is fulfilling, but demanding. However, teachers are assigned extracurricular duties for which they are not trained and for which training possibilities to master the know-how of coaching the specific sports code is not available. P16 explained that his school principal assigned him the task of coaching volley ball; however, *“the problem is that I*

*do not even have the basics of playing volley ball, let alone coaching it ... this is very stressful to me.”*

Apart from teaching, primary school teachers are expected to execute administrative and managerial duties. Many of the duties of a managerial nature are assigned to teachers when school principals are absent for a period of time (par 5.4.3.2). With regard to administrative duties, participants reported that the most common administrative tasks assigned to them pertain to the management of pupils' presence register, keeping learners' academic records, handling of school finances, fund raising and acting as heads of grades. P3 analysed the role conflict-related task description of teachers as follows:

*“Being a primary school teacher in Lesotho entails to be an accountant clerk or an accountant, a secretary who welcomes visitors in the absence of the principal and a cook who serves children their lunch with the feeding scheme.”*

The discomfort with fulfilling these roles is intensified knowing that teachers who are teaching at private schools are not burdened with administrative tasks because of *“the availability of positions such as a human resource manager, an accountant, a secretary and a bursar”* (P3).

Participants stated that learners are increasingly experiencing a variety of social and economic problems as a result of 21<sup>st</sup> century problems such as family disintegration, substance abuse, and children being orphans due to HIV/Aids. These conditions force teachers to assume the positions of being counsellor, social worker and psychologist. P2 confirmed that *“one of the duties assigned to me is counselling of learners”* which she encounters as stressful as she did not receive any training in being a counsellor. P19 captured the gist of stress because of role conflict when he proclaimed that *“role conflict is a factor for burnout because it leads to failure to do as expected.”* Participants agreed that when the expectations and demands of the school are incompatible with the teacher's capacity to carry out certain tasks, burnout arises.

#### 5.4.3.10 Difficulty with implementing the new curriculum

As depicted in Table 5.4, participants identified their difficulty with implementing the new curriculum successfully as a major stressor. Teachers were not involved when the curriculum, which they now have to implement, was developed. Teachers experience difficulty in implementing the new, integrated curriculum because, apart from not being involved with its development, they were not provided adequate training towards the implementation of the new curriculum. The integrated curriculum that was first introduced in Grade 1 in 2011 causes much frustration for teachers because they are aware that they are failing to implement the new curriculum successfully. Although training to implement the new curriculum was provided, the training period was too short and the training itself too intensive to internalise new conduct. It was therefore difficult to obtain sufficient knowledge and to have been capacitated properly for curriculum implementation. With regard to all the frustration and stress associated with unsuccessful curriculum implementation, participants shared their opinions as follows:

*“A new curriculum is a challenge, we fail to implement this curriculum successfully because it needs a lot of training which we do not have yet” (P1). “Training was not adequate because even the people who trained us were not conversant about the curriculum” (P20).*

Apart from a lack of training to implement the new curriculum properly, participants also expressed their frustration and challenges with regard to a lack of textbooks to support the implementation of the new curriculum. As a result of the lack of applicable textbooks to accompany the new curriculum, teachers wasted much time to go to the nearby libraries in search of possibly relevant books. However, in rural areas it is difficult to find appropriate books readily because of the scarcity of libraries and the limited content of the existing libraries. Participants expressed their frustration with a lack of applicable textbooks to accompany the new curriculum content as follows:

*“There are no textbooks for Grade 7 learners” (P7). P20 confirmed that “a new curriculum was implemented without preparations*

*because there are no textbooks for Grade 7 learners. We spend our own money to buy resources for teaching”.*

An alternative to textbooks as teaching resources is to download content from the internet. Participants indicated, however, that they have to spend their own money when downloading subject content from the internet. Further, internet access in rural areas is limited and not all teachers have access to internet facilities. P14 explained this predicament as follows:

*“Because of a lack of textbooks, teachers download teaching material from the internet using their own data, but we teachers in the rural areas do not all have access to the internet”.*

The difficulty in obtaining teaching material to support the implementation of the new curriculum, results in stress and frustration for teachers with the possibility of eventual burnout.

#### **5.4.3.11 Learners’ family background conditions**

Participants reported that learners in primary schools in Lesotho experience a variety of family background problems, which appeal to teachers’ empathetic emotions in the sense that teachers are constantly concerned about their learners’ well-being. Learners’ family background problems are of an economic and social nature.

With reference to the economic-related problems of their learners, participants said that many parents are not employed and as a result their children come to school with empty stomachs. Teaching such learners is stressful because it affects learning success, learner health and learner well-being negatively. P1 added that there are many orphans at her school who come to school without having eaten. Realising on a daily basis the negative effect of this poverty on learners’ academic performance and health in general *“causes severe stress for us teachers”*. Participants also observed that the poverty of parents as a result of unemployment causes learners to come to school with torn clothes and bare feet even in winter because impoverished learners

do not have shoes. P14 remarked that *“pupils’ poor background is hectic, it is disturbing to teach hungry children who are cold!”*

Because of learners’ economic problems relating to not having food and clothes, they develop social problems related to stealing in an attempt to survive life. Participants confirmed that the poverty of learners forces them to steal the property of other learners. To that effect P1 explained the predicament of teachers who must carry out their educative teaching tasks of guiding learners not to steal in order to survive, albeit knowing those learners’ parlous circumstances. Being a teacher assisting impoverished learners and attempting to solve their socio-economic problems, *“there is no way that you cannot be attacked by burnout”* (P1). Learners’ poverty problems become a strain on the lives of teachers because, *“acting in loco parentis at school in the absence of parents and being the ‘school parent’ for impoverished learners, makes me to hate teaching, I am easily affected by learners’ family problems, it causes me stress”* (P14).

#### **5.4.3.12 Insufficient teacher remuneration**

As indicated in Table 5.4 participants suggested low salaries as a cause for burnout among teachers. Participants argued that teachers do not receive sufficient remuneration to maintain a moderate lifestyle including buying a car, building a house, paying school fees for their children, and buying food and clothes for themselves and their family. Participants noted that compared to other professional professions in Lesotho, teaching is the most poorly paid profession. Consequences are that it is stressful to be a teacher in Lesotho because teachers’ salaries are too low to meet basic needs such as *“buying a decent house”* (P7). Poor teacher remuneration is worsened by the fact that teachers as government employees do not get additional allowances like other government workers resulting in teachers feeling that they are being discriminated against. P18 proclaimed that *“all civil servants get allowances and other fringe benefits; we teachers get nothing”*. It was clear that participants felt that they are being wronged by unfair remuneration, which naturally causes stress. The stress caused by the feeling of being wronged, accompanied by the stress of making ends meet with low salaries, resulted in teachers being more prone to burnout.

#### **5.4.3.13 Learner truancy**

Learner truancy causes tremendous stress for teachers because learners perform poorly or they fail at the end of the year because of truancy. Teachers anticipate that all their learners will succeed with learner success causing a pleasant feeling as opposed to failing learners frustrating teachers. When learners fail, *“it makes teachers to believe that they are incompetent and worthless”* (P3), which is worsened by community sentiments that *“always puts the blame on the teachers when learners fail”* (P12). Learner truancy therefore serves as a serious burnout stressor because learner truancy leads to learner failure. Participants proclaimed that learner truancy *“disturbs the psychology of the teacher”* (P3). With regard to the Lesotho context, participants identified the factors for learner truancy to relate to the poverty of parents, learners in orphanages, the irresponsibility and indifference to the education of their children of parents, and learners’ own negligence. Participants emphasised that all these factors causing learner truancy, *“are beyond the control of teachers”* (P19) causing teachers to feel powerless and prone to stress.

#### **5.4.3.14 Teachers’ family conflicts**

Teachers encountering family conflicts is a significant stressor which triggers burnout among the affected teachers. Participants suggested a variety of family conflicts which lead to teacher burnout such as disagreements and quarrels between spouses, violent behaviour of spouses and misunderstandings between spouses. Conflicts resulting from family quarrels and misunderstandings cause constant tension *“and sometimes severe fights between husband and wife”* (P11), resulting in acute stress and eventual burnout.

#### **5.4.3.15 A lack of prompt teacher remuneration**

Participants reported that the delay in paying newly appointed teachers promptly at the end of their first month of teaching at a new school is a burnout stressor. It seemed that some newly appointed teachers wait for a period of four to six months before they are paid. Although affecting all teachers accepting appointments at other schools, the delay in paying teachers promptly is more acutely encountered by novice teachers

with their first appointments as teachers. Participants had agreement on the fact that in Lesotho it is almost a default occurrence that teachers have to wait for a period of at least four months before all the administrative arrangements are completed to remunerate entrants to the teaching profession. In this regard, P7 confirmed that during her first appointment as a teacher, she taught for a period of six months without any salary, incurring unnecessary expenses and she *“had to borrow money which I [she] repaid with interest.”* This state of affairs, namely that *“during their first appointment, teachers are paid after a long time”* (P9) is exacerbated by the fact that *“other civil servants are paid in the first month of their appointment”* (P9) which is again a matter of a feeling of being wronged causing severe stress and eventual burnout (par 5.4.3.12).

#### **5.4.3.16 Poor school board management**

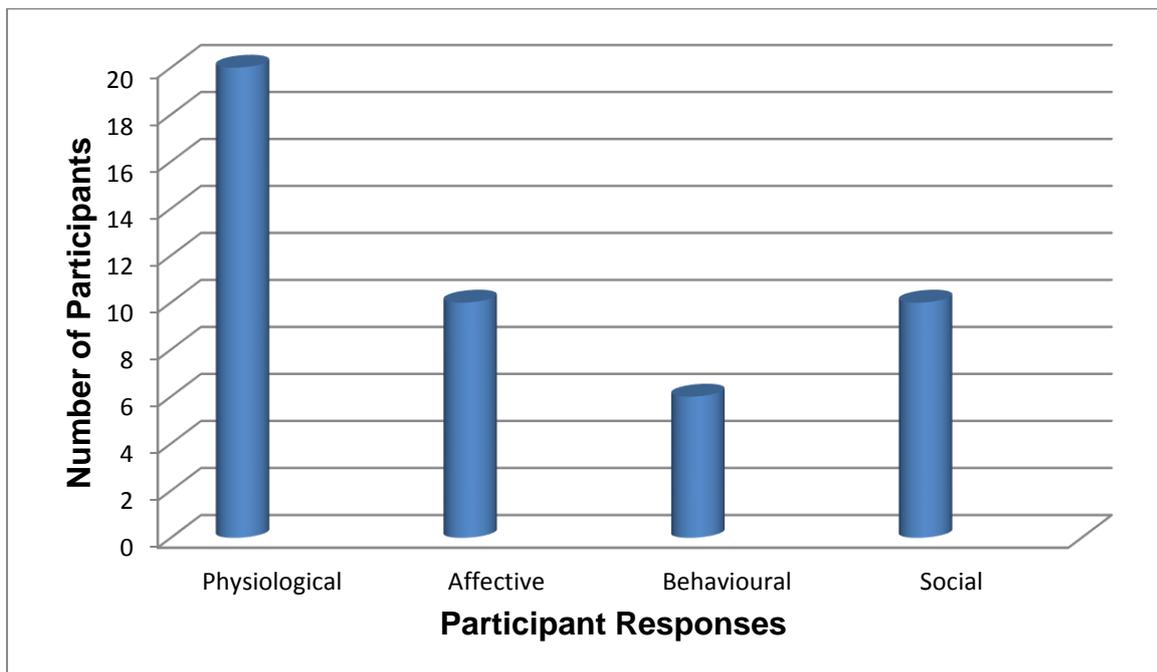
From the interviews with participants it became clear that poor school board management serves as a stressor which causes significant burnout for teachers. Participants asserted that most of the members of the school boards are poorly qualified and are not conversant with the education act and teaching service regulations. This problem contributes to poor school management resulting in teachers being exposed to stress and burnout. When school principals are not well qualified for their managerial task and members of the school board are ignorant about their school managerial responsibilities because of limited qualifications, poor school management prevails resulting as a school stressor for everyone involved. P15 sketched the unfortunate scenario of the majority of school board members who are not knowledgeable about the management of the primary schools and education system of Lesotho, combined with *“the principal who imposes decisions on teachers”* (P16) resulting in stress-related teaching. P16 concurred that his school principal allocates duties without consulting teachers and that *“I hate being paired with lazy teachers”*, however, his complaints about these circumstances remain unsolved resulting in stress and possible burnout.

#### 5.4.4 Consequences of burnout among teachers

Teachers are the key players in the achievement of educational goals in any country; however, from the interviews with teacher participants it was clear that teachers feel that they are overloaded with work such as teaching large classes that expose them to prolonged stress which eventually culminates in burnout. The results of the interviews revealed that burnout has a variety of consequences and challenges among teachers. The consequences of burnout include affecting the well-being of teachers, their work performance and their attrition in the teaching profession.

##### 5.4.4.1 Burnout and the well-being of teachers

Burnout has a series of hazardous effects on the well-being of teachers. The consequences of burnout among teachers are presented in Figure 5.2 as findings originated from participants' contributions during individual interviewing.



**Figure 5.2: Effects of burnout on teacher well-being**

As depicted in Figure 5.2, burnout impacts negatively on aspects relating to teacher well-being as this well-being includes the physiological, affective, behavioural and social meaning making of teachers.

With regard to physiological meaning making, twenty participants indicated that burnout is hazardous to the general well-being of teachers because “*burnout causes health problems*” (P4) relating to “*headaches*” (P8), “*heart attacks*” (P9) and “*high blood pressure*” (P11). Other health problems relating to stress and burnout as confirmed by participants included constant muscle pain, coronary problems, metabolic problems, continuous neck and back pain. P15 shared that he suffers from constant “*neck pain*” because of stress while P18 explained that he encounters an “*irregular heartbeat*” during periods of acute stress.

With regard to affective meaning making, participants proclaimed that burnout has a variety of disastrous consequences influencing them psychologically in a negative way. Participants indicated that as victims of burnout they experience “*high levels of depression*” (P7), feelings of “*sadness and anxiety*” (P18) and a general “*lack of peace of mind*” (P9). Other psychological effects of burnout on teacher functioning include being “*always unsatisfied and unhappy*” (P17) and constantly being “*angry*” (P5). With regard to anger, participants agreed that burnout creates negative feelings which are accompanied by intense manifestations of irritation and aggression with stress and burnout being “*a source of frustration among teachers*” (P10). Stress and burnout also lead to a situation in which teachers experience emotional problems such as being nervous around learners, having intrusive thoughts about life, constant panic attacks and the tendency of “*bursting into tears in front of the learners*” (P12).

Related to emotional meaning making and with regard to teachers’ behavioural manifestations because of stress and burnout, participants explained that “*victims of burnout abuse drugs*” (P2), they “*have drinking problems*” (P12) and they “*become tobacco addicts*” (P20). Participants also stated that burnout manifests in teachers neglecting their own personal appearance, such as, for example, “*I stopped cutting my hair and shaving my beard*” (P20).

From the interviews with participants, the negative consequences of burnout on teachers’ social life became clear. Participants stated that burnout results in teachers developing a sense of loneliness accompanied by a feeling of utter sadness such as that “*I wanted to cry and cry for days on end*” (P20). An important effect of burnout on the life of a teacher as mentioned by participants is social withdrawal. Participants

asserted that teachers who are victims of burnout avoid their colleagues and all the activities, which make life enjoyable. Participants agreed that social withdrawal is the most detrimental product of burnout because social withdrawal results in individuals being preoccupied with their own thoughts as their own worst enemy. Being surrounded by other people prevents an individual from being stuck with detrimental thoughts. In this regard participants reported that *“victims of burnout do not enjoy social company”* (P5), they *“do not enjoy life”* (P7) and they are *“tormented by their own negative thoughts all the time”* (P11).

Isolation as a result of burnout also includes sufferers avoiding contact with family members and closest friends intensifying the detrimental circle of blocking support to overcome burnout. Blocking these opportunities for support with overcoming burnout, causes teachers who suffer from burnout to be unable to manage their personal affairs and to interact with others in order to communicate and build trusting relationships. Participants indicated that teachers who are victims of burnout complain about almost everything and they are defensive in the sense that they *“do not trust other teachers, they always distort messages as a way of self-defence”* (P2) and they always *“blame other teachers”* (P12). From the interviews with participants, it was clear that with regard to healthy and positive relationships with others, sufferers from burnout encounter a locked-in syndrome of isolation. This locked-in situation is ironic because an important part of being cured from burnout is relying on the support from fellow humans through constant communication and relation.

#### **5.4.4.2 Burnout and the work performance of teachers**

As a result of working under stressful conditions, teachers experience burnout which has a variety of disastrous effects on teachers' work performance. Table 5.5 depicts the effects of burnout on teachers' work performance as explained by participants during the individual interviews.

**Table 5.5: Consequences of burnout on teachers' work performance**

Number of Participants	Participant Responses
9	Teachers' inefficiency
10	Absenteeism
6	Demotivation of teachers
4	Developing negative attitudes towards learners
2	Poor classroom management
8	Lack of cooperation
3	Teachers' lack of commitment
5	Emergence of anger and violence
7	Threatening teachers' self-esteem

As depicted in Table 5.5, burnout affects teachers' work performance with regard to inefficiency, absenteeism and demotivation. Burnout also results in teachers developing negative attitudes towards learners, having poor class management, not cooperating and not committing themselves to task completion. From Table 5.5, it is also clear that burnout causes the emergence of anger and violence and a threatening of teachers' self-esteem.

With regard to burnout causing teacher inefficiency, participants explained the problem in relation to burnout victims experiencing a lack of enthusiasm and time to prepare lessons because they are constantly confused. In this regard participants confirmed that *"burnout diminishes teachers' productivity"* (P3), because *"it limits teachers' concentration during instruction"* (P5) and it makes teachers to be *"disorganised all the time"* (P14). Related to burnout is teachers' lack of enthusiasm for their teaching task. These teachers *"have some difficulties in motivating learners to learn"* (P20) resulting in a down spiralling circle of poor learner performance that worsens the affected teacher's level of burnout. Participants pointed to the fact that teachers who suffer from burnout syndrome use inappropriate teaching approaches which *"lead to poor instruction"* (P18). Burnout causes late coming and a negligence of duties because *"burnout makes teachers to be less task-oriented"* (P7) and it *"reduces teachers' ability to meet deadlines"* (P11).

With regard to the effect of burnout on absenteeism from work, participants reported that burnout leads to absenteeism which results in teachers' dismissal from the teaching profession. Two participants acknowledged that their closest friends were recently dismissed from the teaching profession due to absenteeism. Participants pointed out that teachers who are absent from work on a regular basis, tend to request their family doctors to grant them a series of sick leave incidents. In many cases regular absenteeism leads to teachers' early retirement since the Lesotho Education Act of 2010 dictates that if a teacher is granted a series of sick leave occurrences in any given year, such a teacher is subject to medical examination which might result in compulsory early retirement.

Participants reported that teacher burnout influences career motivation, negatively diminishing good teaching because sufferers lose interest in teaching. P2 emphasised that *"a burned-out teacher does not focus on her work"* because of *"dissatisfaction with the job"* which has a direct negative impact on teaching and learning and learners' academic performance. The fact that *"burnout demotivates teachers"* (P4), these teachers have no motivation to be punctual resulting in continuous *"late coming to work"* (P11) and being indifferent to the pedagogical needs of learners. Part of being demotivated because of burnout, sufferers *"refuse to attend workshops"* (P8) and they are therefore prone to *"uninformed"* (P8) decision-taking resulting in constant poor work performance.

Participants maintained that teachers who suffer from burnout develop negative attitudes towards their learners. This negative attitude influences learners' motivation to excel and their beliefs in and feelings towards learning negatively. Teachers' negative attitudes towards their learners because of burnout, results in apathy towards their learners, which causes learners to hate the teacher and the organisational climate prevailing at school. In this regard, P5 reported that *"victims of burnout treat learners badly"* because they are *"harsh to learners"* (P18). The consequence is deconstructive relationships between the burned-out teacher and learners who are subject to the suffering teacher's emotional unhealthy condition. Teachers who suffer from burnout then further harm learners, many of whom are high-risk learners because of negative family backgrounds. Related to a negative attitude towards teaching, participants indicated that teachers suffering from burnout struggle to manage their

learners in the classroom. Burned-out teachers do not have tolerance for classroom disruptions; however, at the same time, “*burnout hampers teachers to detour learners from unacceptable behaviour*” (P6) because burnout hampers teachers’ ability to approach learners in a tactful manner as a feature of effective classroom management.

Teacher burnout leads to teachers’ lack of cooperation because teachers who suffer from burnout refuse to take orders from their school principals and tend to blame their colleagues all the time. One of the participants indicated that victims of burnout hate teamwork which depends on good work relationships between teachers and school principals and between teachers themselves. A lack of good work relationships because of burnout relates to the fact that “*burned-out teachers refuse to take orders from their principals*” (P1). They have problems to “*cooperate with other teachers*” (P5) and they are in constant “*conflict with their learners*” (P11). Related to a lack of cooperation in the workplace, teachers who experience burnout have low commitment and enthusiasm towards life in general and towards their work specifically. Participants pointed out that because of the destructive character of burnout, teachers who had been previously committed towards their teaching task became detached from their work manifesting in “*late coming*” (P9), “*neglecting their duties*” (P10), and “*refusing to be accountable for their mistakes*” (P1). It was clear from the interviews with participants that sufferers from burnout undergo a transformation from being enthusiastic and vigilant about their vocational calling to total indifference and being oblivious about the realising of teaching goals.

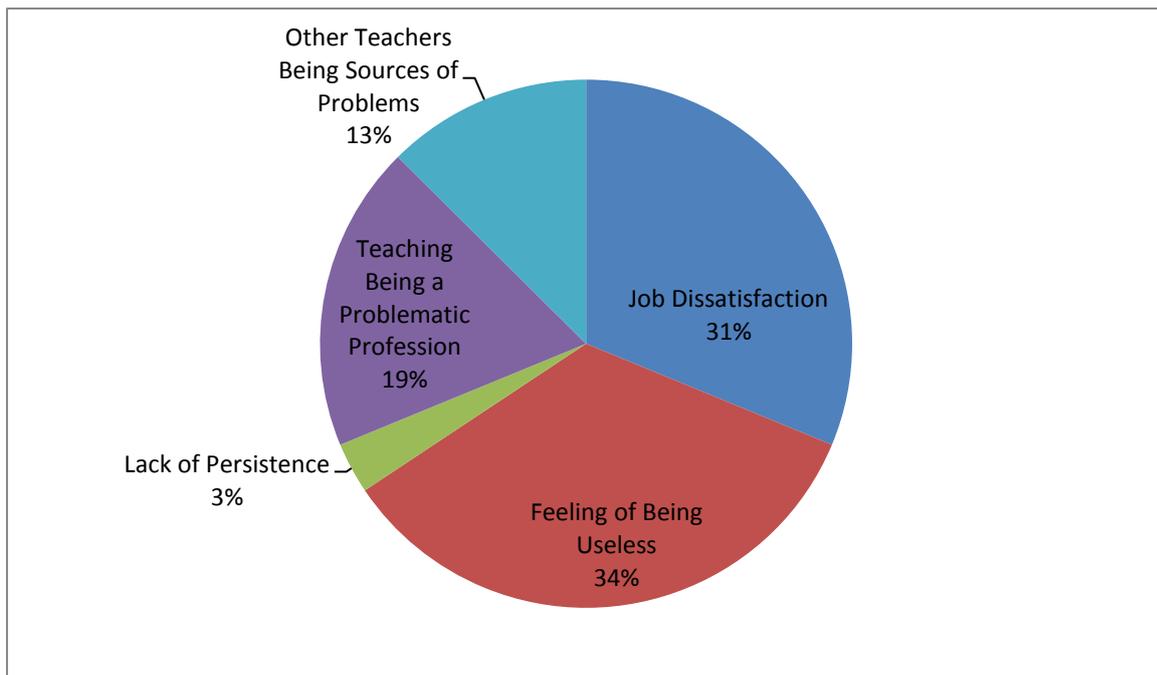
With regard to aggressive behaviour, participants pointed to their experience of teacher burnout leading to the emergence of anger and violence among teachers. P20 shared his experience that “*burnout makes a person to be inhumane*” in the sense that previously docile teachers changed to bullies punishing learners severely and unreasonably. P13 concurred by opining that “*victims of burnout enjoy punishing learners*” and they treat their learners as objects. The fact that burned-out teachers have a tendency of using reactive and punitive responses when interacting with learners, this behaviour leads to “*bad teacher-learner relationships*” (P19) which is in total contrast with what the essence of being a teacher is, namely, to act in the best interest of the child at all times.

Burnout threatens teachers' self-esteem because of an inability to protect themselves against the threats to their self-esteem such as not acting proudly, responsibly and being accountable for the learning and behaviour of their learners. In this regard, *"burnout endangers the personal life of teachers"* (P15) as quality of life is associated with proudly taking ownership of one's deeds and thoughts. Related to not being in a position of proud ownership taking because of burnout, participants commented that *"burnout diminishes teachers' resilience to protect themselves against stressful situations"* (P17) because *"burnout makes teachers to be afraid of facing their challenges"* (P18). From the interviews it became clear that participants agreed that burnout weakens teachers' resilience to cope with life because burnout causes them to be scared when they are exposed to unpredictable circumstances such as encountering unexpected problems and being opposed by other people.

In conclusion, with regard to the work performance of teachers suffering from burnout, it is clear that burnout presents as a variety of destructive behaviour at school as work environment. Burnout results in a teacher losing a sense of belonging to his or her school as working environment. Burnout causes teachers not to trust each other and to perceive to be hated by everybody as a result of poor communication between colleagues and management. This poor communication because of burnout causes victims to distort the messages of school principals, colleagues and learners, resulting in destructive interpersonal relationships causing isolation. Apart from an increased feeling of isolation, burnout causes teachers to demonstrate feelings of resentment, boredom, stagnation and helplessness, all of which demand that burnout be avoided at all cost.

#### **5.4.4.3 Burnout and teacher attrition**

Apart from a generally natural tendency to pursue greener pastures in the sense of more attractive working conditions and remuneration, burnout serves as a factor leading to teachers' exodus from the teaching profession. Figure 5.4 depicts the ways in which burnout is contributing to teacher attrition as reported by participants during the individual interviews.



**Figure 5.3: Burnout and teacher attrition**

As illustrated in Figure 5.3, teacher attrition as a result of burnout manifests in five factors relating to job dissatisfaction, colleagues being sources of problems, teaching being a taxing profession, a lack of persistence and feelings of being useless.

The fact that burnout results in job dissatisfaction causes teacher turnover. Teachers' dissatisfaction with the teaching profession relates to work overload because, when compared with other professionals, teachers have long intensive working hours which probably results in teacher burnout. The emotional taxing situation of teaching mainly orphans due to HIV/Aids, which exposed many children to poverty as a result of losing their parents, and having to teach with a scarcity of basic didactic materials such as a shortage of textbooks contribute to the problem. Dissatisfaction with teaching also relates to being emotionally sensitised to many learners' impoverished conditions, knowing that many learners come to school on empty stomachs and wearing tattered clothes. Poor school management relating to school principals' directive behaviour and school board members' ignorance of school governance also contributes to teachers' dissatisfaction with their teaching careers as this situation results in a lack of humanistic relationships and collegiality between teachers and school management. All of these factors contributing to job dissatisfaction result in high rates of teacher

turnover with some qualified teachers joining the armed forces of Lesotho because of job dissatisfaction.

With regard to colleagues being considered to be the source of teacher burnout, P6 commented that “*some teachers are lazy and they become a burden to us because we have to teach the grades which they are supposed to teach*”. Being exposed to conditions of overburdening because not all members of staff share the same work ethics, results in burnout with teachers opting to leave the teaching profession. Related to the lack of work ethics and negative working relations, P10 argued that “*some teachers incite parents to blame their colleagues [other teachers] for the poor performance of their children*”. When parents are being incited by some teachers about other teachers being the reason for their children’s failure in tests, this toxic situation triggers burnout and eventual teacher turnover. This toxic situation is exacerbated by “*teachers who incite learners to disrespect other teachers*” (P12). The lack of collegial behaviour of some members of staff includes “*conspiring with the members of the board to discriminate against some teachers*” (P16). Participants also pointed to the lack of cooperation between members of staff resulting in a lack of professional support which causes teaching to be severely stressful because of a total lack of collegiality. Difficulty with colleagues also related to lengthy staff meetings where consensus is never reached.

Teaching is a problematic profession related to work overload because of teaching many grades and large class sizes; furthermore, teachers are challenged with the task of performing many different roles and responsibilities in their everyday work, which include being a motivator of learners, manager, observer, counsellor and working under poor physical classroom conditions such as too hot temperatures in summer and too cold conditions in winter. These physical circumstances are worsened by dilapidated classrooms with broken window panes and a total lack of any form of school garden for aesthetic appreciation. Physical infrastructure dilapidation is accompanied by teachers being exposed to role ambiguity related to lack of clear teachers’ job description and role conflict pertaining to teachers’ perception that their expectations and job demands are incompatible and cannot be satisfied simultaneously, all of which results in acute stress causing eventual burnout and ultimately resulting in teacher turnover.

Participants agreed that burnout reduces a teacher's persistence to tackle the job-related challenges such as lack of cooperation between a teacher and his or her colleagues. Participants reported that this situation results in teacher attrition. *"Poor infrastructure"* (P13) relating to dilapidated staff rooms and classrooms and the implementation of a new curriculum without thorough training for proper conduct results in teacher burnout and teacher turnover. The resulting feeling of being useless associated with burnout causes teachers to believe they are not able to achieve anything. This feeling forces teachers to leave the teaching profession with the feeling enhanced by *"problems caused by learners and parents"* (P9). P14 proclaimed that *"in Lesotho, teaching is not a respected profession because teachers are despised and poorly paid"* worsening burnout sufferers' *"feeling of being a useless person (P12)"*.

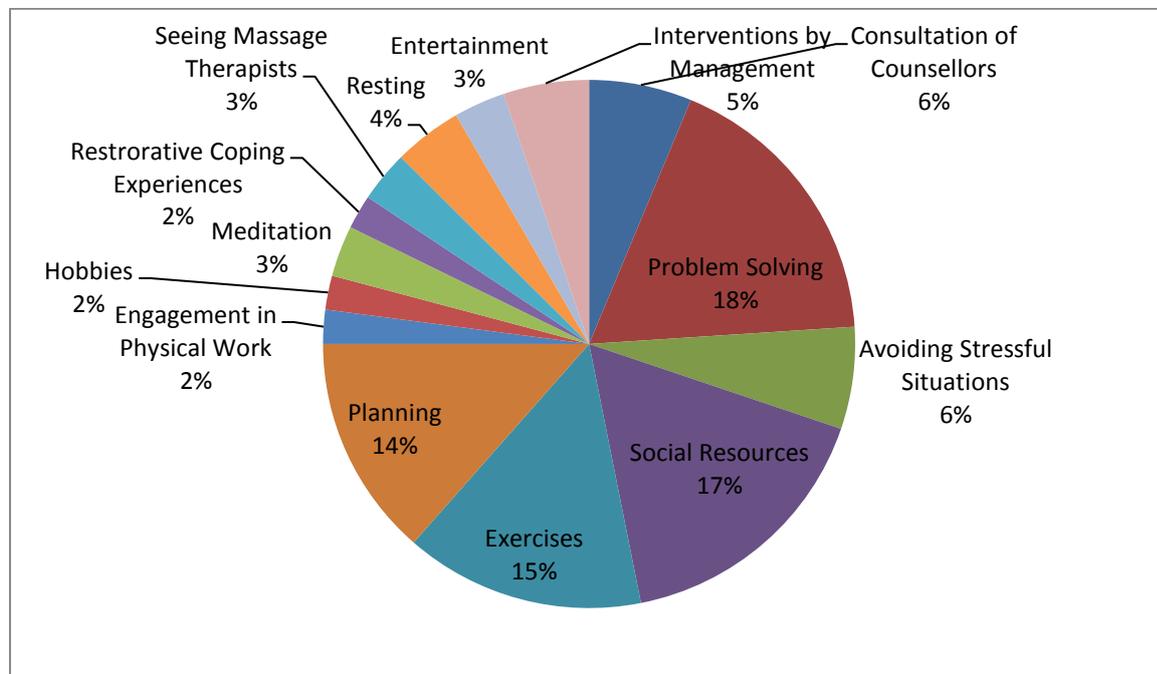
## **5.5 STRESS COPING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY TEACHERS TO PREVENT BURNOUT**

Since teaching is regarded a stressful profession (Shkëmbi, Melonashi & Fana, 2015:1), teachers must employ confrontational coping mechanisms to handle stress constructively. The results of the interviews revealed that teachers use a variety of stress coping strategies to alleviate stress and prevent burnout. The strategies that teachers use to cope with stress are grouped into three main categories, namely, constructive, less constructive and neutral coping strategies. Constructive coping strategies include strategies to restore emotional balance and to solve stress-related problems in such a manner that the stressors will not easily surface again because use of constructive coping strategies mitigates the negative effects of teacher work stress. Less constructive coping strategies temporarily relieve stress, but cause more damage in the long run, whereas neutral coping strategies neither solve the stress-related problem, nor makes it any worse, thus neutral coping strategies are labelled as neither constructive nor less constructive mechanisms of dealing with stressful circumstances.

### **5.5.1 Constructive stress coping strategies**

From the interviews with participants it was clear that participants use constructive stress coping strategies to prevent burnout. Figure 5.4 depicts the constructive stress

coping strategies used by teachers in preventing burnout in response to participants' answers on the following question: What constructive stress coping strategies do you use to prevent burnout?



**Figure 5.4: Constructive stress coping strategies for teachers**

The challenges of the modern world relating to keeping up with technological developments with their ripple effect on socio-economic changes put schools under immense pressure. The demands and expectations of learners with their parents expose teachers to stressors hampering their productivity. Teachers adopt different coping strategies to alleviate stress and buffer burnout. As depicted in Figure 5.4, constructive ways of coping with stress include consultation of professional counsellors, interventions by school management, entertainment and regular rest. Visiting massage therapists, restorative coping experiences, regular meditation and exciting hobbies also help to cope with stress in a positive manner. Engagement in physical work, thorough planning, physical exercises and accessing social resources assist with the development of resilience to face harmful stressors successfully. Avoiding stressful situations where possible, applying lifestyle coping strategies and developing an approach of solving problems as they occur, serve to buffer teachers against unavoidable stressors. Constructive stress coping strategies are effective because these strategies allow the individual teacher to restore emotional balance and

solve problems in an amicable manner as the use of constructive coping strategies, positively affect the teacher's outlook about the situation, thereby altering his/her perception of stress.

With regard to the stress coping strategy of consulting professional counsellors, participants confirmed that they prevent burnout by consulting professional counsellors. Participants argued that counselling is a most effective strategy to buffer burnout. They cited a number of ways in which counselling benefits teachers, such as counselling empowers people to identify the sources of their problems and develop the best solutions to those problems. Counselling provides individuals with an opportunity to talk about the challenges they are facing. It relieves an individual from struggling with difficult cases alone and provides individuals with ways to take control of their lives and personal affairs. In this regard, participants confirmed that *"counselling enables people to accept when they have problems"* (P12), which is the first step in solving of those problems. P17 reported as the most important benefit of counselling the possibility of *"relieving a person from struggling with problems on his own"*.

Coping with stress through management interventions related to participants requesting their school principals to restructure their responsibilities and duties in such a way that they have periods of rest during the school day. P5 proclaimed that because of the periods of rest arranged through management intervention, *"I miraculously can catch my breath each day again"*. Burnout is also prevented by participants requesting their school principals for days of vacation in the form of *"frequent days off"* (P6), with these off-days correlating with days when teachers have more free teaching periods. P6 motivated and explained this days-off arrangement as follows:

*"It is stressful to come to work every day of the week because teachers are not allowed to be on leave during the school calendar term. I prevent burnout by requesting my principal to allow me to take a day off when I have free teaching periods. This relieves stress because I have some time to go for shopping and just enjoy the day."*

Another strategy of preventing burnout through management arrangements is the use of volunteer teachers and student teachers busy with their teaching practice to relieve full-time teachers from routine tasks. Participants commented that the burdening of loyal teachers with excessive career demands is constructively ameliorated by co-opting *“one of the teaching practice student teachers to help me so that my teaching load is reduced”* (P16).

As a meaningful stress coping strategy, participants acknowledged that they prevent burnout by entertaining themselves. Participants identified their ways of entertainment as follows:

*“I listen to music”* (P19). *“I play video games on my cell phone”* (P2). *“I watch television”* (P3).

Participants also reported that they prevent burnout by going to the movies, listening to radio talks, and engaging in sport through either physical participation or by being spectators. Participants said, however, that being physically engaged in the sports activity oneself, is the best technique of preventing burnout because *“it refreshes my mind to play soccer myself”* (P3).

With regard to resting as a coping mechanism against stress, participants observed that teaching becomes a stressful profession when teachers keep themselves constantly busy with school work during and after school hours. Participants pointed out that even during lunch hours some teachers attend to learners' learning needs by allowing learners to come into the staff room for consultation and assistance. It was clear from the interviews that participants do not approve of continuous work without any rest inbetween. Participants emphasised that they prevent burnout by resting and relaxing during school breaks when *“I take a nap”* (P10). This nap-taking during breaks and after school seemed to be general practice with no tolerance for disturbing this practice because *“in my daily schedule I set aside a time for napping, I do not allow other unplanned obligations or responsibilities to interfere with my napping period”* (P6).

Seeking help of massage therapists was considered by participants as a constructive stress coping strategy as massage therapy promotes relaxation and well-being; it relieves muscle spasms and pain and contributes to less depression and anxiety. Participants identified the pain relieved by massage therapy as relating to headaches, back pains and migraines. It was clear from the interviews with participants that massage therapy improves the quality of sleeping and it elevates mood because *“it alleviates stress and tension”* (P3). With regard to restorative coping experiences, participants stated that they prevent burnout by taking advantage of restorative coping experiences such as visits to different nature-related outdoor places like Maletsunyane Falls at Semonkong, Sehlabathebe National Park, Bokong Nature Reserve, Liphofung Nature Reserve and Tsehlanyane National Park. Other places of interest, which participants visit are Katse Dam, Muela Dam, Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village and Mohale Dam. Some participants related their restorative experiences to attending church services and doing shopping in the malls of Maseru, the capital city of Lesotho, as *“shopping in Maseru’s malls makes me tick!”* (P4).

Participants indicated that meditation is a resourceful strategy for buffering burnout since it enables individuals to reflect on their problems and possible solutions for those problems. The interviewees observed the benefits of meditation to relate to physiological benefits, psychological benefits and spiritual benefits. With regard to the physiological benefits of meditation, participants confirmed that meditation leads to a deeper level of physical relaxation to reduce anxiety attacks, which then lowers the levels of blood lactate and decreases muscle tension and concurring headaches. Participants acknowledged the psychological benefits of meditation to relate to building self-confidence and influencing mood and behaviour positively through the resolving of phobias and fears and the controlling of thoughts and concentration. Interviewees concurred with the spiritual benefits of meditation of assisting the individual to keep things in perspective by providing peace of mind to enhance self-actualisation. With regard to the spiritual benefit of meditation relating to learn to forgive, P10 proclaimed *“I mastered to forgive my colleagues who have incited parents and learners against me”*.

The constructive hobbies that participants employ to prevent burnout include reading and storytelling. Participants agreed that telling and listening to stories enable them to

relax completely because *“stories make me to forget my problems”* (P11). Although living increasingly in a life of e-mails and WhatsApp, some participants collect stamps as a stress relieving hobby because *“stamps remind me of days gone by”* (P7) with this remembering being joyful. To engage in physical work was postulated as a very functional strategy to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout. Physical work such as *“gardening”* (P9), *“window washing”* (P19) and *“cleaning the yard”* (P10) served as functional physical activities which simultaneously contributed to psychological well-being in observing the beautiful garden and clean windows and backyard once the task is completed.

To engage in the thorough planning of work in advance was regarded by participants as a purposeful strategy for preventing teacher burnout. Participants noted that failure to do thorough planning for lessons is a main stressor because it increases work demands and hampers teachers to meet deadlines. Planning of lessons is a burnout buffer because it assists with countering work overload. As proper planning directs one to look ahead and to allow adequate time for important tasks, *“planning makes one to avoid the stress of working under pressure”* (P19).

Physical exercise as a stress coping strategy to buffer burnout was acknowledged to relate to aerobics for the female participants and gym session workouts for the male participants. Participants also postulated that they employ indoor exercise such as *“litolobonya”* (P13), which is a cultural dance performed by Basotho women. Some participants also observed that they use yoga to prevent burnout. Participants concurred with the commonly known benefits of physical exercise, namely, a refreshment of the mind, a general enhancement of good health and sleeping patterns and a stretching of muscles for improved elasticity and better blood circulation. In this regard P13 concurred that *“aerobics refresh my mind”* and P17 proclaimed *“gym is the best tool for me to prevent burnout.”*

Social resources to prevent teacher burnout related to interviewees spending time with positive and kind people as a strong social support system against stress. Participants acknowledged both internal and external social support systems with parents, uncles, aunts, spouses, cousins and children acting as internal support systems and colleagues, friends and supervisors representing external support systems. With

reference to their work contexts, participants indicated that supervisors provide them with the necessary administrative support and they also advise them on best practices in dealing with specific problems. Participants noted that social resources are crucial strategies to buffer burnout because *“sharing problems with people who have similar problems prevents burnout”* (P18). Participants asserted that close relationships with partners, children, colleagues and friends are helpful in restoring energy and alleviating some of the psychological effects of burnout such as depression and feelings of being worthless. Related to the support from social groups to buffer stress with related burnout, participants identified the avoiding of stressful situations such as *“hanging out with individuals who always complain”* (P7). Participants also pointed to the avoiding of confrontations with colleagues and supervisors, which causes severe stress. In this regard, P5 commented that she avoids unnecessary confrontations with colleagues and supervisors because *“it keeps me from sleep, which is killing me”*. Late coming and poor classroom management practices were also identified as serious stressors to be avoided at all cost.

Participants indicated that they buffer burnout by employing healthy lifestyle coping strategies such as eating balanced diets, taking a long hot bath after a stressful day, having lunch with friends and family and enjoying a favourite leisure time such as *“watching soccer on TV”* (P10). Part of a healthy lifestyle is a pertinent focus on solving problems as and when they occur. Participants stressed that this coping strategy demands from individuals to identify the root cause of the problem in the first place and then to analyse the problem in order to view the problem eventually in totality. In this regard, problem solving *“enables me to have a holistic view of the problem so that I can know how to fix it”* (P1). Participants acknowledged that being able to solve a problem as a strategy to cope with stress includes identifying the severity of the problem, assessing solutions to the problem and choose the best solution. In this regard, P8 reported that *“accepting my problem and seeking some means of resolving it prevents burnout”*. P17 emphasised that when he encounters problems, *“I address them immediately”* and P3 proclaimed *“I do not blame people for my mistakes”*, all of which refer to strategies relating to problem solving as stress countering endeavours.

### 5.5.2 Less constructive stress coping strategies

From the interviews with participants, it was clear that they also use less constructive stress coping strategies to prevent burnout and that they are aware that these strategies relieve stress only temporarily without being a permanent solution. Table 5.6 depicts the less constructive stress coping strategies identified by participants.

**Table 5.6: Less constructive stress coping strategies**

Number of Participants	Participant Responses
5	Disengagement
8	Procrastination
12	Behaviour changes
10	Unhealthy eating behaviours
3	Violent behaviours

As illustrated in Table 5.6, in their effort to eliminate stress and prevent burnout, participant teachers adopt less constructive stress coping strategies relating to disengagement, procrastination, changing their behaviour and resorting to unhealthy eating and being violent.

With regard to disengagement as a stress coping strategy, interviewees reported that they prevent burnout by utilising disengagement in the sense of becoming apathetic to problems relying only on the higher entity to solve their problems. In this regard P1 explained that when faced with a problem she sometimes *“intentionally ignores the problem with a belief that God will intervene.”* Some participants pointed out that they prevent burnout by avoiding talking about their stressful circumstances. Another interviewee acknowledged that when he is faced with a problem, which he thinks he cannot solve, he resorts to denial of the problem. Participants were aware, however, that to practise disengagement as a stress coping strategy is only extending the time of encountering the problem because *“disengagement maintains and strengthens disorder in the life of a person”* (P18).

Related to disengagement is procrastination in the sense of not acting promptly when faced with a problem causing stress but waiting for an appropriate opportunity to deal with the problem, or subconsciously hoping the problem will solve itself. Participants argued, however, that to act prematurely hampers making wise decisions. Participants were aware that procrastination may result in work overload and that procrastination delays the implementation of meaningful action plans. Importantly, interviewees acknowledged that procrastination causes anxiety and guilt because *“I am ashamed every time I miss deadlines”* (P3). Nevertheless, procrastination is a strategy to cope with the stress of difficult challenges because *“despite its shortcomings, I use it to help me cope with stress”* (P6).

Participants prevent burnout by employing changed behaviours in the sense of *“softening the blow”* (P11) by taking their minds off the stressful circumstances with a beer. Participants stated that drinking beer does not only make them feel better but it also distracts them from the pending stressors. P9 commented that she *“prevents burnout by drinking beer moderately”*. Other participants indicated that they prevent burnout by smoking because *“smoking relieves stress”* (P6). Some participants acknowledged that a fairly common practice amongst certain teachers is to prevent burnout by resorting to absenteeism. In this regard P16 proclaimed that he *“avoids work challenges by staying at home”* which he justified as morally more in order than to *“come to work drunk”*. Apart from substance abuse to cope with stress such as *“taking pills”* (P15), participants agreed that a substantial number of young male teachers in Lesotho are guilty of smoking dagga. In this regard, P7 commented that it is default behaviour that *“male teachers prevent burnout by smoking dagga”*. A further stress coping strategy resorted to under changed behaviours that participants mentioned, is to blame colleagues and the school principal for uncomfortable conditions. P20 proclaimed *“blaming my colleagues and my principal is bad but it makes me feel better”* in the sense of avoiding taking responsibility for what went wrong. It was clear from the interviews that some sufferers from stress and burnout resort to ‘hurting’ other people in their attempts to cope with stressors.

Relating to compulsive eating, participants acknowledged that burnout can be prevented by *“eating comfort food”* (P2), which implies unhealthy eating behaviours. Some interviewees reported that they prevent burnout by resorting to over eating while

others eat too little and too infrequently. Eating comfort food, which is junk food and which is commonly utilised by female teachers, “helps in easing the blow of burnout” (P8).

Resorting to violent behaviour appeared to be a common less constructive coping mechanism utilised by some participants when under severe stress. P4 admitted that “fighting and crying alleviate stress”, whereas P18 acknowledged “I alleviate stress by getting at others”. Some of the participants indicated that they compact burnout by complaining to their colleagues about minor issues. Aggressive behaviour towards learners when under severe stress was also common. In this regard, P15 admitted “I am sorry to say, but I punish learners when I am not in a good mood by shouting at them.” It was clear from the interviews with participants that acute stress results in mood swings manifesting in aggressive behaviour towards colleagues and especially also towards vulnerable learners.

### 5.5.3 Neutral stress coping strategies

Data pertaining to neutral stress coping strategies employed by teachers in preventing burnout are presented in Figure 5.5. These findings are derived from the data collected via individual interviewing.

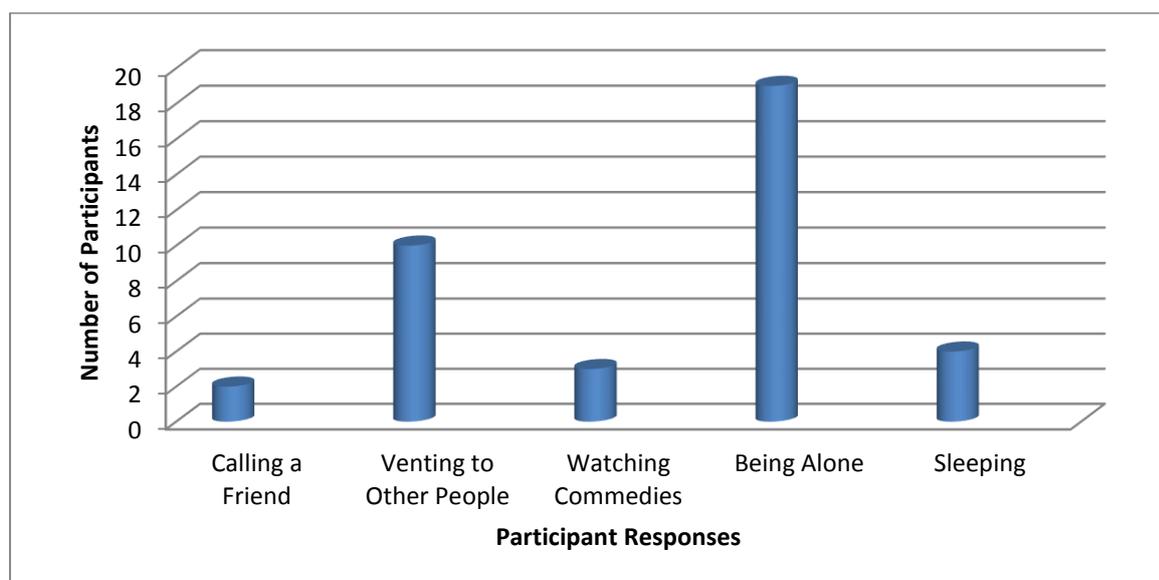


Figure 5.5: Neutral stress coping strategies

As depicted in Figure 5.5, teachers alleviate stress and prevent burnout by adopting neutral stress coping strategies related to calling a friend, venting to other people, watching comedies, being alone and sleeping excessively. Neutral stress coping strategies neither solve nor worsen the stressor.

Interviewees indicated that they prevent burnout by calling their friends when having a problem to express and share their feelings with their friends instead of bottling up their feelings. They suggested that expressing one's feelings when experiencing a problem alleviates stress while bottling feelings up triggers stressors. P1 admitted that when she experiences a personal problem, *"I phone a friend"* whereas P7 confirmed that *"chatting and twittering to friends alleviates stress"*. Closely related to calling a friend in order to seek advice on coping with stress, participants asserted that they prevent burnout by venting to their family and friends. Participants acknowledged that to express their feelings without the sound-boarding purpose of seeking advice and clarification, enable them to put their feelings of anger and dissatisfaction into perspective. By venting problems to friends and colleagues, *"I get my feelings under control"* (P13), *"I become more relaxed"* (P7), *"I am able to anticipate solutions"* (P9). It was clear that participants valued venting as a stress coping strategy which calms their minds for the moment.

The value of humour to counter stress is commonly applied, also by participants who admitted that they watch comedies to cope with stress and prevent burnout. They indicated that watching comedies reduces stress and it enhances joy and happiness because by watching comedies, *"I experience pleasure and amusement"* (P3). It was clear from the interviews with participants that watching comedies results in laughter, happiness and relaxation to distract potential sufferers from burnout from anger, guilt and despair.

With regard to being alone as a stress coping strategy, participants pointed to the fact that constant interaction with people is overwhelming leading to stress encounters. Therefore, spending time alone refreshes the nerves, enabling an individual to tackle the outside world with vigour and self-confidence again. From the interviews with participants, it became clear that being alone allows the individual to self-

understanding and to put a proper perspective on problems in order to act confidently in coping with stress. Participants opined as follows:

*“Being alone gives me a chance to think about how best to solve my problems” (P7). “Being alone helps me to reflect on the causes of my problems” (P9). “Spending time alone helps me to better understand myself, to better understand how I feel about things, to better understand what is going on in my life, to better understand my interests and abilities” (P19). “Sometimes we make mistakes because we do not understand who we are and what we want” (P13).*

Participants acknowledged the very important role of enough hours of sleep to buffer burnout. Participants emphasised that from their own experience they know that adequate sleep refreshes the mind and body. They noted that tiredness increases stress because it enhances irrational thinking. Although participants know that the number of sleeping hours needed per day differs from person to person, they proposed a sleeping period of six to eight hours per night to ensure that *“getting adequate sleep makes one to be ready to face the challenges of the next day” (P8).*

## **5.6 THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING WITH TEACHER STRESS COPING STRATEGIES**

From the interviews with participants a number of roles was suggested which can be effected by the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training to contribute to teachers' coping with stress in order to prevent burnout. These suggestions are presented in Table 5.7.

**Table 5.7: Mechanisms of equipping teachers to prevent burnout**

Number of Participants	Participant Responses
2	Clarification of job description
1	Induction of new teachers
4	Increment of teachers' salaries
1	Creating promotion opportunities
12	Provision of teaching resources
6	Reduction of teacher-pupil ratio
3	Renovation of buildings
4	Inspection of schools
5	Stress management workshops
7	Employment of counsellors

There are multiple roles, which the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can fulfil to equip teachers with stress coping skills for the purpose of preventing burnout. As shown in Table 5.7, the Ministry can adopt roles relating to the clarification of teachers' job description, the proper induction of new teachers and increasing teachers' remuneration to acceptable levels. Creating sufficient promotion opportunities for teachers, providing adequate teaching resources and reducing teacher-pupil ratios will contribute to the teaching profession being more attractive to prospective candidates. The regular renovation of school buildings, regular inspections of schools to ascertain the appropriateness of teaching and learning and regular workshops on stress management workshops with accompanying counsellors to assist with support, can buffer burnout successfully.

With regard to a clear clarification of job description, participants indicated that the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can prevent teacher burnout by clearly clarifying the job descriptions of teachers. Participants stated that the clarification and updating of teachers' job descriptions can enable teachers to pinpoint some of the duties and responsibilities which are not part of their job descriptions. With this clarification, *"the burdening of teachers with responsibilities which are not part of their primary duties can be avoided"* (P1). Participants asserted that clear job descriptions

can address the issues of role ambiguity and role conflict to which teachers are prone on a regular basis and which results in constant stress.

Participants reported that the formal induction of new teachers is a resourceful technique, which the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can adopt to prevent teacher burnout. As thorough induction programmes can enable new teachers to be aware of the frustrations and problems which they are likely to encounter in the teaching profession, *“such programmes will prepare teachers for the future challenges of the profession”* (P10).

Participants observed that the Ministry of Education and Training of Lesotho can buffer teacher burnout by increasing the salaries of teachers to realistic levels. In this regard, participants reported on the low salaries of teachers and that a salary increase *“will enable teachers to buy cars and houses”* (P2), provided that teachers receive *“car allowances and housing allowances”* (P17). Participants emphasised that reasonable salaries lead to job satisfaction and a happy life with happy lives relating to having enough money *“to cover transport expenses, rent and school fees for our children”* (P16).

Participants claimed that teaching in primary schools in Lesotho is stressful because promotion opportunities are few. This problem can be redressed by creating more promotion opportunities for teachers as was anticipated in 2009 when the current teaching service career structure was developed with proposals for senior positions relating to assistant, specialist and senior specialist teacher. *“These positions were never implemented”* (P1) and by implementing these promotion opportunities, this can serve as a buffer against teacher burnout.

Participants opined that the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho can buffer teacher burnout by providing adequate teaching resources such as textbooks, stationery and laboratory apparatus to ensure that teaching and learning occurs at reasonable levels. Enabling teachers to facilitate science content effectively, for example, *“the Ministry must provide schools with beakers and test tubes”* (P17) because teachers sometimes buy teaching aids with their own money which results in stress. The participants suggested that teaching resources enhance teachers' self-

confidence since teaching resources contribute to *“effective instructional practice”* (P11).

Although learner numbers are closely linked to high birth rates with accompanying economic constraints, participants asserted that the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can prevent teacher burnout through a reduction of teacher-pupil ratios. Participants noted that in some primary schools, particularly in the rural areas of Lesotho, there are cases of a teacher, teaching a group of more than two hundred pupils at a time. Participants maintained that teaching large classes is stressful to teachers and that a solution is the reduction of teacher-pupil ratios. Participants suggested that a reduction of the huge teacher-pupil ratio can be achieved *“through employing more teachers”* (P2) because *“the marking of compositions and essays of so many learners is not easy, the Ministry of Education and Training must make a plan”* (P17).

Enabling teachers to cope with stress can be achieved by renovating old classrooms and staff rooms. In this regard, participants opined that *“it is not comfortable to teach in dilapidated classrooms”* (P2) where *“there are leaks in the roof of my class room”* (P4). It was clear from the interviews with participants that roof leaks during the rainy season cause severe stress for teachers to achieve proper teaching and learning. Related to addressing dilapidated school buildings in rural schools, P11 claimed that *“this problem can be resolved by renovation of these school buildings”*.

Participants indicated that teacher burnout can be prevented by the regular inspection of schools as a means of teacher support. Participants pointed out that school inspectors have a tendency to visit only schools which are in towns and abandon rural schools. This is regarded as malpractice because the *“inspection of all schools must be a regular activity”* (P15) whereby teachers are guided and supported with the main aim of inspection not being *“fault finding”* (P7). Participants mentioned the advantages of school inspection relating to the monitoring of education quality and the providing of feedback to schools and the government on outcomes achieved. The embedded issue of teacher accountability for work performance by means of standardised guidelines for an adherence to curriculum application, warrants that *“schools should*

*be inspected on a regular basis because the aim of inspection is to improve the quality of education” (P18).*

With reference to stress management workshops, participants reported that the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho can buffer teacher burnout successfully with regular stress management workshops for teachers because these workshops *“will empower teachers to cope with stress” (P12)*. Participants envisioned stress management workshops to equip teachers with different ways to manage stress by helping teachers *“to learn techniques of preventing burnout” (P12)*. Related to regular workshops on stress management, is the need for counsellors to support teachers with counselling services. These counsellors *“must be placed in regions which are accessible to teachers” (P17)* to assist teachers with all their educative teaching related questions of which thorough answers and guidelines will contribute to an alleviation of pertinent stressors as a buffer against burnout.

## **5.7 SUMMARY**

The research findings reveal that participants experience stress with the possibility of eventual burnout. The stress levels among participants ranged from moderate to substantial relating to the fact that participants had to teach while also being burdened by additional duties and responsibilities of a managerial and administrative kind. A number of stressors were categorised as relating to the work itself, learners, school management, teachers’ professional development, interpersonal school relations and family issues, all of which cause potential burnout for teachers. Burnout, which affects teachers’ work performance and general well-being and that of their learners, results in teacher attrition. Teachers use a variety of constructive, less constructive and neutral stress coping strategies to prevent burnout. Constructive stress coping strategies include consultations with professional counsellors, physical exercises and entertainment. Less constructive stress coping strategies involve drinking beer and smoking while neutral endeavours to cope with stress entail watching comedies and spending time alone. The Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training can affect relevant mechanisms to contribute to the equipping of teachers with stress coping know-how in order to prevent burnout. These ministry endeavours relate to clarifying teachers’ job descriptions, increasing teacher salaries to realistic levels and creating

promotion opportunities for teachers as motivation to persevere with their teaching task and as a buffer against burnout.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS ON DATA QUANTITATIVELY COLLECTED**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the analysis of quantitatively collected data. These data were collected from 350 respondents. The statistical data analysis methods of multiple regression, chi-square and t-test were used to analyse quantitatively collected data. Multiple regression was used to analyse data with the aim of predicting burnout from predictor variables such as teachers' work overload, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict. The chi-square test was employed to establish whether variables such as teacher's age, personality, experience and type of school have influence on teacher burnout. A t-test was used to determine whether female and male teachers are affected by burnout in the same way, or whether burnout is higher among female or male teachers.

Before discussing the research findings, the researcher provides background information on the research respondents.

#### **6.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH RESPONDENTS**

The research site for the data quantitatively collected was exactly the same as for the data qualitatively collected. As it has already been indicated in paragraph 5.2, the research site for this study was the National University of Lesotho. This institution trains teachers and other professionals. The researcher's interest in collecting data in this institution are arose from the fact that it trains teachers. Therefore, the researcher's aim was to collect data from the practising teachers. Collecting data from this institution enabled the researcher to find the respondents from different schools in one place.

The population for this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout comprised of 600 primary school teachers who were pursuing a Bachelor of Education in Primary

Education at the National University of Lesotho for the 2017/2018 academic year. Bachelor of Education in Primary Education is a part-time programme offered by the University of Lesotho for practising teachers who hold a Diploma in Primary Education. The sample for the quantitative part of the study was comprised of 350 teachers. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of 350 teachers from the population. For this particular investigation, there were more females than males in the population. As such, the use of any sampling technique other than stratified random sampling technique would result in a case in which more females than males would be selected. Therefore, the use of stratified sampling led to a selection of representative data. Thus the use of stratification was appropriate in this case because the population reflected, an imbalance on a characteristic of a sample (Creswell, 2012:44). For the quantitative part of this study, 350 respondents filled in the questionnaires, with 257 female respondents and 93 male respondents.

Examination of quantitatively collected data revealed that teachers in the primary schools of Lesotho are experiencing a danger of burnout. To that effect, readers are referred to table 6:1 where research findings are based on data collected through the use of Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (Annexure E). Specifically, this instrument was employed to collect data relating to the three dimensions of burnout which are emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment.

**Table 6.1: Respondents’ burnout status as reflected in three dimensions**

Dimensions	Median	Mode	Mean	Range
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	23	13	16.1	46 (40)
Depersonalisation (DP)	11	3	6.9	24 (20)
Personal accomplishment (PA)	44	42	37.3	48 (40)

Note: the numbers in parentheses represent percentages.

Table 6.1 contains information about respondents’ burnout status as reflected by three dimensions, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment. These three dimensions for determining burnout relates to the

measuring instrument developed by Maslach and Jackson (Bria, Spânu, Baban & Dumitrascu, 2014:103).

### **6.2.1 Emotional exhaustion**

Respondents' emotional exhaustion scores at the time when data were collected, ranged from 1 to 47, thus the computed range was 46 which implies that the burnout rate among teachers as it relates to emotional exhaustion was 40%. Pertaining to emotional exhaustion, the median score of 23, modal score of 13 and mean score of 16.1 illustrate the fact that teachers in the primary schools in Lesotho are facing a problem of burnout. The median, mode and mean are the most useful measures of location to handle huge amounts of quantitative data such as the data, the researcher was dealing with in this study. In this case, the median means that 23 was the burnout level of the respondents which divided the data set into two equal parts, with 50% of the burnout scores having a value bigger than the median (23) and 50% of the burnout scores having a value smaller than the median (23). The mode implies that most of the respondents had the burnout level of 13. The mean indicates that the average burnout level of the respondents was 16.1. This score is very high and this implies that the respondents are exposed to the risks of burnout.

### **6.2.2 Depersonalisation**

Respondents' depersonalisation scores at the time when data were collected, ranged from 1 to 25, thus the computed range was 24 which implies that the burnout rate among teachers as it relates to depersonalisation was 20%. Pertaining to depersonalisation, the median score of 11, modal score of 3 and mean score of 6.9 illustrate the fact that teachers in the primary schools in Lesotho are facing a problem of burnout. In this regard, the median means that 11 is the burnout level of the respondents which divides the data set into two equal parts, with 50% of the burnout scores having a value bigger than the median (11) and 50% of the burnout scores having a value smaller than the median (11). The mode implies that most of the respondents had the burnout level of 3. The mean indicates that the average burnout level of the respondents was 6.9. The average burnout score which is above 4 indicates that the respondents are experiencing high levels of burnout.

### **6.2.3 Personal accomplishment**

Respondents' personal accomplishment (reduced personal accomplishment) scores at the time when data were collected, ranged from 3 to 51, thus the computed range was 48 which implies that burnout rate among teachers as it relates to reduced personal accomplishment was 40%. Pertaining to reduced personal accomplishment, the median score of 44, modal score of 42 and mean score of 37.3 illustrate the fact that teachers in the primary schools in Lesotho are facing a problem of burnout. In this example, the median means that 44 is the burnout level of the respondents which divides the data set into two equal parts, with 50% of the burnout scores having a value bigger than the median (44) and 50% of the burnout scores having a value smaller than the median (44). The mode implies that most of the respondents had the burnout level of 42. The mean indicates that the average burnout level of the respondents was 37.3. This score is very high and this means that the respondents are experiencing high risks of burnout.

## **6.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND HYPOTHESES TESTING**

Data were collected with reference to questionnaires, namely, Demographic and Personality Questionnaire (Appendix F), Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scale (Appendix G) and School Environmental Questionnaire (Appendix H). The Demographic and Personality Questionnaire was used to collect data pertaining to the respondents' age, gender, number of years' teaching experience and personality. The Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scales were employed to collect data relating to measures of role conflict, role ambiguity and overload. Finally, the School Environmental Questionnaire was used to collect data in relation to the scores from variables such as personnel development, organisational climate, organisational culture, school type and organisational commitment. To analyse the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics was used for the purposes of enabling the researcher to present, analyse and interpret data in a more meaningful way while inferential statistics relating to multiple regression, the chi-square and t-test were used for the purposes of confirming the findings in order to draw credible conclusions. Multiple regression, the chi-square and t-test were employed to test the following research hypotheses:

- Variables such as teacher's work overload, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict are predictors of burnout among teachers. Specifically, multiple regression was employed to test this hypothesis.
- Variables such as teacher's age, personality, work experience and type of school are predictors of burnout among teachers. The chi-square was used to test this hypothesis.
- Both male and female teachers are affected by burnout in the same way. The t-test was employed to test this hypothesis.

The readers are made aware that the above-mentioned research hypotheses are multiple research hypotheses. These hypotheses are simplified in paragraphs 6.4.1 and 6.4.2. In this regard, the first research hypothesis which was tested is as follows:

- Work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout.

The procedure for data analysis in quantitative studies involves testing the null hypotheses, comparing the computed values and table/critical values (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:508; Pietersen & Maree, 2013:247). When the computed value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected while, on the other hand, when the computed value is less than the critical value, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:508; Pietersen & Maree, 2013:247). In this case, the following null hypotheses were tested:

- Variables such as teachers' work overload, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict are not predictors of burnout among teachers. Multiple regression was employed to test this null hypothesis.
- Variables such as teachers' age, personality, work experience and type of school are not predictors of burnout among teachers. The chi-square was used to test this null hypothesis

- Both male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way. The t-test was employed to test this null hypothesis.

It should be noted that the above-mentioned null hypotheses are multiple null hypotheses. These hypotheses are simplified in paragraphs 6.4.1 and 6.4.2. In this case, the first null hypothesis which was tested was as follows:

- Work overload is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

#### **6.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE ANALYSIS OF DATA USING MULTIPLE REGRESSION**

Multiple regression is a statistical data analysis technique used in situations where multiple independent variables are used to predict a single dependent variable (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:242). Specifically, in this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho, multiple regression was employed to predict respondents' burnout from the seven variables, namely, work load, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict as predictors of burnout among teachers. The seven variables were entered in the multiple regression model of the following form:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + b_7X_7$$

Where:

Y was burnout score.

$b_0$  was the constant.

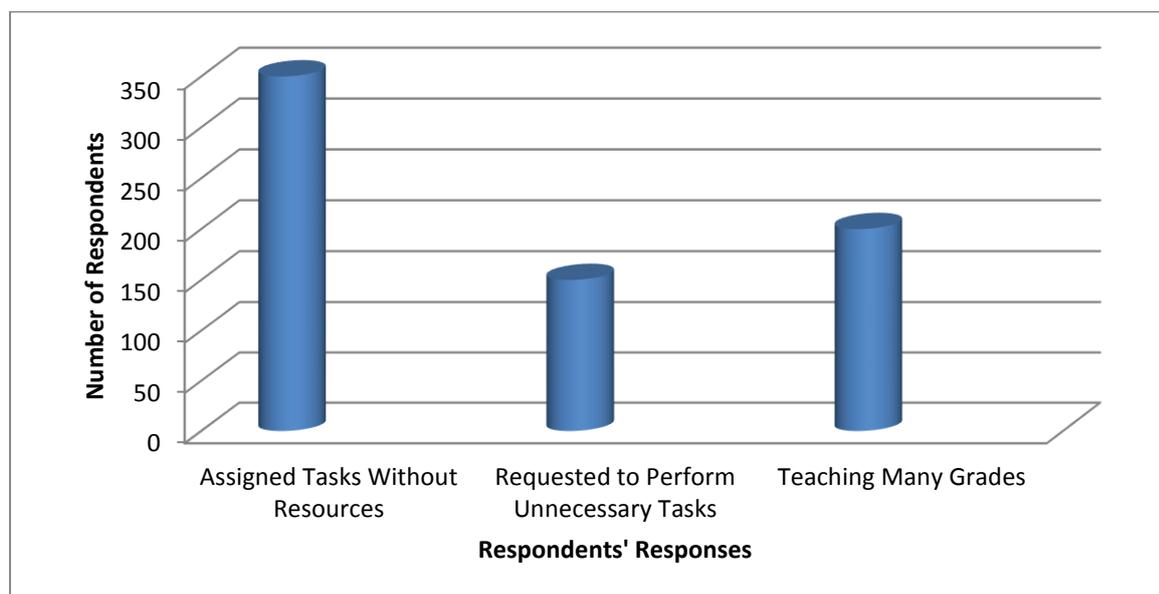
$b_1, b_2, b_3, b_4, b_5, b_6, b_7$ , were coefficients of work load, lack of organisational, lack of staff development, role, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict.

$X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, X_6, X_7$  were the scores of work load, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, climate, organisational culture and role conflict.

Multiple regression was used to analyse data which were collected using the two questionnaires, namely, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scale (Appendix G) and School Environmental Questionnaire (Appendix H). The Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scale was used to collect data relating to measures of role conflict, role ambiguity and overload. The School Environmental Questionnaire was used to collect data relating to the scores from variables, namely, personnel development, organisational climate, organisational culture and organisational commitment. The findings from multiple regression analysis pertaining to testing of the hypotheses relating to seven applicable stressor variables are discussed in paragraphs 6.4.1 to 6.4.7.

### 6.4.1 Work overload and teacher burnout

The results of this study show that work overload predicts teacher burnout. Data in Figure 6.1 reveal different ways in which work overload causes burnout.



**Figure 6.1: Impact of work overload on teacher burnout**

As depicted in Figure 6.1, there is a relationship between work overload and teacher burnout. The respondents indicated three ways in which work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout. 350 respondents suggested that teachers are assigned some tasks without adequate resources and teaching materials to execute such tasks and as a result teachers are exposed to burnout hazards due to a failure to achieve the set

goals. 150 respondents reiterated that one of the factors which burdens and causes burnout among teachers is that teachers are requested to perform unnecessary tasks. Principals take advantage of teachers and request them to perform tasks which are not related to their job descriptions. 200 respondents reported that teachers are exposed to burnout because they are burdened with teaching many grades.

#### 6.4.2 Research findings on work overload and teacher burnout

In analysing data in relation to work overload and teacher burnout, a multiple regression analysis (F test) was carried out by regressing burnout scores on teachers' work overload scores. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) and statistical (null) hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>). The hypotheses were as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout.

H<sub>0</sub>: work overload is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

A summary of the results of regression analysis pertaining to work overload as a predictor of teacher burnout is presented in Table 6.3. In Table 6.3, R (0.162) refers to the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient is the value which shows a relationship between two or more variables (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:234). Thus, in Table 6.3, R (0.162) is a value which shows a relationship between work overload and teacher burnout. For the purpose of helping the readers to have a clear understanding of how correlation coefficient (R) is used to analyse data in quantitative studies, the researcher illustrates an interpretation of the R as follows:

**Table 6.2: Interpretation of a correlation coefficient (R)**

<b>Correlation coefficient (R)</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
0.00 to 0.00	No relationship
0.00 to 0.20	Very low
0.20 to 0.40	Low
0.40 to 0.60	Moderate
0.60 to 0.80	Substantial
0.80 to 1.00	Very high

Source: Best and Kahn, 1998:308

As reflected in Table 6.2, R (0.00 to 0.00) means that there is no relationship between the variables, R (0.20 to 0.40) implies that a relationship between the variables is low while R (0.80 to 1.00) means that a relationship between the variables is very high.

A further explanation of a summary of the results of regression analysis pertaining to work overload as a predictor of teacher burnout as presented in Table 6.3, is made in this paragraph. In this case, R square (0.026 = 2.6%) refers to a percentage of a variation in teacher burnout that is explained by work overload. That is, R square ( $R^2$ ) is a percentage of variation in predicted variable (Y) that is explained by the predictor variable (X) (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:241). N (350) represents the sample for this study. Degree of freedom (df) = (1, 348; 1 being degree of freedom for numerator which relates to group/groups of number of samples under study and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator which relates to number of observations under investigation). For clarity, readers are referred to Appendix K. The formula for a computation of degree of freedom is as follows:  $df = (1, n - 2)$ , thus a degree of freedom in this case is  $df = 1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348$ . F (9.453417) represents the calculated F-value which is a number calculated/obtained by using the data collected from 350 respondents. That is, (F=9.453417) is the result of the F test. P (0.002) < .01, means the levels of significance. P (0.002) represents level of significance for data collected from 350 respondents while .01 represents level of significance for the F critical/table values of the F Distribution, in the table of the critical values of the F Distribution. In this case, readers are referred to Appendix K. It should be noted that the degrees of freedom and levels of significance are used to locate the calculated F-values and critical/table F-values. A reminder is made here that in quantitative studies, when the computed value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected while, on the other hand, when the computed value is less than the critical value, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:508; Pietersen & Maree, 2013:247).

**Table 6.3: Multiple regression analysis of burnout on work overload**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R						0.162
R Square						0.026
Adjusted R Square						0.024
Standard Error						13.262

<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	1662.587	1662.587	1	9.453417	P < .01
Residual		61203.3	175.8716	348		0.002
Total		62865.89	1838.4586	349		

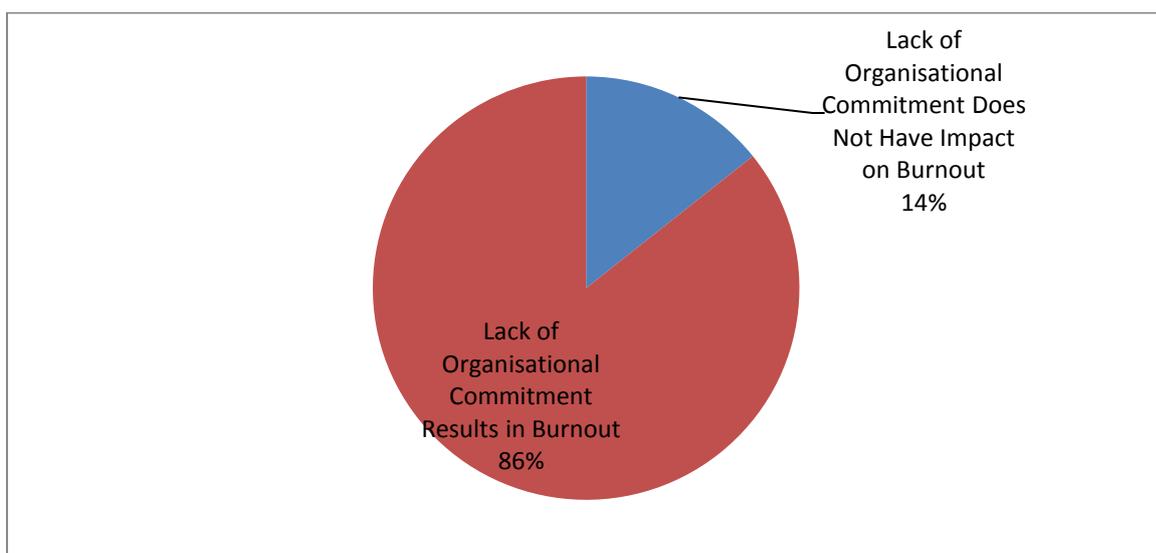
Referring to Table 6.3, the regression analysis resulted in a correlation of 0.162 ( $R = 0.162$ ) between burnout score and teachers' work overload score. This value shows that work overload influences teacher burnout. The analysis further yielded the R square of 0.026 for work overload in relation to burnout. This means that work overload accounted for 2.6 percent of the variance in burnout. This also implies that 97.4 percent of the variance in teacher burnout is due to factors other than work overload. Multiple regression analysis (F test) yielded the calculated F-value of 9.453417. The calculated F-value (9.453417) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem ( $df = 1, n - 2$ ), where n is the number of observations (respondents) in the frequency distribution (sample). In this case,  $df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348)$ ; 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. **Note:** since the computed df (348) is greater than the table df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher then employed infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix K to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix K and locating the calculated F-value of 9.453417 in the distribution with  $df = 1$  and 348 ( $\infty$ ), the results revealed a significant relationship between burnout score and work overload score at the p-value

of .01 (level of significance). The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix K was 6.63. Since the calculated F-value of 9.453417 is greater than the critical F-value of 6.63, it was concluded that work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout was retained while the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that work overload is not a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected. On basis of this, a conclusion is made that work overload results in burnout among primary school teachers in Lesotho.

**Note:** in Appendix K,  $df = 1$  (degree of freedom for numerator), 348 ( $\infty$ ) (degree of freedom for denominator), .01 (level of significance) and F-value of 6.63 (table/critical F-value) are encircled for ease of reference. That is, these values are encircled for the purpose of helping readers to read the values of F Distribution used in analysis of variance (ANOVA).

#### 6.4.3 Lack of organisational commitment and teacher burnout

The findings of this study illustrate that lack of organisational commitment leads to burnout among teachers. Figure 6.2 is about the respondents' responses in relation to the statement which states that teachers who are not favoured by their managers and principals are likely to experience a problem of burnout.



**Figure 6.2: Impact of lack of organisational commitment on teacher burnout**

As illustrated in Figure 6.2, 14% of the respondents reported that lack of organisational commitment does not have an impact on teacher burnout. On the other hand, 86% of the respondents suggested that lack of organisational commitment influences teacher burnout. The respondents reported that teachers who are not taken care of by their organisation get frustrated, lose hope and this state eventually results in burnout among teachers. It was further stated that lack of support from organisational administration triggers teacher burnout because teachers may feel unappreciated by administrators. Thus, the majority (86%) of the respondents confirmed that lack of organisational commitment is a predictor of teacher burnout.

#### 6.4.4 Research findings on lack of organisational commitment and teacher burnout

In analysing data in relation to lack of organisational commitment and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing burnout score on lack of organisational commitment score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.4. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical (null) hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : lack of organisational commitment is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : lack of organisational commitment is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

**Table 6.4: Regression analysis of burnout on lack of organisational commitment**

<b><i>Regression Statistics</i></b>		
R		0.082
R Square		0.007
Adjusted R Square		0.004
Standard Error		13.606
<b>Analysis</b>	<b>of</b>	<b>Variance</b>

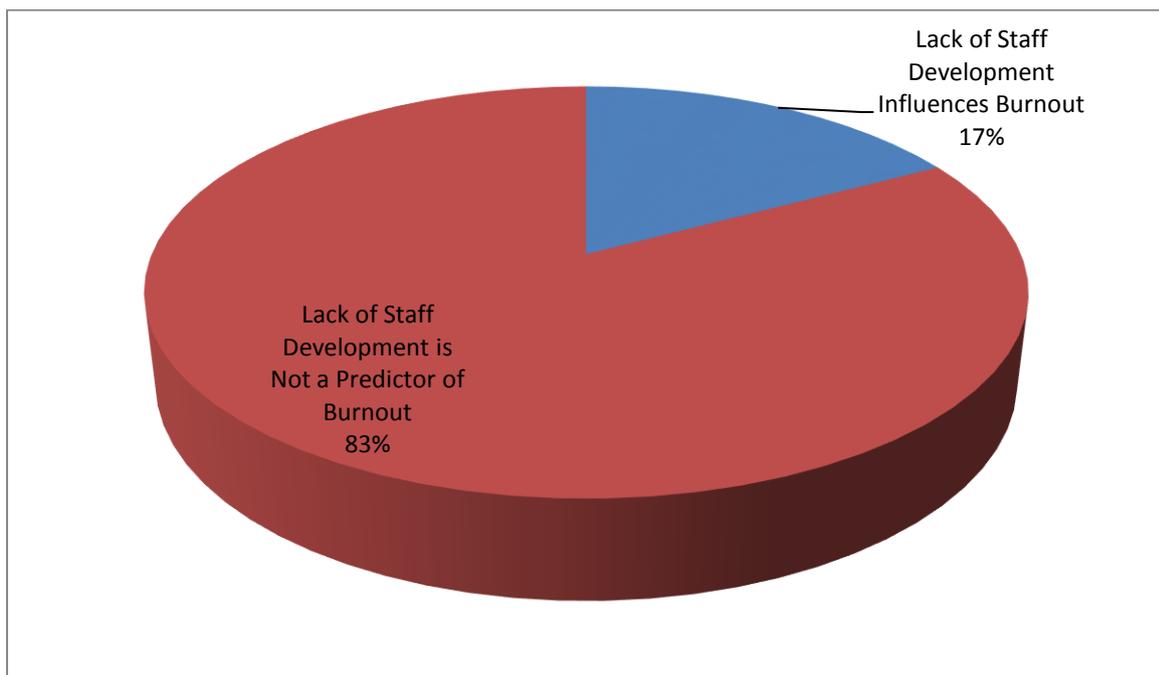
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	433.764	433.764	1	2.343	P > .05
Residual		64419.096	185.112	348		0.127
Total		64852.860	618.876	349		

Referring to Table 6.4, the regression analysis resulted in the R of 0.082 between burnout score and lack of organisational commitment score. This value shows that a correlation between the two variables is very low (negligible) and insignificant. The analysis also yielded the R square of 0.007 for lack of organisational commitment in relation to burnout. This means that lack of organisational commitment accounted for 0.7 percent of the variance in burnout. The regression analysis also yielded the calculated F-value of 2.343. The calculated F-value (2.343) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem ( $df = 1, n - 2$ ), where n is the number of respondents. In this case,  $df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348)$ ; 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. **Note:** because the computed df (348) is greater than the table df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher then used infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix J to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 2.343 in the distribution with  $df = 1$  and 348 ( $\infty$ ), the results revealed an insignificant relationship between burnout score and lack of organisational commitment score at the p-value of .05 (level of significance). The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in J was 3.84. Since the calculated F-value of 2.343 is less than the critical F-value of 3.84, it was concluded that lack of organisational commitment does not have influence on teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that lack of organisational commitment is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that lack of organisational commitment is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. On the basis of this, it is concluded that organisational commitment does not have an impact on teacher burnout. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of the qualitative part of this study. This inconsistency

may be attributed to the sample size. The sample size of the qualitative study is 20 while the sample of the quantitative study is 350.

#### 6.4.5 Lack of staff development and teacher burnout

The data which are presented in Figure 6.3 show that lack of staff development does not have an impact on teacher burnout.



**Figure 6.3: Influence of lack of staff development on teacher burnout**

As illustrated in Figure 6.3, there are two different views about an issue of relationship between lack of staff development and burnout. 17% of the respondents argued that lack of training opportunities causes burnout because it makes teachers have feelings of insecurity and incompetence. On the other hand, 83% of the respondents noted that lack of staff development does not contribute to burnout. They said that what is more important at a work place is job satisfaction and a reasonable salary. Thus, the majority of the respondents confirm that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

#### 6.4.6 Research findings on lack of staff development and teacher burnout

In analysing data in relation to lack of staff development and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing the burnout score on lack of staff development score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.5. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) and statistical hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>). The hypotheses were as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: lack of staff development is a predictor of teacher burnout.

H<sub>0</sub>: lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

**Table 6.5: Regression analysis of burnout on lack of staff development**

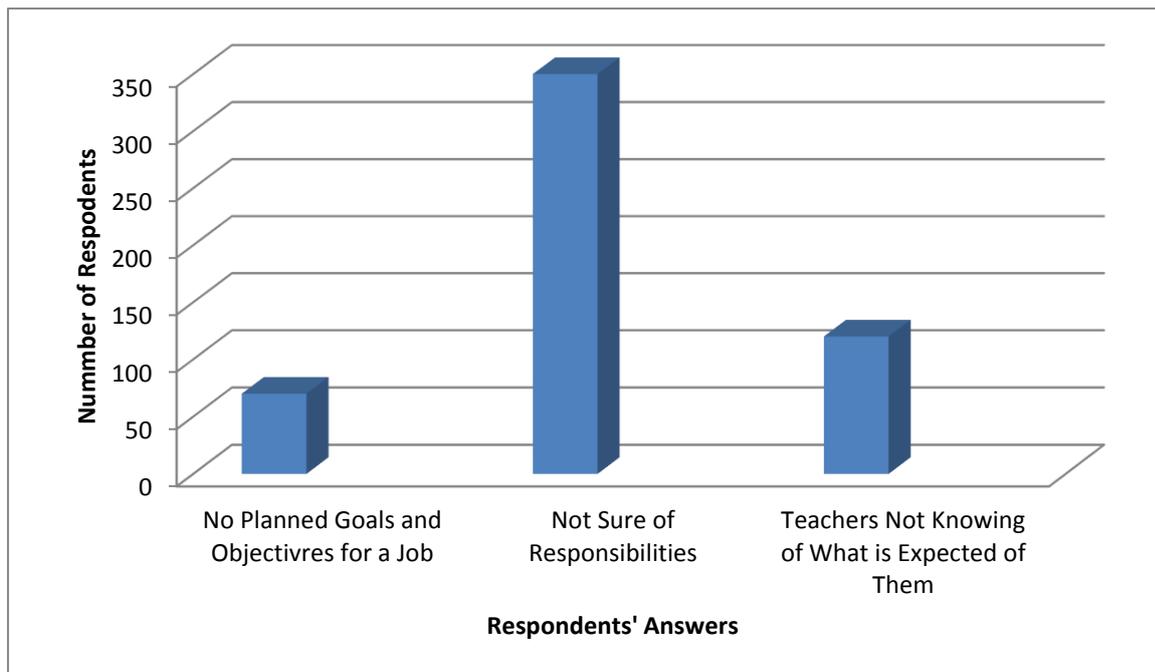
<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R			0.070			
R Square			0.005			
Adjusted R Square			0.002			
Standard Error			13.618			
<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	315.289	315.289	1	1.700	P > .05
Residual		64537.571	185.453	348		0.193
Total		64852.86	500.742	349		

Referring to Table 6.5, the regression analysis resulted in the R of 0.070 between burnout score and lack of staff development score. This value shows that a correlation between the two variables is very low and insignificant. The analysis also yielded the R square of 0.005 for lack of staff development in relation to burnout. This illustrates

that lack of staff development accounted for 0.5 percent of the variance in burnout. Multiple regression analysis yielded the calculated F-value of 1.700. The calculated F-value (1.700) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem ( $df = 1, n - 2$ ), where n is the number of observations (respondents) in the frequency distribution. In this case,  $df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348)$ ; 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. **Note:** because the computed df (348) is greater than the critical df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher used infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix J to find the critical value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 1.700 in the distribution with  $df = 1$  and 348 ( $\infty$ ), the results revealed an insignificant relationship between burnout score and lack of staff development score at the p-value of .05. The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J was 3.84. Since the calculated F-value of 1.700 is less than the critical F-value of 3.84, it was concluded that lack of staff development does not have an impact on teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that lack of staff development is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained.

#### **6.4.7 Role ambiguity and teacher burnout**

Data in Figure 6.4 show that role ambiguity is a predictor of teacher burnout. Data in this figure reveal a variety of ways in which role ambiguity causes burnout.



**Figure 6.4: Effects of role ambiguity on teacher burnout**

Data in Figure 6.4, illustrate that role ambiguity contributes to teacher burnout. The respondents indicated three ways in which role ambiguity is a predictor of teacher burnout. 70 respondents reported that there are no planned goals and objectives for their job and that this situation frustrates them. 350 teachers noted that they are not sure of their responsibilities and that principals are free to assign them any type of task. 120 respondents said that they are not sure what is expected of them because every morning when a teacher gets to a place of work, he/she can be told that there is an urgent meeting to attend or he/she can be assigned any task which he/she has not planned to perform.

#### **6.4.8 Research findings on role ambiguity and teacher burnout**

In analysing data in relation to role ambiguity and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing burnout score on role ambiguity score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.6. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : role ambiguity is a predictor of teacher burnout.

H<sub>0</sub>: role ambiguity is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

**Table 6.6: Regression analysis of burnout on role ambiguity**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R			0.042			
R Square			0.002			
Adjusted R Square			0.001			
Standard Error			13.639			

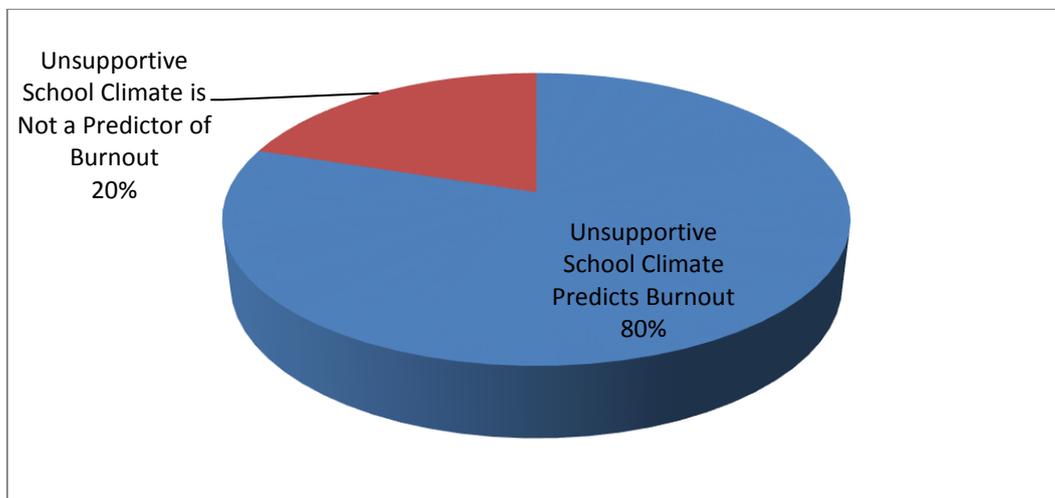
<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
<b>Model</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Mean Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Regression	350	115.858	115.858	1	0.623	P > .05
Residual		64737.002	186.026	348		0.431
Total		64852.86	301.884	349		

Referring to Table 6.6, the regression analysis resulted in the R of 0.042 between burnout score and role ambiguity score. This value shows that a correlation between the two variables is very low and insignificant. The analysis also yielded the R square of 0.002 for role ambiguity in relation to burnout. This shows that role ambiguity accounted for 0.2 percent of the variance in burnout. The regression analysis yielded the calculated F-value of 0.623. The calculated F-value (0.623) was used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem (df = 1, n - 2), where n is the number of respondents. In this example, df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348); 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. **Note:** since the computed df (348) is greater than the critical df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher then used infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix J to find the critical value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 0.623 in the

distribution with  $df = 1$  and  $348 (\infty)$ , the results revealed an insignificant relationship between burnout score and role ambiguity score at the p-value of .05. The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J is 3.84. Since the calculated F-value of 0.623 is less than the critical F-value of 3.84, it was concluded that role ambiguity does not have an impact on teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that role ambiguity is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that role ambiguity is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. This finding contradicts the finding of the qualitative part of this study. This contradiction may be attributed to the methods of data analysis used in analysing qualitative and quantitative data. It is not always the case that qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis produce the same results.

#### 6.4.9 Organisational climate and teacher burnout

The findings of this study illustrate that organisational climate predicts teacher burnout. Figure 6.5 is about the respondents' answers pertaining to the statement which states that unsupportive school climate exposes teachers to the dangers of burnout.



**Figure 6.5: Impact of organisational climate on teacher burnout**

As depicted in Figure 6.5, there are two different views about an issue of a relationship between organisational climate and burnout. 20% of the respondents reported that unsupportive organisational climate is not a predictor of burnout. The respondents argued that burnout attacks people who have low self-esteem. On the other hand, 80%

of the respondents observed that organisational climate contributes to burnout. The respondents observed that bad work environment such as lack of collaboration with colleagues leads to a problem of burnout because it contributes to a feeling of isolation among the teachers. Organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout. This fact was confirmed by 80% of the respondents.

#### 6.4.10 Research findings on organisational climate and teacher burnout

In analysing data in relation to organisational climate and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing burnout score on organisational climate score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.7. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : organisational climate is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

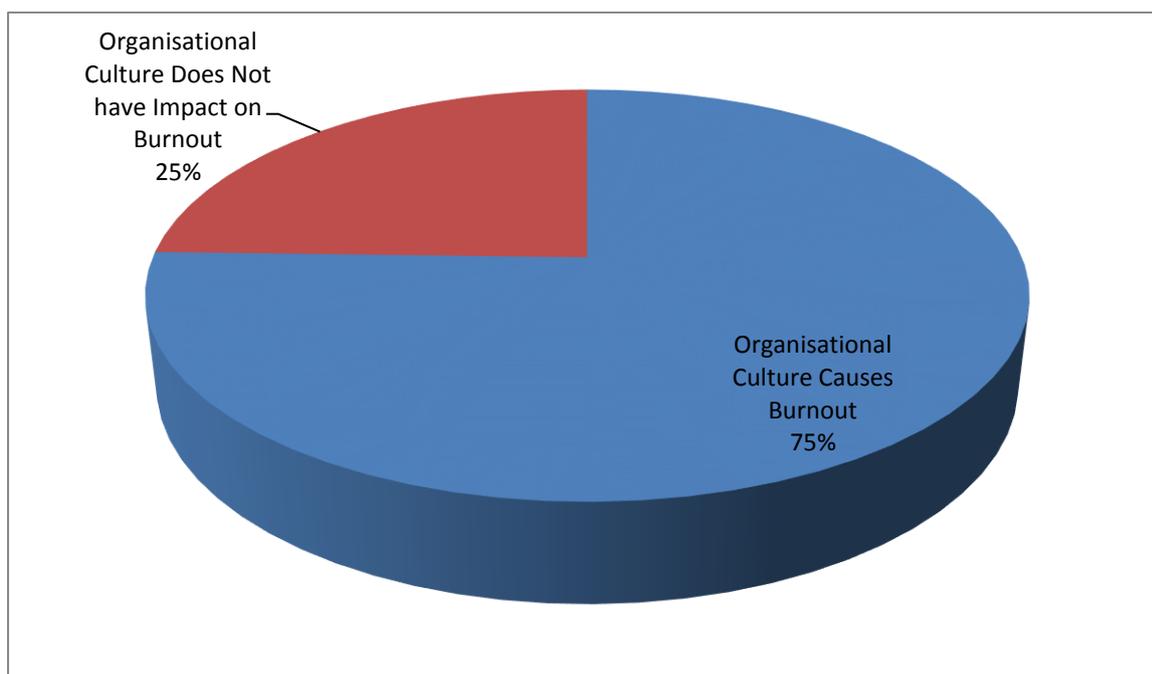
**Table 6.7: Regression analysis of burnout on organisational climate**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R		0.108				
R Square		0.012				
Adjusted R Square		0.009				
Standard Error		13.361				
<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	736.3584	736.3584	1	4.124	P < .05
Residual		62129.53	178.5331	348		0.043
Total		62865.89	914.8915	349		

Referring to Table 6.7, the regression analysis resulted in a correlation of 0.108 ( $R = 0.108$ ) between burnout score and organisational climate score. This value shows that organisational climate influences teacher burnout. The analysis further yielded the R square of 0.012 for organisational climate in relation to burnout. This implies that organisational climate accounted for 1.2 percent of the variance in burnout. Simply, this means that 1.2 percent of the variance (variation) in burnout is explained by organisational climate or is predictable from the variance in organisational climate. The regression analysis yielded the calculated F-value of 4.124. The calculated F-value (4.124) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem ( $df = 1, n - 2$ ), where  $n$  is the number of respondents. In this case,  $df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348)$ ; 1 being degree of freedom for the numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for the denominator. **Note:** since the computed df (348) is greater than the table df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher then employed infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix J to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 4.124 in the F Distribution with  $df = 1$  and  $348 (\infty)$ , the results revealed a significant relationship between burnout score and organisational climate score at the p-value of .05 (level of significance). The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J was 3.84. Since the calculated F-value of 4.124 is greater than the critical F-value of 3.84, it was concluded that organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout was retained while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that organisational climate is not a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected. On the basis of this, it was concluded that organisational climate is a predictor of burnout.

#### **6.4.11 Organisational culture and teacher burnout**

Data in Figure 6.6 show that organisational culture influences teacher burnout. This fact was confirmed by 75% of the respondents.



**Figure 6.6 Impact of organisational culture on teacher burnout**

As shown in Figure 6.6, there are two different views on the issue of organisational culture as a predictor of teacher burnout. 25% of the respondents suggested that organisational culture is not a predictor of burnout. The respondents argued that teachers cannot be influenced by environment such as school culture because they are professionals. On the other hand, 75% of the respondents reported that organisational culture contributes to burnout. The respondents noted that bad organisational culture such as malicious use of rules and regulations contributes to teacher burnout. The respondents noted that some principals do not use school regulations and rules to maintain order but they use rules to punish teachers. Thus, the issue of organisational culture as a predictor of teacher burnout was confirmed by 75% of the respondents.

#### **6.4.12 Research findings on organisational culture and teacher burnout**

In analysing data in relation to organisational culture and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing burnout score on organisational culture score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.8. Multiple regression was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: organisational culture is a predictor of teacher burnout.

H<sub>0</sub>: organisational culture is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

**Table 6.8: Regression analysis of burnout on organisational culture**

<i>Regression Statistics</i>						
R			0.074			
R Square			0.005			
Adjusted R Square			0.003			
Standard Error			13.614			

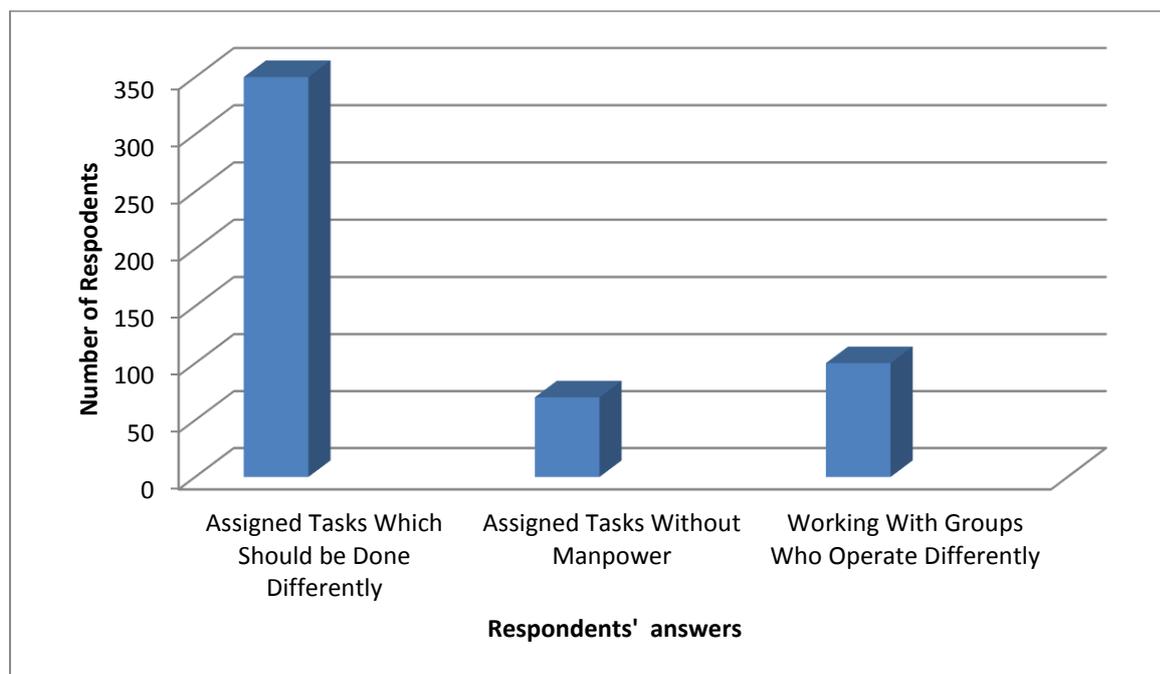
<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
<b>Model</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Mean Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Regression	350	355.648	355.648	1	1.919	P > .05
Residual		64497.212	185.337	348		0.167
Total		64852.86	540.985	349		

As depicted in Table 6.8, the regression analysis resulted in the R of 0.074 between burnout score and organisational culture score. This value shows that organisational culture does not have an impact on teacher burnout. The value shows that a correlation between the two variables is negligible and insignificant. The analysis also yielded the R square of 0.005 for organisational culture in relation to burnout. This shows that organisational culture accounted for 0.5 percent of the variance in burnout. The regression analysis yielded the calculated F-value of 1.919. The calculated F-value (1.919) was employed with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem (df = 1, n - 2), where n is the number of respondents. In this example, df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348); 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. **Note:** since the computed df (348) is greater than the critical df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher then used infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix J

to find the critical value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 1.919 in the distribution with  $df = 1$  and  $348 (\infty)$ , the results revealed an insignificant relationship between burnout score and organisational culture score at the p-value of .05. The critical F-value in the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J was 3.84. Since the calculated F-value of 1.919 is less than the critical F-value of 3.84, it was concluded that organisational culture does not have an impact on teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that organisational culture is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that organisational culture is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. Therefore, on the basis of this, it was concluded that organisational culture does not have influence on teacher burnout. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of the qualitative part of this study. This inconsistency may be attributed to the sample size. The sample size of the qualitative study is 20 while the sample of the quantitative study is 350.

#### 6.4.13 Role conflict and teacher burnout

Data in Figure 6.7 illustrate that role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout. Data in this figure reveal different ways in which role conflict causes burnout.



**Figure 6.7: Impact of role conflict on teacher burnout**

Data in Figure 6.7 illustrate that role conflict contributes to teacher burnout. The respondents indicated three ways in which role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout. 350 respondents reported that teachers in the primary schools in Lesotho are assigned many different tasks which are difficult to be executed. They complained that being assigned both academic tasks and administrative tasks expose teachers to a risk of burnout. The issue is that a primary duty of a teacher is teaching and at least other duties which are related to teaching. But administrative tasks are the responsibilities of the principal. 70 respondents observed that teachers are assigned tasks without manpower to execute them, for example, supervising learners during cleaning of the classrooms and cleaning of the toilets without any help. 100 respondents reiterated that working with different groups who do things differently is stressful. The respondents observed that they work with parents, officers from the Ministry of Education who visit the schools and people who hire the school buildings for the purpose of fund-raising. The issue is that working with different groups of people who operate differently is stressful. Thus, data in Figure 6.7 show that role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout.

#### **6.4.14 Research findings on role conflict and teacher burnout**

In analysing data in relation to role conflict and teacher burnout, multiple regression analysis was carried out by regressing the burnout score on role conflict score. A summary of the results is presented in Table 6.8. Multiple regression was employed to test the hypotheses, namely, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : role conflict is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

**Table 6.9: Regression analysis of burnout on role conflict**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R			0.200			
R Square			0.040			
Adjusted R Square			0.037			
Standard Error			13.376			

<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	2586.410	2586.410	1	14.455	P < .01
Residual		62266.450	178.927	348		0.000
Total		64852.86	2765.337	349		

As depicted in Table 6.9, the regression analysis resulted in the R of 0.200 between burnout score and role conflict score. The value shows that role conflict has an impact on teacher burnout. The analysis also yielded the R square of 0.040 for role conflict in relation to burnout. This shows that role conflict accounted for 4 percent of the variance in burnout. Multiple regression analysis yielded the calculated F-value of 14.455. The calculated F-value (14.455) was employed with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem ( $df = 1, n - 2$ ), where n is the number of respondents. In this example,  $df = (1, 350 - 2 = 1, 348)$ ; 1 being degree of freedom for numerator and 348 being degree of freedom for denominator. For the fact the computed df (348) is greater than the critical/table df (200) which is the highest df in the critical values of the F Distribution, the researcher used infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). The researcher referred to Appendix K to find the critical value in the critical values of the F Distribution. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the F Distribution in Appendix J and locating the calculated F-value of 14.455 in the distribution with  $df = 1$  and  $348 (\infty)$ , the results revealed a significant relationship between burnout score and role conflict score at the p-value of .01. The critical F-value in the critical values of the

F Distribution in Appendix J was 6.63. Since the calculated F-value of 14.455 is bigger than the critical F-value of 6.63, it was concluded that role conflict triggers teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout was retained while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that role conflict is not a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected. On the basis of this, it was concluded that role conflict has influence on teacher burnout.

## 6.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE ANALYSIS OF DATA USING CHI-SQUARE

Data were organised into two categories, namely, yes and no with chi-square testing with an aim of establishing whether the four variables of teacher's age, personality, work experience and type of school have influence on teacher burnout. The following chi-square formula was used to determine whether teacher's age, personality, work experience and type of school have a potential of predicting burnout among teachers:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

For the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in contingency tables where:

$x^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\sum$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in that particular case, the number of cells involved teachers' age, personality, work experience and type of school).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

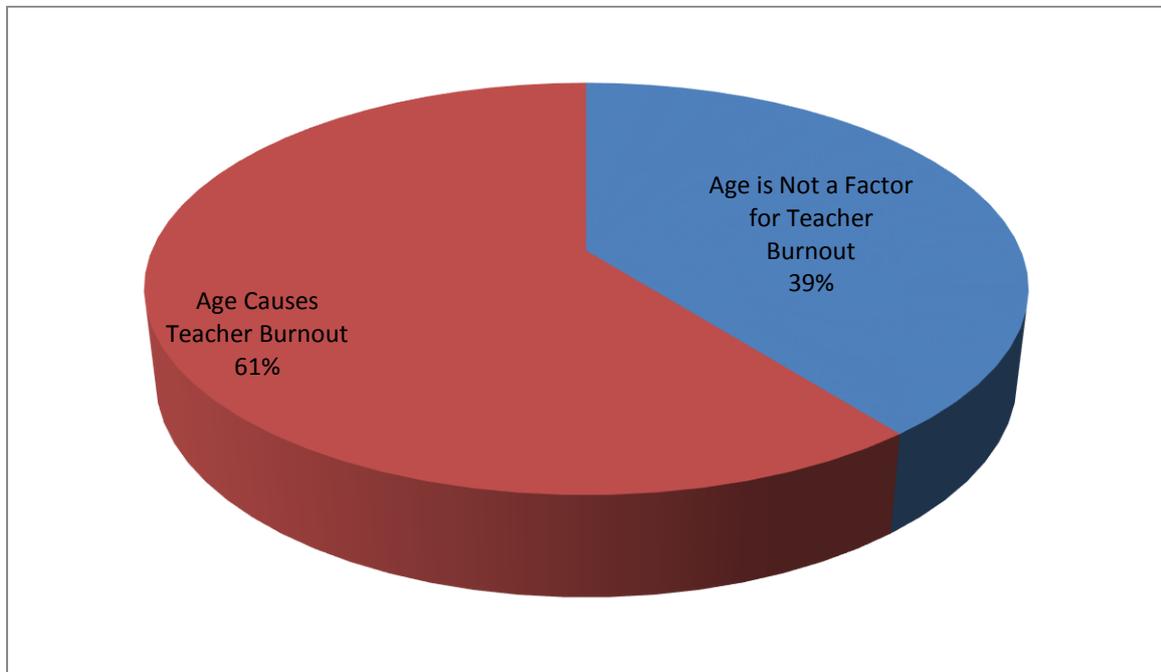
$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

In analysis data using, the chi-square, the researcher followed three steps, for example, organising data into two categories, namely, yes and no, computation of the expected frequencies and computation of the chi-square value or the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ).

### 6.5.1 Age and teacher burnout

Data in Figure 6.8 show that age is a predictor of teacher burnout. This fact was confirmed by the majority of the respondents.



**Figure 6.8: Effects of age on teacher burnout**

As reflected in Figure 6.8, there are two conflicting views on the issue of teachers' age as a predictor of burnout. 39% of the respondents argued that age is not a predictor of burnout. The respondents noted that being young or old does not contribute to being susceptible to burnout because there are many young or old teachers who have not been victims of burnout. On the other hand, 61% of the respondents reported that age contributes to burnout. The majority of the respondents who supported this issue were young teachers. The majority of the respondents confirmed that age has an impact on teacher burnout. The finding that age is a predictor of teacher burnout is in line with the findings of previous researchers (El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137; Tsigilis, Zournatzi & Koustelios, 2011:56). In these studies, younger staff reported higher burnout than older staff.

### 6.5.2 Research findings on age and teacher burnout

The chi-square was used to analyse data with an aim of establishing whether there is a significant relationship between teacher's age and teacher burnout. The researcher was interested in the opinions of the respondents about age and teacher burnout. During the process of data collection, teachers responded to the following question: is age a predictor of teacher burnout? In analysing data, the researcher organised those data into two categories, namely, yes and no. Then, the chi-square was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical (null) hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : age is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : age is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

Data in relation to teacher's age as a predictor of burnout are presented in Table 6:10. Thus, for the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in a contingency table. Those data are the results of the question which states: is age a predictor of teacher burnout?

**Table 6.10: Contingency table of age**

Respondents	Yes	No	Totals
Females	152	105	257
Males	60	33	93
Totals	212	138	350

The chi-square was employed to analyse data in Table 6:10, that is, the chi-square test was used to calculate the chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ). The following chi-square formula was used to determine whether teacher's age has a potential of predicting burnout among teachers:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

Where

$x^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\Sigma$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in that particular case, the number of cells involved teachers' age scores).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

### Computation of expected frequencies ( $f_e$ )

For the researcher to be able to compute the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) or the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value, the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) for each of the four (4) cells as illustrated in Table 6.10, were computed. The following formula was then used to compute the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) of data in Table 6.10:

$$f_e = \frac{(\Sigma f \text{ column})(\Sigma f \text{ row})}{\text{Grand total}}$$

Where

$f_e$  was expected frequency

( $\Sigma f$  column) sum of scores in the column categories

( $\Sigma f$  row) sum of scores in the row categories

Grand total was sum of all totals in the categories

$$\frac{(212)(257)}{350} = 156$$

$$\frac{(138)(257)}{350} = 97$$

$$\frac{(212)(93)}{350} = 56$$

$$\frac{(138)(93)}{350} = 37$$

A summary of the results of chi-square analysis pertaining to teachers' age as a predictor of teacher burnout is presented in Table 6.11. In Table 6.11, 1.48 is a chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ). It is a value which was calculated by using the data collected from 350 respondents. It is a calculated/computed chi-square value. This value was compared with the table/critical chi-square value (3.84) in Appendix K, with the aim of establishing whether age has an impact on teacher burnout.

**Note:** in quantitative studies, when testing the hypotheses, the following procedure is observed:

- When the computed/calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value equals or exceeds the critical/table ( $x^2$ ) value, the null hypothesis is rejected (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:209).
- When the computed/calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value is less than the critical/table value, the research hypothesis is rejected (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:209).

**Table 6.11: Computation of  $x^2$  value (chi-square statistic)**

$f_o$	$f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$
152	156	-4	16	0.103
105	97	8	64	0.659
60	56	4	16	0.286
33	37	-4	16	0.432
Calculated $x^2$ value				1.48

**Note:** Table 6:11 is a simplified version of this formula:  $x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$

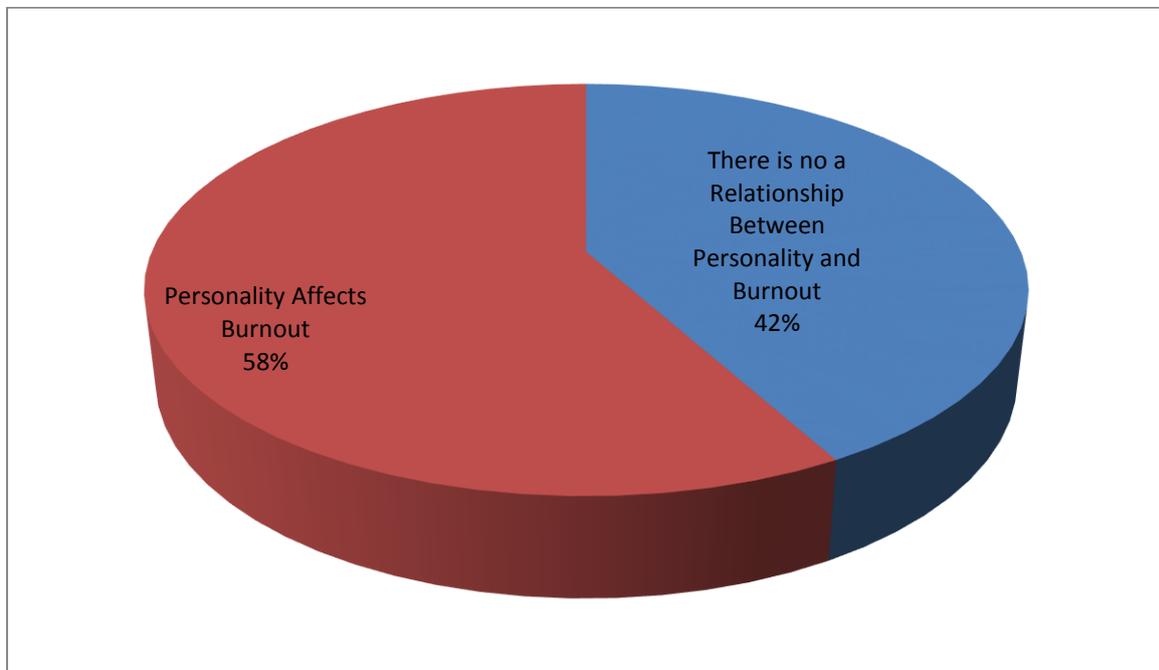
Referring to Table 6.11, the chi-square test (the chi-square analysis) yielded the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 1.48. The chi-square statistic (1.48) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem where  $df = (\text{rows} - 1) (\text{columns} - 1)$ , rows and columns being the number of categories in the frequency distribution, readers are referred to Table 6.10; in this case,  $df = (2-1)(2-1) = 1$ . The researcher employed .05 as the level of significance (alpha). The researcher referred to Appendix L to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the chi-square table with the aim of determining the level of significance of the results of this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the Chi-square table in Appendix K and locating the calculated  $x^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 1.48 in the table with  $df = 1$ , the results were not significant at the p-value of .05. The critical/table  $x^2$  value in the critical values of the Chi-square table in Appendix K,

was 3.84. Since the calculated  $\chi^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) of 1.48 is less than the critical/table  $\chi^2$  value of 3.84, it was concluded that age is not a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that age is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected and the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that age is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. This means that teachers' age does not have an impact on teacher burnout.

**Note:** in Appendix K,  $df = 1$ , .01 (level of significance) and Chi-square value of 3.84 (table/critical chi-square) are encircled for ease of reference. That is, these values are encircled for the purpose of helping readers to read the table values of the chi-square.

### 6.5.3 Personality and teacher burnout

There is a controversy about whether or not personality is a predictor of burnout. Some people believe that personality has an influence on burnout while some individuals do not support this issue. However, data in Figure 6.9 indicate that personality has an impact on burnout.



**Figure 6.9: Impact of personality on teacher burnout**

42% of the respondents reported that personality is not one of the causes of burnout. The respondents argued that burnout is caused by problems which an individual encounters in his/her everyday life situation and not by his/her personality. On the other hand, 58% of the respondents reiterated that personality is a factor for burnout. The respondents suggested that introverts are susceptible to burnout because they do not share their problems with other people.

#### 6.5.4 Research findings on personality and teacher burnout

The Chi-square was used to analyse data with the aim of establishing whether there is a significant relationship between a teacher’s personality and teacher burnout. The researcher was interested in the opinions of the respondents about personality and teacher burnout. During the process of data collection, respondents responded to the following question: is personality a predictor of teacher burnout? In analysing data, the researcher organised those data into two categories, namely, yes and no. Then, the chi-square was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical (null) hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : personality is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : personality is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

Data in relation to teacher’s personality as a predictor of burnout are presented in Table 6:12. Thus, for the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in a contingency table. Those data are the results of the question which states: is personality a predictor of teacher burnout?

**Table 6.12: Contingency table of personality**

Respondents	Yes	No	Totals
Females	150	107	257
Males	53	40	93
Totals	203	147	350 Grand Total

The chi-square was employed to analyse data in Table 6:12, that is, the chi-square test was used to calculate the chi-square statistics ( $x^2$ ). The following chi-square formula was used to determine whether the teachers' personality has a potential of predicting burnout among teachers:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

Where

$x^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\sum$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in that particular case, the number of cells involved teachers' personality score).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

### Computation of expected frequencies ( $f_e$ )

For the researcher to be able to compute the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) or the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value, the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) for each of the four (4) cells as illustrated in Table 6.12, were computed. The following formula was then used to compute the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) of data in Table 6.12:

$$f_e = \frac{(\sum f \text{ column})(\sum f \text{ row})}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$\frac{(203)(257)}{350} = 149$$

$$\frac{(147)(257)}{350} = 108$$

$$\frac{(203)(93)}{350} = 54$$

$$\frac{(147)(93)}{350} = 39$$

**Table 6.13: Computation of  $x^2$  value (chi-square statistic)**

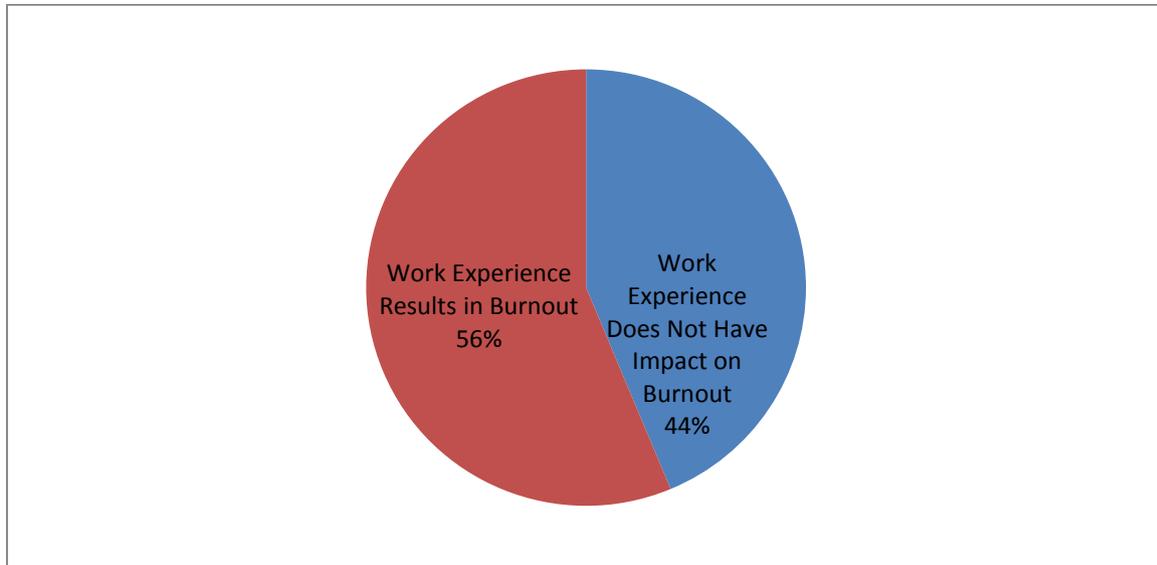
$f_o$	$f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$
150	149	1	1	0.007
107	108	-1	1	0.009
53	54	-1	1	0.019
40	39	1	1	0.026
Calculated $x^2$ value				0.061

**Note:** Table 6:13 is a simplified version of this formula:  $x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$

Referring to Table 6.13, the chi-square test (the chi-square analysis) yielded the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 0.061. The chi-square statistic (0.061) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem where  $df = (\text{rows} - 1) (\text{columns} - 1)$ , rows and columns being the number of categories in the frequency distribution, (readers are referred to Table 6.12). In this case,  $df = (2-1)(2-1) = 1$ . The researcher employed .05 as the level of significance (alpha). The researcher referred to Appendix K to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the chi-square table with the aim of determining the level of significance of the results of this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the chi-square table in Appendix K and locating the calculated  $x^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 0.061 in the table with  $df = 1$ , the results were not significant at the alpha value of .05. The critical/table  $x^2$  value in the critical values of the chi-square table in Appendix K was 3.84. Since the calculated  $x^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 0.061 is less than the critical/table  $x^2$  value of 3.84, it was concluded that personality is not a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that personality is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected and the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that personality is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. This means that personality does not have influence on burnout. This finding contradicts the finding of the qualitative part of this study. This disparity may be attributed to the methods of data analysis used in analysing qualitative and quantitative data. It is not always the case that qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis produce the same results.

### 6.5.5 Work experience and teacher burnout

Data in Figure 6.10 show that work experience influences teacher burnout. This fact was confirmed by 56% of the respondents.



**Figure 6.10: Influence of work experience on teacher burnout**

As reflected in Figure 6.10, 44% of the respondents reported that work experience does not have an impact on teacher burnout. The respondents noted that burnout can be triggered by stressors such as learners' indiscipline and poor management, not by work experience. On the other hand, 56% of the respondents reported that work experience causes burnout. The respondents argued that the burnout rate is high among teachers who have less years of teaching experience because they lack skills of dealing with troublesome learners, parents and other tiresome demands of the teaching profession such as teaching large and many grades.

### 6.5.6 Research findings on work experience and teacher burnout

The chi-square was used to analyse data with an aim of establishing whether there is a significant relationship between teacher's work experience and teacher burnout. The researcher was interested in the opinions of the respondents about work experience and teacher burnout. During the process of data collection, respondents responded to the following question: is work experience a predictor of teacher burnout? In analysing data, the researcher organised those data into two categories, namely, yes and no.

Then, the chi-square was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical (null) hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : work experience is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : work experience is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

Data in relation to teacher's work experience as a predictor of burnout are presented in Table 6:14. Thus, for the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in a contingency table. Those data are the results of the question which states: is work experience a predictor of teacher burnout?

**Table 6.14: Contingency table of work experience**

Respondents	Yes	No	Totals
Females	150	107	257
Males	47	46	93
Totals	197	153	350 Grand Total

The chi-square was employed to analyse data in Table 6:14, that is, the chi-square test was used to calculate the chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ). The following chi-square formula was used to determine whether teachers' work experience has the potential of predicting burnout among teachers:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

Where

$\chi^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\sum$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in that particular case, the number of cells involved teachers' work experience score).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

### Computation of expected frequencies ( $f_e$ )

For the researcher to be able to compute the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) or the calculated Chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value, the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) for each of the four (4) cells as illustrated in Table 6.14 were computed. The following formula was then used to compute the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) of data in Table 6.14:

$$f_e = \frac{(\sum f \text{ column})(\sum f \text{ row})}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$\frac{(197)(257)}{350} = 145$$

$$\frac{(153)(257)}{350} = 112$$

$$\frac{(197)(93)}{350} = 52$$

$$\frac{(153)(93)}{350} = 41$$

**Table 6.15: Computation of  $x^2$  value (chi-square statistic)**

$f_o$	$f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$
150	145	5	25	0.172
107	112	-5	25	0.223
47	52	-5	25	0.481
46	41	5	25	0.609
Calculated $x^2$ value				1.485

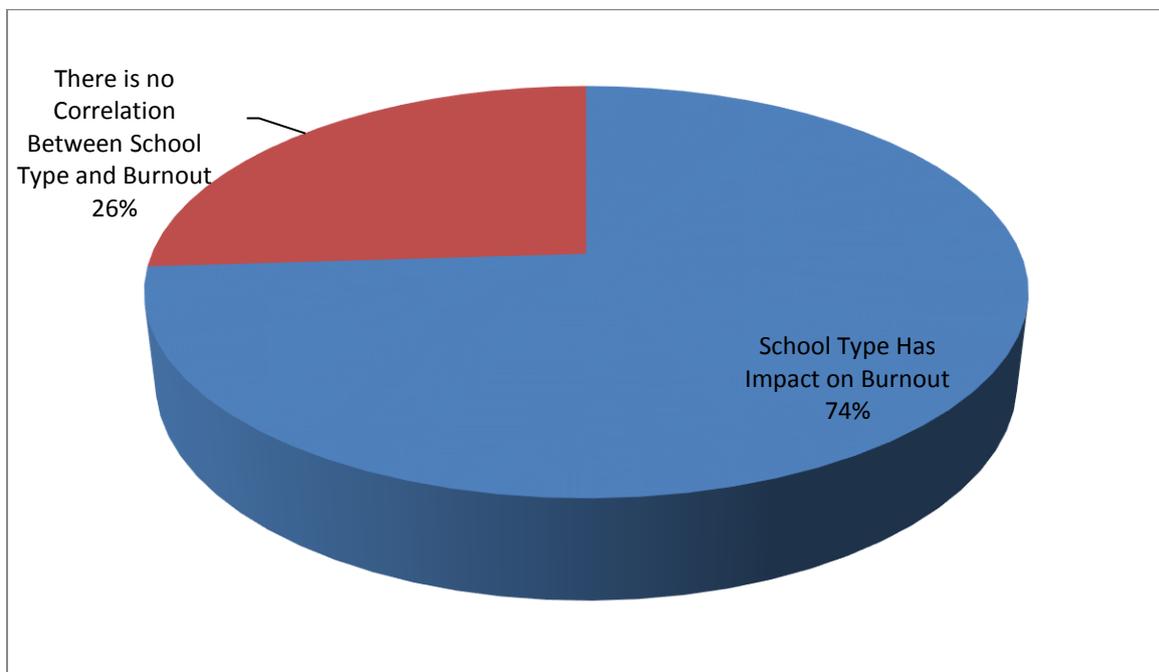
**Note:** Table 6:15 is a simplified version of this formula:  $x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$

Referring to Table 6.15, the chi-square test (the chi-square analysis) yielded the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) of 1.485. The chi-square statistic (1.485) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem where  $df = (\text{rows} - 1)(\text{columns} - 1)$ , rows and columns being the number of categories in the frequency distribution, (readers are referred to Table 6.14). In this case,  $df = (2-1)(2-1) = 1$ . The researcher employed .05 as the level of significance (alpha). The researcher referred to Appendix K to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the chi-square table with the aim of determining the level of significance of the results of this study. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the chi-square table

in Appendix K and locating the calculated  $\chi^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) of 1.485 in the table with  $df = 1$ , the results were not significant at the p-value of .05. The critical/table  $\chi^2$  value in the critical values of the chi-square table in Appendix K was 3.84. Since the calculated  $\chi^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) of 1.485 is less than the critical/table  $\chi^2$  value of 3.84, it was concluded that work experience is not a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that work experience is a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected and the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that work experience is not a predictor of teacher burnout was retained. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of the qualitative part of this study. This inconsistency may be attributed to the sample size. The sample size of the qualitative study is 20 while the sample of the quantitative study is 350.

### 6.5.7 Type of school and teacher burnout

Data in Figure 6.11 illustrate that type of school is one of the stressors which results in teacher burnout. This fact was confirmed by 74% of the respondents.



**Figure 6.11: Impact of type of school on teacher burnout**

As depicted in Figure 6.11, 26% of the respondents reported that school type does not have an influence on teacher burnout. The respondents noted that there are many

teachers who are working in hard schools (poor schools) but who had never complained about a problem of burnout. On the other hand, 74% of the respondents observed that type of school is a predictor of teacher burnout. The respondents argued that teachers who are working in an unsafe work environment such as dilapidated offices and classrooms are exposed to a risk of burnout.

### 6.5.8 Research findings on type of school and teacher burnout

The chi-square was used to analyse data with an aim of establishing whether there is a significant relationship between type of school and teacher burnout. That is, the chi-square was used to analysis data with a purpose of determining whether the type of school where teachers are working has a significant influence on teachers' burnout level. The researcher, therefore, was interested in the opinions of the respondents about school type and teacher burnout. During the process of data collection, respondents responded to the following question: is type of school a predictor of teacher burnout? In analysing data, the researcher organised those data into two categories, namely, yes and no. Then, the chi-square was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : school type is a predictor of teacher burnout.

$H_0$ : school type is not a predictor of teacher burnout.

Data in relation to school type as a predictor of teacher burnout are presented in Table 6:16. Thus, for the purpose of data analysis using the chi-square, the researcher presented data in a contingency table. Those data are the results of the question which states: is school type a predictor of teacher burnout?

**Table 6.16: Contingency table of school type**

Respondents	Yes	No	Totals
Females	203	54	257
Males	56	37	93
Totals	259	91	350 Grand Total

The chi-square was employed to analyse data in Table 6:16, that is, the chi-square test was used to calculate the Chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ). The following Chi-square formula was used to determine whether type of school where a teacher is working has the potential of predicting burnout among teachers:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

Where

$x^2$  was the chi-square statistic.

$\sum$  was the sum of all cells in the problem (in that particular case, the number of cells involved school type score).

$n$  was the number of total observations in the columns.

$f_o$  was the proportion of observed frequencies in the cells.

$f_e$  was the proportion of expected frequencies in the rows.

### Computation of expected frequencies ( $f_e$ )

For the researcher to be able to compute the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ ) or the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value, the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) for each of the four (4) cells as illustrated in Table 6.16, were computed. The following formula was then used to compute the expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) of data in Table 6.16:

$$f_e = \frac{(\sum f \text{ column})(\sum f \text{ row})}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$\frac{(259)(257)}{350} = 190$$

$$\frac{(259)(93)}{350} = 69$$

$$\frac{(91)(257)}{350} = 67$$

$$\frac{(91)(93)}{350} = 24$$

**Table 6.17: Computation of  $x^2$  value (chi-square statistic)**

$f_o$	$f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$
203	190	13	169	0.889
54	67	13	169	2.522
56	69	13	169	2.449
37	24	13	169	7.042
Calculated $x^2$ value				12.902

**Note:** Table 6:17 is a simplified version of this formula:  $x^2 = \sum \frac{n(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$

Referring to Table 6.17, the chi-square test (the chi-square analysis) yielded the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ )) of 12.902. The chi-square statistic (12.902) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem where  $df = (\text{rows} - 1) (\text{columns} - 1)$ , rows and columns being the number of categories in the frequency distribution, readers are referred to Table 6.16; in this case,  $df = (2-1)(2-1) = 1$ . The researcher employed .05 as the level of significance (alpha). The researcher referred to Appendix K to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the chi-square table with the aim of determining the level of significance of the results of this study. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the chi-square table in Appendix K and locating the calculated chi-square ( $x^2$ ) value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ )) of 12.902 in the table with  $df = 1$ , the results were significant at the p-value of .05. The critical/table  $x^2$  value in the critical values of the chi-square table in Appendix K was 3.84. Since the calculated  $x^2$  value (the chi-square statistic ( $x^2$ )) of 12.902 exceeds the critical/table  $x^2$  value of 3.84, it was concluded that type of school where teachers are working is a predictor of teacher burnout. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that school type is a predictor of teacher burnout was retained and the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that school type is not a predictor of teacher burnout was rejected. This means that type of school has an influence on teacher burnout.

## 6.6 RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE ANALYSIS OF DATA USING T-TEST

The mean burnout score of 257 female teachers was compared with the mean burnout score of 93 male teachers. A t-test was employed to determine whether female and

male teachers were affected by burnout in the same way, or whether burnout was higher among female or male teachers. The following t-test formula was used to find out whether a degree of burnout was higher among female or male teachers:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}$$

In this case, analysing data using a t-test, the researcher handled data in which:

t was a t-test statistic.

$\bar{x}_1$  was the mean burnout score of female respondents.

$\bar{x}_2$  was the mean burnout score of male respondents.

$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$  was the standard error of the difference in the mean burnout scores of both female and male respondents.

In analysing data, a t-test was employed to test the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The hypotheses were as follows:

$H_1$ : both male and female teachers are affected by burnout in the same way.

$H_0$ : both male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way.

Data in relation to gender and burnout are presented in Table 6:18. Thus, for the purpose of data analysis using a t-test, the researcher presented data in a contingency table. Those data are the summary of female and male distributions. In Table 6.18,  $\bar{x}_1 = 61$  represents the mean burnout score of female teachers and  $\bar{x}_2 = 62$  represents the mean burnout score of male teacher. This scenario illustrates that burnout is higher among male teachers than among female teachers.  $N_1 = 257$  represents the number of female respondents.  $N_2 = 93$  represents the number of male respondents.  $\sum x_1^2 = 49679$  represents the sum of the variances of female respondents group, which, in this example, refers to the value that describes how the burnout scores in the distribution of the female group are dispersed or spread about the mean.  $\sum x_2^2 = 16039$  represents the sum of the variances of the male respondents group, which in my

example refers to the value that describes how the burnout scores in the distribution of the male group are dispersed about the mean.

**Table 6.18: Contingency table of gender and burnout**

Female group distribution ( $x_1$ )	Male group distribution ( $x_2$ )
$\bar{x}_1 = 61$	$\bar{x}_2 = 62$
$N_1 = 257$	$N_2 = 93$
$\sum x_1^2 = 49679$	$\sum x_2^2 = 16039$

The researcher employed a t-test to analyse the data which are presented in Table 6.18. In data analysis as presented in Table 6.18, the researcher followed three steps, namely, computation of the standard deviation (s or SD), computation of the standard error of the difference in means ( $s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$ ) and computation of a t-test statistic (t).

### Computation of the standard deviation (s)

The following formula was used to compute the standard deviation (s):

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x_1^2 + \sum x_2^2}{df_1 + df_2}}$$

Where

s was the standard deviation.

$\sum x_1^2$  was the sum of the variances of female respondents group.

$\sum x_2^2$  was the sum of the variances of male respondents group.

$df_1$  was the degree of freedom for female respondents.

$df_2$  was the degree of freedom for male respondents.

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{49679 + 16039}{256 + 92}}$$

$$s = \sqrt{188.84}$$

$$s = 13.74$$

### Computation of the standard error of the difference in means ( $s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$ )

The following formula was used to compute the standard error of the difference in means ( $s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$ ):

$$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = s \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}$$

Where

$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$  was the standard error of the difference in means of burnout scores of female and male respondents.

s was the standard deviation.

$n_1$  was the number of female respondents.

$n_2$  was the number of male respondents

$$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = 13.74 \sqrt{\frac{1}{257} + \frac{1}{93}}$$

$$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = 13.74 \sqrt{\frac{350}{23901}}$$

$$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = 13.74 (0.12)$$

$$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = 1.65$$

### Computation of a t-test statistic (t)

The following formula was used to compute a t-test statistic (t):

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}$$

In this case, analysing data using a t-test, the researcher handled data in which:

t was a t-test statistic.

$\bar{x}_1$  was the mean burnout score of female respondents.

$\bar{x}_2$  was the mean burnout score of male respondents.

$s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$  was the standard error of the difference in the mean burnout scores of both female and male respondents.

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}$$

$$t = \frac{61 - 62}{1.65}$$

$$t = \frac{1}{1.65}$$

$$t = 0.61$$

A t-test (a t-test analysis results) yielded the calculated t value (a t-test statistic) of 0.61. A t-test statistic (0.61) was then used with the degree of freedom (df) in the research problem where  $df = (n_1 + n_2 - 2)$ ,  $n_1$  being the number of respondents in the frequency distribution of female group and  $n_2$  being the number of respondents in the frequency distribution of male group, (readers are referred to Table 6.18). In this case,  $df = 257 + 93 - 2 = 348$ . Since df (348) is greater than df (120) which is the highest value in the critical values of the t-test, the researcher then employed infinity ( $\infty$ ) as the degree of freedom (df). For a two-tailed t-test, the researcher employed .05 as the level of significance (alpha). The researcher referred to Appendix L to find the critical/table value in the critical values of the t-test table with the aim of determining the level of significance of the results of this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho. Therefore, by referring to the critical values of the t-test table in Appendix L and locating the calculated t value (a t-test statistic) of 0.61 in the table with  $df = 348$  ( $\infty$ ), because  $df = 348$  is greater than  $df = 120$  which is the highest value in the critical values of the t-test table. The results were not significant at the alpha value of .05. The critical/table t value in the critical values of the t-test table in Appendix L is 1.960. Since the calculated t value (the t-test statistic) of 0.61 is less than the critical/table t value of 1.960, it was concluded that male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that both male and female teachers

are affected by burnout in the same way was rejected and the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that both male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way was retained. Thus, in the final analysis, it was concluded that burnout is higher among male teachers than among female teachers. This was evident when the mean burnout scores of the two groups were compared. The mean burnout score of female teachers (mean = 61) was less than the mean burnout score of male teachers (mean = 62). For this particular case, readers are referred to Table 6.18.

**Note:** in Appendix M,  $df = 348 (\infty)$ , .05 (level of significance) and  $t$  test value of 1.960 (table/critical  $t$  test) are encircled for ease of reference. That is, these values are encircled for a purpose of helping readers to read the table values of the  $t$  test.

## 6.7 LOCATING CRITICAL VALUES IN THE DISTRIBUTION TABLES

Reading of critical values in the distribution tables of F Distribution, Chi-square Distribution and  $t$  Distribution is outlined in paragraphs 6.7.1, 6.7.2 and 6.7.3.

### 6.7.1 Locating critical values in the F Distribution

Referring to Appendix J, the reader will notice the following features of F Distribution: along the vertical X column are the F ratios (levels of significance), namely, .10, .05 and .01 which relate to confidence intervals percentages. For example, this means that either rejecting the research hypothesis or statistical hypothesis at .01 level, the result/finding is 99% correct. Across the top of the tables, are the degrees of freedom for the numerator ( $df$  for numerator) which range from 1 to 12 which relate to groups or number of samples under investigation. Along the vertical axis are the degrees of freedom for the denominator ( $df$  for the denominator) which range from 1 to infinity ( $\infty$ ) which relate to number of observations (samples) under investigation. In the body of the tables are the table/critical values of the F Distribution which range from 39.9 to 2.18. **Note:** at this point, it is important to demonstrate a procedure of locating critical values in the F Distribution. For example, locating (looking up for) the following finding in the F table:  $F(1, 348 \text{ or } (\infty) = 9.453417$  (result of F test),  $P < .01$ : a researcher or reader draws a line from 1 ( $df$  for numerator) downwards (vertically) through that

column. Another line is drawn from 348 or ( $\infty$ ) (df for denominator) horizontally across that row, going through .01 level of significance. Thus, the critical F-value is located where the vertical and horizontal lines intersect. In this case, the two lines intersect at 6.63 (table/critical F-value).

$F = f$  test (1, 348 or ( $\infty$ )) = 9.453417,  $P < .01$  implies that the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected since the calculated F-value of 9.453417 is greater than the critical F-value of 6.63. For example, referring to paragraph 6.4.2, it is concluded that the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout is retained while the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that work overload is not a predictor of teacher burnout is rejected.

### 6.7.2 Locating critical values in the chi-square distribution

Referring to Appendix K, the reader will notice the following features of the chi-square table: Along the vertical axis (in the column of df), are the degrees of freedom which range from 1 to 30. These values represent number of observations (samples) under study. Across the top of the table, are the levels of significance, namely, .05 and .01 which relate to confidence intervals percentages. For example, this means that either rejecting the research hypothesis or statistical hypothesis at .05 level, the result/finding is 95% correct. In the body of the table, are the table/critical values of the chi-square which range from 3.84 to 50.89. **Note:** at this point, it is important to demonstrate a procedure of locating critical values in the Chi-square table. For example, locating the following finding in the chi-square table:  $\chi^2$  (df =1) = 1.48 (result of chi-square test),  $P < .05$  (level of significance): a researcher or reader draws a line from .05 (level of significance) downwards (vertically) through that column. Another line is drawn from 1 (df) horizontally across that row. Thus, the critical chi-square value is located where the vertical and horizontal lines intersect. In this case, the two lines intersect at 3.84 (table/critical chi-square value).

$\chi^2$  (df =1) = 1.48 (result of chi-square test),  $P < .05$  (level of significance) implies that the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected since the calculated chi-square value of 1.48 is less than the critical chi-square value of 3.84. For example, referring to paragraph 6.5.2, it is concluded that the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that age is a

predictor of teacher burnout is rejected and the statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that age is not a predictor of teacher burnout is retained. This means that teachers' age does not have an impact on teacher burnout.

### 6.7.3 Locating critical values in the t distribution

Referring to Appendix L, the reader will notice the following features of the t table: This table has two-tailed test level of significance and one-tailed test level of significance. Along the vertical axis (in the column of df) are the degrees of freedom which range from 1 to 120, these values represent number of observations (samples) under investigation. Across the top of the table are the levels of significance, namely, .05 and .01, which relate to confidence intervals percentages. For example, this means that either rejecting the research hypothesis or statistical hypothesis at .05 level, the result/finding is 95% correct. In the body of the table, are the table/critical values of the t test. **Note:** at this point, it is important to demonstrate a procedure of locating critical values in the t table. For example, locating the following finding in the t table:  $t = t$  test (348 or  $(\infty)$  (df) = 0.61 (result of t test),  $P > .05$  (level of significance): a researcher or reader draws a line from .05 (level of significance) downwards (vertically) through that column. Another line is drawn from 348 or  $(\infty)$  (df) horizontally across that row. Thus, the t value is located where the vertical and horizontal lines intersect. In this case, the two lines intersect at 1.960 (table/critical t value).

$t = t$  test (348 or  $(\infty)$  (df) = 0.61 (result of t test),  $P > .05$  (level of significance) implies that the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected since the calculated t value of 0.61 is less than the critical t value of 1.960. For example, referring to paragraph 6.6, it is concluded that the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that both male and female teachers are affected by burnout in the same way was rejected and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that both male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way was retained. Thus, it is concluded that male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same way because burnout is higher among male teachers than among female teachers.

## 6.8 SUMMARY

The findings of this study illustrate that primary school teachers in Lesotho are exposed to the three dimensions of burnout, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment. The respondents' emotional exhaustion scores at the time when data were collected ranged from 1 to 47 which implies that the burnout rate among teachers as it relates to emotional exhaustion was 40%. The respondents' depersonalisation scores at the time when data were collected ranged from 1 to 25 which implies that the burnout rate among teachers as it relates to depersonalisation was 20%. Finally, the respondents' reduced personal accomplishment scores at the time when data were collected ranged from 3 to 51 which implies that the burnout rate among teachers as it relates to reduced personal accomplishment was 40%.

Multiple regression analysis was carried out to test a multiple research hypothesis relating to variables such as teacher's work overload, lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity, organisational climate, organisational culture and role conflict as predictors of burnout among teachers. The analysis illustrated that work overload, organisational climate and role conflict are predictors of teacher burnout while, on the other hand, the analysis indicated that lack of organisational commitment, lack of staff development, role ambiguity and organisational culture do not have an impact on teacher burnout.

The chi-square analysis was carried to test a multiple research hypothesis relating to variables such as teacher's age, personality, work experience and type of school as predictors of burnout among teachers. The chi-square test indicated that type of school is a predictor of teacher burnout while the test revealed that age, personality and work experience do not have an influence on teacher burnout.

The t-test was employed to test the hypothesis relating to male and female teachers as affected by burnout in the same way. The results showed that male and female teachers are not affected by burnout in the same manner because the burnout rate was higher among male teachers.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **A CRITICAL COMBINING OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

With regard to the research approach in this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout, the researcher adapted a mixed-methods research design consisting of qualitative and quantitative research representations. The focus of the qualitative part of the study was on the analysis of qualitative data while the quantitative part of the study focused on the analysis of quantitative data. Thus, the focus of this chapter is on a critical combining of qualitative and quantitative research findings. The main aim is to discuss the findings of both qualitative and quantitative research findings. The population for the study was 600 people. As indicated in paragraphs 5.3 and 6.2, the samples for the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study were comprised of 20 and 350 teachers respectively. For the qualitative part of the study, quota sampling was employed to draw the sample of 20 participants from the population. For the quantitative part of the study, stratified random sampling was used to select the sample of 350 respondents from the population. The reasons for using quota sampling and stratified random sampling in selecting the sample are stated in paragraphs 1.6.2 and 4.4. Qualitative data were analysed on the basis of the research questions. The inductive approach was used to analyse qualitatively collected data. This approach involves organising data into themes and identifying patterns in order to interpret meaning and construct relevant answers to postulated research questions (Creswell, 2012:238). Quantitative data were analysed on the basis of the research hypotheses. Statistical data analysis methods of multiple regression, chi-square and t-test were used to analyse quantitatively collected data.

#### **7.2 VARIABLES PREDICTING BURNOUT AMONG TEACHERS**

The results of both qualitative and quantitative parts of the study revealed a number of stressors which predict burnout among primary school teachers in Lesotho. These variables are classified into groups of factors, namely, factors relating to the work, lack

of teacher development, demographic settings, organisational culture, organisational climate, role ambiguity and role conflict.

### **7.2.1 Work overload and teacher burnout**

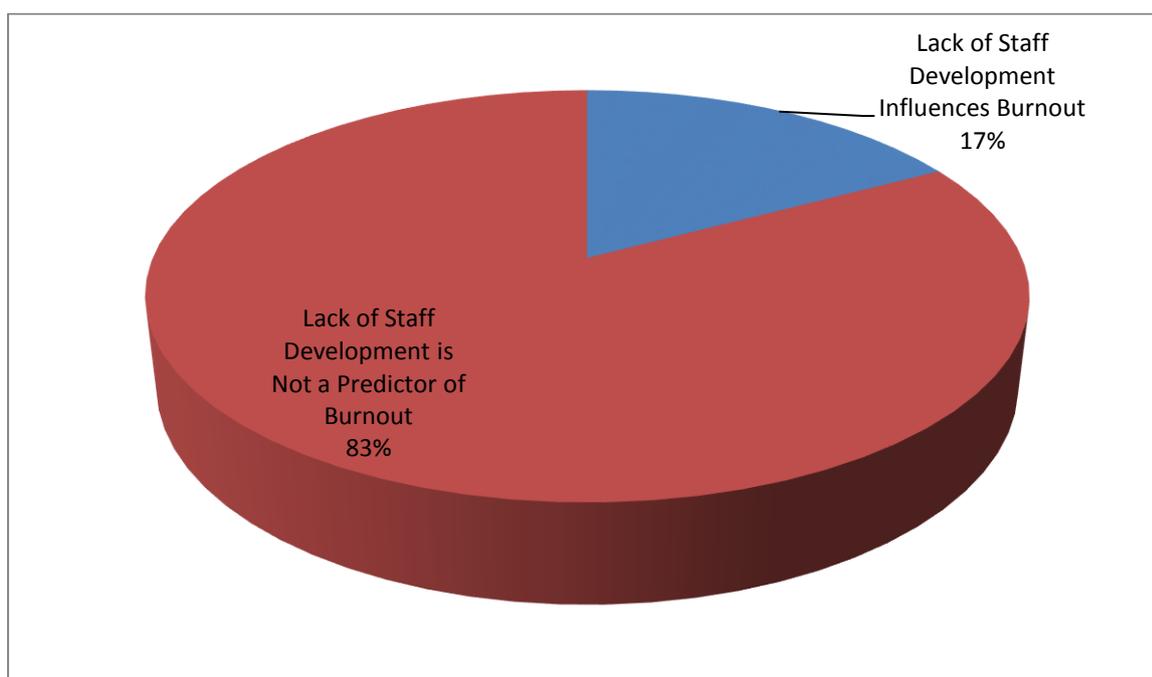
The results of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study revealed that work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout. With regard to the findings of the qualitative part of the study, work overload as a predictor of teacher burnout relates to teaching many grades, teaching many subjects, teaching many learners and long hours of teaching. For example, P16 reported that in his school there are seven grades which are taught by only three teachers. P16 further indicated that, apart from teaching many grades, he also teaches 223 learners. P2 suggested that she teaches five grades which is a heavy load. On the other hand, with regard to the findings of the quantitative part of the study, work overload as a predictor of teacher burnout relates to being assigned some tasks without adequate resources to execute such tasks, performing tasks which are not related to the job descriptions of teachers and being burdened with teaching many grades. In terms of a relationship between work overload and burnout, regression analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of ( $R=0.162$ ) and a percentage of ( $R\text{ square}=0.026$ ). This scenario shows that work overload influences teacher burnout and that work overload accounted for 2.6% of the variance in burnout.

The finding that work overload is a predictor of teacher burnout is in line with the findings of previous researchers (Amino, 2012:341; Koenig, 2014:1; El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:135) all of whom found that work overload has an impact on teacher burnout. For example, in illustrating this point Amino (2012:341) reiterates that teachers are exposed to the dangers of burnout because they are overloaded with work and have long working hours as their work does not end with statutory teaching hours but extends to preparation of lessons, marking of assignments, tests and examinations. Long hours of teaching put teachers under pressure, which is a factor resulting in burnout. On the same issue, El Shikieri and Musa (2012:135) show different ways in which work overload contributes to teacher burnout which include teacher-learner ratio, teaching many grades and different other tasks which are being added to the teachers' workday. Many of these tasks are administrative in nature,

namely, planning the activities of the schools, fund-raising, developing strategic development plans in the schools and attending the staff meetings.

### 7.2.2 Lack of staff development and teacher burnout

The results of the qualitative part of this study indicated that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout. Data in relation to this point are presented in Figure 7.1.



**Figure 7.1: Impact of lack of staff development on burnout**

Referring to Figure 7.1, 83% of the respondents asserted that lack of staff development does not have an influence on teacher burnout. The respondents argued that what is more important to a teacher pertain to job satisfaction and a reasonable salary, not lack of development opportunities.

The finding that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout refutes the findings of the previous researchers (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013:5; Van der Heijden, Van Vuuren, Kooij and de Lange, 2015:23). All these studies showed that there is a direct relationship between lack of staff development and teacher burnout. For example, Simbula et al. (2012:729) note that a continuous lack of career

development opportunities does not only affect the school system negatively but also exposes teachers to the risk of burnout. On this basis, lack of staff development leads to burnout while personnel development is the best strategy for preventing burnout (Amino, 2012:342). Thus, staff development is the best weapon for tackling burnout. For example, personnel development creates a sense of accomplishment and a more fully developed professional identity for teachers which alleviates burnout (Amino, 2012:342). Personnel development provides support, motivation and strength that enable the teachers to identify themselves with the culture of teaching (Amino, 2012:342). Teacher development increases efficiency and creates promotion opportunities which results in job satisfaction (Amino, 2012:342). Van der Heijden et al. (2015:23) also view staff development as a solution to the challenges posed by burnout, dynamic labour market, increased global competition and technological innovations.

The finding that lack of personnel development is not a predictor of burnout is further supported by the regression analysis finding as presented in Table 7.1. In the final analysis, the researcher concludes that lack of staff development does not have an influence on burnout. Three valid reasons are put forth in this regard, namely, on the basis of the results of regression analysis as presented in Table 7.1, retaining the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout implies 95% of chances of being correct, a correlation coefficient of ( $R= 0.070$ ) between burnout score and lack of staff development score shows that the relationship between the two variables is not only very low but it is also insignificant. Thus, the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which stipulates that lack of staff development is a predictor of teacher burnout is rejected. Furthermore, the view that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout is supported by the majority of the teachers. **Note:** readers are referred to paragraph 6.4.2 for a reminder about an interpretation of a correlation coefficient ( $R$ ) and a condition of rejecting either a research hypothesis or a statistical hypothesis.

**Table 7.1: Regression analysis of burnout on lack of staff development**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>						
R			0.070			
R Square			0.005			
Adjusted R Square			0.002			
Standard Error			13.618			

<b>Analysis of Variance</b>						
<b>Model</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Mean Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Regression	350	315.289	315.289	1	1.700	P > .05
Residual		64537.571	185.453	348		0.193
Total		64852.86	500.742	349		

### 7.2.3 Role ambiguity and teacher burnout

The results of the qualitative part of this study revealed that role ambiguity is a stressor which results in teacher burnout. According to Olivares-Faúndez, Gil-Monte, Mena, Jélvez-Wilke and Figueiredo-Ferraz (2014:112), role ambiguity is defined as a condition in which a worker is uncertain about tasks which he/she must execute at the workplace. With regard to the findings of the qualitative part of this study, role ambiguity as a predictor of teacher burnout relates to a state in which a worker does not understand some of the roles which are related to the tasks he or she must execute, an employee's confusion pertaining to the *expectations* of what his or her job responsibilities are, and a situation in which a worker is assigned tasks which are inconsistent with the duties stipulated in his or her job description. In this regard, P3 reported that if workers do not understand their work roles, they spend much time and energy seeking information about those roles and that this situation causes frustration which eventually results in burnout. P6 also noted that in the primary schools there are some duties which are perceived as the duties of the principals but the principals

demand teachers to execute those tasks. This is a problem which causes burnout among teachers.

The finding that role ambiguity is a stressor which causes teacher burnout is congruent with the results of the studies conducted by Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567), Olivares-Faúndez et al. (2014:112), Morgan (2015:7) and Moss (2015:34). For example, in illustrating this point Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567) observe that workers who are in the state of role ambiguity experience a problem of lack of information regarding the tasks and responsibilities which they must execute. Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567), therefore, conclude that a problem of burnout is inevitable under this circumstance. Role ambiguity is a predictor of burnout (Olivares-Faúndez et al., 2014:112). Olivares-Faúndez et al. (2014:112) observe that role ambiguity is a factor of burnout because it contributes to problems such as lack of information on what tasks should be executed and lack of clarity about attaining the goals of an organisation. Burnout takes place when workers are unclear about their duties, responsibilities, actions and expectations of the employers (Moss, 2015:34). Lack of clarity pertaining to employees' duties, responsibilities and actions results in burnout among such workers (Moss, 2015:34). Role ambiguity as relating to lack of performance criteria on how employees' work performance will be judged and how workers are supposed to complete the tasks assigned to them results in burnout (Morgan, 2015:6).

The results of the quantitative part of the study revealed that role ambiguity is not a predictor of teacher burnout. This finding refutes the findings of the qualitative part of the study and those of previous researchers (Utami & Nahartyo, 2012:567; Olivares-Faúndez et al., 2014:112; Morgan, 2015:7 and Moss, 2015:34). The discrepancy between the findings of the quantitative part of this study and the qualitative part of the study can be attributable to the sample, data collection instruments and the methods of data analysis used in the respective methodologies, namely, quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:226). For example, the sample size should not be less than 30 participants or respondents (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:226). The sample for the qualitative part of the study was 20 teachers which is a relatively very small sample.

#### **7.2.4 Organisational climate and teacher burnout**

The results of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study indicated that there is a correlation between organisational climate and teacher burnout. With regard to the findings of the qualitative part of the study, organisational climate as a factor for teacher burnout relates to leadership styles, lack of participatory decision-making, lack of teachers' support, lack of security and burdening of teachers with routine duties. The participants reiterated that the climate of their schools is unfavourable and that this situation exposes them to the risks of burnout. For example, P4 noted that being a teacher in the primary schools in Lesotho is stressful because principals impose policies on teachers. The point is that the management styles of some school principals expose teachers to burnout because these styles limit teachers' professional autonomy. P2 argued that teachers being professionals must have the freedom to exercise their professional autonomy and that failure to be afforded that professional right results in a problem of burnout. In particular, P2 pin-pointed a problem of some principals who dictate the teaching methods which teachers must use when they teach. According to P2 this is a bad manage style which triggers teacher burnout. With regard to failure to involve teachers in the decision-making processes, P8 complained that her school principal forces teachers to teach the same grade, for example, teaching a lower grade for many years without providing teachers with the opportunity to rotate and teach other grades. According to P8, teaching the same grade every year is a boring routine which results in burnout. With reference to lack of support as a dimension of organisational climate which leads to burnout, P7 noted that the principal in her school does not support teachers with finance when they execute some of the duties assigned them. For example, P7 observed that the principal requests teachers to attend workshops without giving them some money for transport. The other issue which was considered as a dimension of organisational climate which causes teacher burnout was lack of security for teachers. P17 stated that his principal does not protect teachers from violent parents and members of the community. The other dimension of organisational climate which was considered as a burnout stressor was the problem of burdening teachers with routine duties. Although P1 was aware that attending staff meetings is one of the duties of every teacher, she complained that in her school there is a series of unplanned staff meetings which interfere with teaching. She argued that unplanned and lengthy staff meetings cause burnout.

With reference to the findings of the quantitative part of the study, organisational climate as a cause of teacher burnout relates to unsupportive school work environment. 80% of the respondents postulated that bad work environment, in the form of lack of collaboration with colleagues, results in teacher burnout since it contributes to a feeling of isolation and loneliness among the teachers. In terms of a correlation between organisational climate and burnout, regression analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of ( $R = 0.108$ ) and a percentage of ( $R \text{ square} = 0.012$ ). This situation shows that organisational climate has an impact on teacher burnout and that organisational climate accounted for 1.2% of the variance in burnout.

The finding that organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout confirms the findings of previous researchers (Babu & Kumari, 2013:554 ;Bai, 2014:602; Pan & Wu, 2015:1032; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:9). In illustrating the fact that organisational climate influences burnout, Babu and Kumari (2013:554) postulate that a friendly school climate in the form of responsible school principals reduces the problem of burnout syndrome among teachers while an unfavourable climate promotes burnout. This point is also supported by Bai (2014:600). A conducive climate is effective in solving teachers' problems in the school setting and decreases teacher burnout while an irrational climate increases teacher burnout (Bai, 2014:600). Pan and Wu (2015:1032) also observe that there is a relationship between organisational climate and teacher burnout. A harmonious school climate is a crucial factor in reducing burnout syndrome among teachers (Pan & Wu, 2015:1036). Building a conducive organisational climate promotes teachers' healthy mental development and efficiency (Pan & Wu, 2015:1036). Sahni and Deswell (2015:8) support an issue that organisational climate is a predictor of teacher burnout. Reasonably, when teachers perceive organisational climate of their schools to be favourable, they experience less burnout in comparison to those who perceive organisational climate unfavourable to them (Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8). A friendly school climate is an important factor in reducing burnout syndrome since it provides a work environment in which teachers feel satisfied and safe (Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8). It is, therefore, imperative that principals and teachers should promote a positive organisational climate in their schools (Sahni & Deswal, 2015:8).

### **7.2.5 Organisational culture and teacher burnout**

The findings of the qualitative part of this study revealed that organisational culture is a predictor of burnout among teachers. According to Ipek, Aytac and Gok (2015:9), organisational culture is defined as a set of philosophies, ideologies, attitudes and expectations which hold the organisation together. For example, some organisations have ideological cultures which advocate decentralisation of power while others advocate centralisation of powers. With regard to the findings of the qualitative part of the study, organisational culture as one of the causes of burnout relates to lack of collegiality, lack of social support and lack of work ethics. The participants postulated that the culture of their schools is unfavourable and that this state of affairs exposes them to a danger of burnout. With regard to lack of collegiality as a burnout stressor, P5 reported that the interpersonal relations among teachers are not good as there are many incidents of stressful and destructive conflicts caused by troublesome teachers which expose teachers to high risks of burnout. P20 also confirmed that lack of professional collegiality is not only a threat to the well-being of teachers but it also hampers teachers' work operations in the schools. P15 also asserted that a bad school culture in the form of lack of collegiality results in professional burnout and teachers' lack of dedication to their work. In support of the same point that organisational culture has an impact on teacher burnout, P15 observed that lack of social support as a dimension of organisational culture is a product of incohesive and weak networking amongst teachers leading to teacher burnout. P15 noted that bad interpersonal relations among staff are characterised by lack of cooperation and trustworthiness, the net result of which is teacher burnout. With reference to lack of work ethics as a dimension of organisational culture which leads to burnout, P19 stated that some teachers are lazy and negligent, and need close supervision from the school principals. According to P19, this situation exposes dedicated teachers to a risk of burnout.

The finding that organisational culture is a stressor which leads to teacher burnout is consistent with the results of the studies conducted by Montgomery, Panagopoulou, Kehoe and Valkanos (2011:109), Zamini, Zamini and Barzegary (2011:1965), Huhtala (2013:76), Dimitrios and konstantinos (2014:43), Gligorović, Nikolić, Terek, Glušac and Tasić (2016:232) and Selvaraja and Pihie (2015:132). In illustrating the fact that

organisational culture has influence on burnout, Zamini et al. (2011:1965) concluded that unfriendly organisational cultures such as inflexible rules causes worker burnout. Bad school culture creates tension in the minds of teachers which results in burnout (Zamini et al., 2011:1965). Montgomery et al. (2011:109) also support a stance that school culture influences burnout. Conducive school culture enables teachers to have a clear understanding of their work environment which results in burnout reduction (Montgomery et al., 2011:109). The findings of the study conducted by Huhtala (2013:76) also prove that school culture is a predictor of burnout. In particular, unethical school culture such as bad management styles causes strain and burnout among teachers (Huhtala, 2013:77). The results of the study conducted by Dimitrios and konstantinos (2014:43) also proved that there is a correlation between organisational culture and teacher burnout. Dimitrios and konstantinos (2014:43) suggest that unfavourable organisational culture is detrimental to the life of any organisation since it is not only linked to a problem of burnout but also to other factors such occupational stress, loss of job commitment, attrition and lack of job satisfaction. There are many other studies which revealed a relationship between organisational culture and burnout. For example, Gligorović et al. (2016:232) found out that a positive organisational culture is a factor which encourages and motivates individuals to develop good interpersonal work relations which eventually lead to burnout relief (Gligorović et al., 2016:232). The study of Selvaraja and Pihie (2015:132) also proved that there is a correlation between organisational culture and burnout. A favourable school culture facilitates a suitable environment in enhancing school innovativeness which is a condition for teacher burnout relief (Selvaraja & Pihie, 2015:132).

On the other hand, the results of the quantitative part of this study showed that organisational culture is not a predictor of burnout among teachers. This finding is reported in Table 7.2. On the basis of the regression results as depicted in Table 7.2, two main reasons are put forth in support of the fact that organisational culture is not a predictor of teacher burnout; firstly, the calculated F-value of 1.919 is less than the critical F-value of 3.84 (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:247). Secondly, P-value of 0.167 ( $P = 0.167$ ) is greater than the level of significance (0.05) (Pietersen & Maree, 2013:247). Readers are referred to paragraph 6.4.12 for a detailed analysis.

**Table 7.2: Regression analysis of burnout on organisational culture**

Analysis of Variance						
Model	N	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	Df	F	Sig
Regression	350	355.648	355.648	1	1.919	P > .05
Residual		64497.212	185.337	348		0.167
Total		64852.86	540.985	349		

The results of the quantitative part of the study revealed that there is no relationship between organisational culture and teacher burnout. This finding contradicts the findings of the qualitative part of the study and those of previous researchers (Montgomery et al., 2011:109; Zamini et al., Zamini & Barzegary, 2011:1965; Huhtala, 2013:76; Dimitrios & konstantinos, 2014:43; Gligorović et al., 2016:232; Selvaraja & Pihie, 2015:132). The inconsistency between the findings of the quantitative part of this study and the qualitative part of the study can be attributable to methods of data analysis used in the respective methodologies, namely, quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Levers, 2013:3; Shemi, 2012:76). Scotland (2012:11) and Thanh and Thanh (2015:26) note that the findings of qualitative studies sometimes can be influenced by researchers' bias which is not the case with the findings of the quantitative studies.

### **7.2.6 Role conflict and teacher burnout**

The results of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study revealed that there is an association between role conflict and teacher burnout. Olivares-Faúndez et al. (2014:112) define role conflict as an incongruity of expectations associated with an employee's role at the place of work. Moss (2015:34) notes that in the teaching profession role conflict occurs when a teacher perceives that his/her expectations and job demands are incompatible and cannot be satisfied simultaneously.

Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567), on the other hand, state that role conflict occurs when an individual is expected to execute tasks in a manner that contradicts his/her

capacity. With regard to the findings of the qualitative part of the study, role conflict as a factor of teacher burnout relates to being assigned many different roles which are in conflict with one another or incompatible with one another. The participants reiterated that being assigned roles which are incompatible results in teachers feeling insecure and confused and that this situation leads to burnout. The participants noted that the conflicting roles which they ought to execute are of a pedagogic, administrative and managerial nature. With reference to the pedagogic nature, P16 noted that, while the primary duty of a teacher is to teach, teachers are assigned extracurricular duties for which they are not trained. He made an example of being assigned a task of coaching volley ball, a task which is impossible to execute because he does not have even a basic understanding of playing volley ball. According to P16, this situation is stressful and frustrating. Pertaining to the administrative and managerial nature, the participants illustrated that primary school teachers in Lesotho are burdened with administrative and managerial duties. Examples of these duties pertain to the management of pupils' presence register, keeping learners' academic records, handling of school finances, fund raising and acting as heads of grades. In this regard P3 noted that being a primary school teacher in Lesotho is hectic because it entails being an accountant clerk or an accountant, a secretary who welcomes visitors in the absence of the principal and a cook who serves children their lunch with the feeding scheme.

With reference to the findings of the quantitative part of the study, role conflict as a factor of teacher burnout relates to being assigned tasks which should be done differently, assigned tasks without manpower and working with groups which operate differently. For example, 350 respondents reported that, while the primary duty of a teacher is teaching, teachers are stressed by being assigned both academic tasks and administrative tasks. The respondents argued that administrative tasks should be executed by the principals. 70 respondents illustrated that another problem which exposes teachers to burnout is an issue of being assigned tasks without adequate manpower to execute them. The other problem which was cited as a burnout stressor was the issue of working with different groups of people who do things differently, for example, working with parents, officers from the Ministry of Education and Training, members of the local community and the schools' proprietors as many schools in Lesotho are owned by the church denominations.

In terms of an association between role conflict and burnout, regression analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of ( $R = 0.200$ ) and a percentage of ( $R^2 = 0.040$ ). This scenario shows that role conflict has influence on teacher burnout and that role conflict accounted for 4% of the variance in burnout.

The finding that role conflict is a stressor which results in teacher burnout endorses the findings of previous researchers (Utami and Nahartyo, 2012:567; Koenig, 2014:1; Moss, 2015:34). In this regard, Utami and Nahartyo (2012:567) assert that workers experience role conflict when there are gaps between their organisation's needs and clients' expectations. Thus, in this particular incident, teachers experience role conflict and consequently burnout when there are gaps between the schools' needs and learners' expectations. Koenig (2014:1) also moves that role conflict is a predictor of teacher burnout. Koenig (2014:1) reports that teachers are challenged with tasks of assuming a variety of roles and responsibilities in their everyday work, which include being a teacher, planner, motivator, manager, observer and counsellor. According to Koenig (2014:1), the other roles played by teachers which make them to be vulnerable victims of burnout relate to being a school leader, resource provider, administrator, mentor for fellow teachers and an active agent of change at school. Moss (2015:34) asserts that role conflict is a burnout stressor which impairs the effectiveness and efficiency of workers at the place of work.

### **7.2.7 Type of school and teacher burnout**

The results of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study revealed that there is a correlation between type of school and teacher burnout. With regard to the findings of this study, type of school as a predictor of teacher burnout relates to poor physical working environment, shortage of teaching facilities and teaching resources. With reference to poor physical working environment as a burnout stressor, P18 suggested that the classrooms and staff room in his school are dusty and that a poor physical working environment is not only unhealthy but it is also frustrating. On the same issue, 74% of the respondents attested to the fact that teachers who are working in an unsafe work environment such as dilapidated offices and classrooms are exposed to a risk of burnout. With regard to shortage of teaching facilities, P4 reported that in her school teachers use a church hall as a classroom to teach all the learners

from Grades 1 to 7. This scenario shows shortage of teaching facilities as a disturbing problem in the primary schools in Lesotho. On the issue of shortage of teaching resources, the participants postulated that there is an acute shortage of teaching resources. Examples of these resources included chalk boards, stationery, exercise books and equipment for Physical Education. This situation is worsened by the fact that in some incidences teachers spend their own money to buy teaching resources such as chalk, pens, textbooks, preparation books, schemes of work and records of completed work.

The finding that type of school is a stressor which results in teacher burnout is further supported by the results of chi-square analysis. The Chi-square analysis yielded the Chi-square statistic of 12.902. Given the fact that the Chi-square statistic was greater than the critical chi-square value of 3.84, it was concluded that type of school is the predictor of burnout. In this case, the researcher employed the alpha level of .05 and degree of freedom was 1 ( $df = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$ ). **Note:** Readers are referred to paragraph 6.5.8 for a detailed analysis.

The finding that type of school is a stressor which leads to teacher burnout is congruent with the findings of previous researchers (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011:57; Mukundan, Zare, Zarifi, Manaf & Sahamid, 2015:26; Genç, 2016:9). In illustrating the fact that type of school is a burnout stressor, Küçüksüleymanoğlu (2011:60) stresses that in comparison with teachers working with hearing impaired learners, teachers working with mentally retarded learners experience high levels of burnout because mentally retarded learners have violent behaviour and other related discipline problems. In support of the same point that type of school is a burnout stressor, Mukundan et al. (2015:30) assert that working in the schools which put more emphasis on the culture of spoon-feeding of learners exposes teachers to high burnout levels as compared with working in the schools which discourage the culture of spoon-feeding of learners. The implication is that the culture of spoon-feeding of learners entails intensive guided reading and supervision of learners which puts a lot of pressure on teachers. In illustrating the very point, Genç (2016:9) observes that in comparison with teachers working in the private schools, teachers working in the public schools experience higher levels of burnout because teachers working in the public schools are exposed

to bad working conditions such as shortage of furniture, poor, unclean and unsafe work environment such as old and dusty offices and classrooms.

### **7.3 VARIABLES PREDICTING BURNOUT AS REFLECTED BY THE QUALITATIVE PART OF THE STUDY**

The qualitative part of this study reveals a variety of factors which are considered to be the stressors which result in teacher burnout. The variables pertain to learners' poor academic performance, learner indiscipline and insufficient teacher remuneration.

#### **7.3.1 Learners' poor academic performance and teacher burnout**

The results of this study showed that learners' poor academic performance and lack of interest in learning contribute to the problem of burnout syndrome among teachers. In this regard, P2 reiterates that, as a result of learners' lack of interest in their studies, most learners in Lesotho primary schools are not able to do anything by themselves as they always need teachers to be pushing them. This is frustrating because it burdens teachers with unnecessary work load. About the same issue, P15 suggests that learners' academic performance is very poor because they do not have interest in their academic work. Therefore, P15 concludes that learners' incompetence is a stressor which causes burnout among teachers. P16 also supports this issue by observing that teachers feel bad when learners do not understand what they are taught and consequently fail at the end of the year.

The finding that learners' poor academic performance is related to teacher burnout is in line with the findings of the previous researchers (Bousquet, 2012:12; Antoniou, Ploumpi & Ntalla, 2013:349). Bousquet (2012:12) reports that a daily close interaction with learners is a burnout stressor. Bousquet (2012:12) illustrates that despite lack of learners' seriousness pertaining to their learning, teachers are still expected to provide quality education to them. In support of the same issue, Antoniou et al. (2013:349) argue that because of the many roles which teachers play in relation to helping learners at the school, this makes them feel that they invest more in learners than they receive from them. According to Antoniou et al. (2013:349) this situation makes

teachers face emotional, psychological and occupational difficulties which inevitably result in burnout.

### **7.3.2 Learner indiscipline and teacher burnout**

The results of this study revealed that there is an association between learner indiscipline and teacher burnout. The participants stated that learners' misbehaviour contributes to teacher burnout in a number of different ways. For example, P12 notes that learners' disruptive behaviour, more especially when accompanied by violence, frustrates teachers. P14 also argues that unacceptable behaviour of learners is not only a torture to teachers but it also makes teachers hate teaching. P17 also illustrates that it is inevitable to encounter a problem of burnout when dealing with uncontrollable learners.

That finding that learner indiscipline is a burnout stressor confirms the results of the studies conducted by Fisher (2011:7), Bousquet (2012:11), and Yazdanmehr and Akbari (2015:2). For example, Fisher (2011:7) notes that learner behaviour is a predictor of teacher stress and burnout. According to Fisher (2011:7), examples of learner behaviours which lead to teacher burnout are hostility towards teachers, not paying attention during class and learners' noise. Bousquet (2012:11) observes that learners' behaviour causes burnout among teachers. According to Bousquet (2012:11), learners' indiscipline is a stressor because it does not allow teachers to have time for rest and recovery of the body's resources or strength. This issue is also supported by Yazdanmehr and Akbari (2015:2), according to whom learners' unacceptable behaviours such as violence and aggressive behaviour triggers burnout among teachers because it is tiresome to deal with such behaviours.

### **7.3.3 Insufficient teacher remuneration and teacher burnout**

The findings of this study revealed that there is a correlation between insufficient teacher remuneration and teacher burnout. The participants reported that low salary is a stressor which causes burnout among teachers. In this regard, P7 states that teachers in Lesotho get low salaries and that this causes burnout because these

salaries are so low that a teacher is unable to meet basic needs such as buying a decent house and a car.

That finding that insufficient teacher remuneration is a factor of burnout among teachers is congruent with the results of the studies conducted by Chireshe and Shumba (2011:114), Mutune and Orodho (2014:15). Chireshe and Shumba (2011:114) argue that low salaries make teaching a stressful profession. In support of the same issue Mutune and Orodho (2014:15) report that low salaries lead to job dissatisfaction and burnout, and make teachers quit the teaching profession in search of better prepositions.

#### 7.4 VARIABLES PREDICTING BURNOUT AS REFLECTED BY THE QUANTITATIVE PART OF THE STUDY

The quantitative part of this study reveals a variety of factors which are considered to be the stressors leading to teacher burnout. The variables pertain to teachers' age, personality and work experience.

##### 7.4.1 Age and teacher burnout

The results of the chi-square analysis revealed that teachers' age is not a predictor of burnout. That is, being a young or old teacher does not have impact on burnout. In this regard, readers are referred to Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3: Computation of chi-square value (chi-square statistic)**

$f_o$	$f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$
152	156	-4	16	0.103
105	97	8	64	0.659
60	56	4	16	0.286
33	37	-4	16	0.432
Calculated $\chi^2$ value				1.48

The results of this study as presented in Table 7.3 show that age is not a predictor of teacher burnout. For example, the chi-square analysis yielded the chi-square statistic

of 1.48. For the fact that the chi-square statistic is less than the critical chi-square value of 3.84, it is concluded that age is not a predictor of burnout. In this case, the researcher employed the alpha level of .05 and the degree of freedom was 1( $df = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$ ). **Note:** Readers are referred to paragraph 6.5.2 for a detailed analysis.

The finding that age is not a predictor of teacher burnout refutes the findings of the previous researchers (Tsigilis, Zournatzi & Koustelios, 2011:56; El Shikieri & Musa, 2012:137). The findings of these researchers show that age has influence on teacher burnout. In particular, these studies indicate that young teachers are more susceptible to burnout than older teachers.

#### **7.4.2 Personality and teacher burnout**

The findings of this study showed that there is no relationship between personality and teacher burnout. The Chi-square analysis yielded the Chi-square statistic of 0.061. Since the Chi-square statistic is less than the critical Chi-square value of 3.84, it is concluded that personality does not have an impact on teacher burnout. In this example, the researcher employed the alpha level of .05 and degree of freedom was 1( $df = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$ ).

The finding that personality is not a predictor of teacher burnout is inconsistent with the findings of other researchers (Larrivee, 2012:10; Sahni & Deswal, 2015:9). These studies indicate that introvert teachers are at high risk of experiencing burnout because they do not discuss their problems with other people.

#### **7.4.3 Work experience and teacher burnout**

The results of this study revealed that work experience is not a predictor of teacher burnout. For example, the chi-square analysis yielded the chi-square statistic of 1.485. From the fact that the chi-square statistic is less than the critical chi-square value of 3.84, it is concluded that work experience does not have influence on teacher burnout. In this example, the researcher employed the alpha level of .05 and the degree of freedom was 1( $df = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$ ).

The finding that work experience is not a factor of teacher burnout contradicts the findings of previous researchers (Louw, George & Esterhuysen, 2011:2; Tashi, 2014:76). According to Louw et al. (2011:2), less experienced teachers are more prone to burnout because they are new in the profession and, as a result, they are often very anxious to perform and achieve professionally. On the other hand, Tashi (2014:76) observed that more experienced teachers are more susceptible to burnout because they have been doing the job for a long time and this situation leads to fatigue among teachers which is a result of dealing with the same problems all the time.

## **7.5 SUMMARY**

The focus of this chapter was on a critical combining of qualitative and quantitative research findings. Thus, the main objective was to discuss the findings of both qualitative and quantitative research findings. In the process of discussing the findings of this study, the researcher used three different strategies. Firstly, the findings of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study were discussed under the same themes. Secondly, the findings of this study were discussed as reflected by the qualitative part of this study. Finally, the findings of this study were discussed as reflected by the quantitative part of this study. In following the first strategy, the findings of both the qualitative and quantitative parts of this study were discussed under the themes work overload and teacher burnout, lack of staff development and teacher burnout, role ambiguity and teacher burnout, organisational climate and teacher burnout, organisational culture and teacher burnout, role conflict, teacher burnout and type of school. In using the second strategy, the findings of this study as reflected by the qualitative part of this study were discussed under the themes burnout versus stressors such as learners' poor academic performance, learner indiscipline and insufficient teacher remuneration. In using the third strategy, the findings of this study as reflected by the quantitative part of this study were discussed under the themes burnout versus stressors such as age, personality and work experience.

## CHAPTER 8

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was on teacher burnout and the coping strategies teachers employ to counter possible burnout in their profession. In this regard the study achieved the following aims:

- To determine the relationship between stress and burnout.
- To establish some important stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers.
- To establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout.

In this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout, the researcher adopted a mixed-methods research approach comprising of qualitative and quantitative research representations. The study covered eight chapters. The focus of Chapter one was on the background to the study, motivation for the study, statement of the problem, research questions and research hypotheses. Chapter two reviewed literature on the phenomenon of employee burnout, specifically as it relates to the teaching profession. Theories such as self-efficacy, person-environment-fit theory and transactional model of stress were discussed as applicable theoretical frameworks for this study. Chapter three covered a review of related literature on the relationship between teacher burnout and variables such as teachers' age and teaching experience, gender, personality, work overload, role ambiguity, lack of staff development, organisational climate, organisational culture, type of school and general organisational commitment. Coping strategies which are employed by teachers to buffer stress were also highlighted. Chapter four dealt with an explanation of the research methodology and research design used for conducting the empirical investigation. Some of the topics which were highlighted in Chapter four included research paradigms and research approaches. Instruments for data collection were also explained in this chapter. Chapter five focused on the analysis of qualitatively collected data from 20

participants. Chapter six dealt with the analysis of quantitatively collected data collected from 350 respondents. The focus of Chapter seven was on a critical combining of qualitative and quantitative research findings. Thus, the aim of Chapter seven was to discuss the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative research.

The focus of Chapter eight is on the following areas:

- Discussions of literature study and empirical study findings.
- Conclusions drawn from the findings of the study.
- Recommendations.
- Suggestions for further study.
- Limitations of the study.
- Concluding remarks.

## **8.2 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE AND THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION**

The focus of this paragraph is on the presentation and discussion of the literature and empirical study findings which are presented separately, in different sections. The starting point is the presentation of the literature study findings followed by the empirical study findings. Presenting these findings, the researcher follows a chronological sequence of research actions.

### **8.2.1 Literature study findings**

The literature study findings encapsulate a succinct eliciting of aspects relating to types of teacher burnout, effects of burnout on the lives of teachers, applicable frameworks for conducting research on stress and burnout, the concept of burnout, models of burnout, models of stress, the relationship between burnout and its predictor variables and coping strategies to counter stress.

#### **8.2.1.1 Types of teacher burnout**

Teacher burnout is categorised into three classes, namely, types I, II and III (par 1.2.4). Type I burnout represents teachers who use ineffective problem-solving strategies

which are due to their vulnerable nature to anxiety and stress resulting in them being more susceptible to possible burnout. Teachers in this category believe that regardless of how hard they work, they cannot achieve their goals with typical personality characteristics relating to them being highly ambitious, impatient and time urgent. Teachers in the Type II burnout category are overcommitted with a high sense of self-esteem, attempting to succeed against all odds with a tendency of risking their personal health and neglecting their personal lives for the purpose of maximising their professional success. These behaviours expose Type II burnout teachers to a risk of burnout. Teachers in the Type III burnout category have a tendency of complaining that their skills go unnoticed by their employers and also that their talents are not being utilised sufficiently at work. This mentality results in frustration and burnout among teachers in Type III category (par 1.2.4).

#### **8.2.1.2 Effects of burnout on the lives of teachers**

Burnout has a variety of undesirable effects on the lives of teachers as employees, leading to unhappiness and professional dissatisfaction (par 2.1). Victims of burnout do not want to go to work, doubt their abilities and they are not sociable. Victims of burnout are aggressive and violent not only towards their colleagues but also towards their learners, resulting in resentment and rudeness, diminishing their effectiveness and efficiency at work (par 2.1).

#### **8.2.1.3 Applicable frameworks for conducting research on stress and burnout**

The three theories which served as theoretical lenses for this study on teacher stress and burnout pertained to self-efficacy theory, person-environment-fit theory and the transactional model of stress and burnout.

- Self-efficacy theory

Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy have confidence in their ability to overcome personal obstacles such as stress and burnout because their efficacy levels determine how they perceive their environmental challenges and their responses to these

challenges. They tackle their challenges with strength and resourcefulness, being assured that they will conquer the challenges and be able to shape their work environment and interact with it effectively (par 2.2.1). Self-efficacious teachers capitalise on the job opportunities for personal and professional growth and they rarely complain about physical health problems such as fatigue, stress, depression, burnout and pain. On the other hand, teachers with low levels of self-efficacy believe that no matter how hard they attempt accomplishing a task, they cannot make a difference (par 2.2.1). They are vulnerable victims of stress and burnout.

Four sources of self-efficacy relating to mastery experiences or past performance, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological states entail that success breeds success, empowerment occurs through observing, performance is improved through convincing and to execute a new and unfamiliar task this should be done without being aroused (par 2.2.4).

- Person-environment-fit theory

Person-environment-fit theory entails the degree to which individuals' personality characteristics matches their environments postulating that interaction with the environment determines the stressfulness of the situation for the specific individual (par 2.3.1). The implication is that teachers' vocational satisfaction, stability and achievement depend on the congruence between their personality and the environment in which they work.

Stress as the by-product of a mismatch between environmental demands and teachers' ability to meet these demands, also relates to teachers' teaching styles with teachers tending to resort to teaching strategies which are congruent with their own former learning styles. The implication is that positive teachers' personality traits and own positive learning support pupils' learning by creating conducive environments for learning and encouraging learners' active participation in their daily class activities resulting in successful learning which diminishes teacher stress (par 2.3.2).

- Transactional model of stress and burnout

The transactional model of stress and burnout that postulates that stress and burnout are the products of the transaction (contact) between teachers and their environments, suggests that there should always be a fit between employees' abilities and their work environmental demands. When such a fit is lacking, stress and burnout are triggered by teachers' perception of the disequilibrium between their classroom challenges and the resources needed to face those demands, such as, for example, the availability of educational facilities and supervision support with a changed curriculum (par 2.3.3).

#### **8.2.1.4 The concept of burnout**

Burnout as a function of stress which individuals feel both in their social and professional life results in a loss of aim, energy and idealism towards work as a consequence of prolonged and extensive job-related stress (par 2.4.1). Burnout is the last point of coping with chronic stress having adverse effects of a physical and mental nature with the possibility of reaching a point of harming other people (par 2.4.4). The burnout syndrome manifests in symptoms appearing sequentially, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (par 2.4.4). Emotional exhaustion as the starting point of burnout arises from extreme exhaustion caused by psychological and emotional demands resulting in teachers who are chronically and physically absent or mentally unable to plan their work (p 2.4.6). Depersonalisation portraying negative, insensitive and uncaring attitudes towards other people, represents a state in which teachers treat learners as objects, becoming indifferent towards their learners and colleagues (par 2.4.7). When facing this dilemma, teachers engage in a practice of social withdrawal both through physical isolation and distancing themselves emotionally (par 2.4.8). Reduced personal accomplishment triggered by the lack of recognition and positive feedback from other people prompts feelings of failure, inadequacy and loss of self-respect (par 2.4.9). Reduced personal accomplishment results in teachers feeling unsuccessful and insufficient in their teaching profession leading to feelings of estrangement towards their duties, demotivated, having no control, despairing, and losing self-respect (par 2.4.9).

Historically, burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger describing the gradual emotional depletion and loss of motivation among individuals working for aid organisations in New York (par 2.4.2). Freudenberger described burnout as a state of mental and physical exhaustion that destroys motivation, whereby employees' devotion to their work fails to produce good results especially among health workers exposed to heavy workloads and negative feedback from their patients (par 2.4.2). Maslach's Burnout Inventory developed in the 1980s enabled researchers to collect authentic data associating work-related stress and burnout with job dissatisfaction, frustrations and poor work conditions (par 2.4.2). In the 1990s, research on burnout widened its scope to include employees such as military commanders, priests and teachers (par 2.4.2). In the 1990s, research on burnout was further improved by discovering long-term effects of work stress predicting burnout and effective methods of combating burnout (par 2.4.2).

#### **8.2.1.5 Characteristics of teacher burnout**

Burnout among teachers, manifests on a cognitive, emotional, and behavioural level with teachers cognitively having low concentration and self-esteem while emotionally feeling weak, guilty, angry and sad (par 2.4.3). On a behavioural level burnout displays impatience, social withdrawal, sleep disorders and nightmares (par 2.4.3). With regard to interpersonal relationships, teachers who are victims of burnout experience isolation, loss of interest in relationships, engagement in interpersonal conflicts, loneliness and scepticism (par 2.4.3). Psychosomatically, teachers who are victims of burnout encounter shock, profuse sweating, dizziness and disorientation contributing to low morale, demotivation, and negative attitudes towards their teaching and their learners (par 2.4.3).

#### **8.2.1.6 Models of burnout**

Three models contribute towards understanding of how burnout develops among workers, namely, the job-demands-resources model, the job-demand-control model and the burnout cascade model (par 2.7.1). The job-demands-resources model illustrates that burnout develops from stress as a result of job challenges relating to a lack of job resources such as limited career opportunities, limited support from

colleagues, limited professional autonomy and the lack of a positive work climate hampering the achievement of organisational goals (par 2.7.2). With regard to the teaching profession, the job-demands-resources model illustrates that job challenges associated with workload, unfavourable physical work environment, irregular working hours and work pressure increase the risk of burnout among teachers (par 2.7.3). The job-demand-control model illustrates that burnout among workers is caused by a combination of high job demands and low job control whereby work overload and time pressure with no control over tasks and having little professional autonomy at the workplace causes burnout (par 2.7.4). With regard to the teaching profession, the job-demand-control model postulates that teachers' work demands without equivalent control or appropriate intervention measures over their work activities has a high tendency of aggravating their burnout levels (par 2.7.5). The burnout-cascade model suggests that teachers have a tendency of encountering increased levels of emotional exhaustion when they are confronted with difficult child behaviours resulting in teachers resorting to reactive and punitive measures when confronted with pupils' misbehaviours (par 2.7.6). The burnout-cascade model postulates a high degree of social and emotional competence relating to self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and decision-making skills to address the instructional and emotional challenges of the classroom (par 2.7.7).

#### **8.2.1.7 Models of stress**

Two models serving as indicators to explain and understand the stress syndrome are the effort-reward-imbalance model and the conservation of resources model (par 2.8). According to the effort-reward-imbalance model workers exchange their efforts for rewards implying failure to reward workers for the executed duties results in emotional distress and strain (par 2.8.1). Rewards entail reasonable salaries, promotion opportunities, esteem (respect and support) and emotional security which improve career satisfaction. The effort-reward-imbalance model illustrates that the disequilibrium between costs (teachers' high effort) and gains (low reward given to teachers) trigger emotional distress resulting in poor health and absence among teachers (par 2.8.2).

The conservation of resources model suggests that individuals strive to obtain, retain and protect resources with resources classified as personal characteristics such as high self-esteem and positive outlook, objects such as a home and car, conditions such as a job and financial and emotional security and energies such as knowledge and time (par 2.8.3). These resources as a means of achieving work goals and reducing job demands affirm that teachers who possess positive psychological capacities relating to restoring their lost resources or getting new resources perform better in their teaching careers with high levels of work satisfaction (par 2.7.4).

#### **8.2.1.8 Teacher burnout and predictor variables**

The relationship between teacher burnout and predictor variables include age, gender, personality, workload, role ambiguity, role conflict, lack of personnel development, school organisational climate, school organisational culture and type of school.

With regard to the relationship between teacher age and burnout, younger teachers experience more work stress and burnout than older teachers because older teachers are more experienced, having better time management skills, work better under pressure and control their emotions better than younger teachers (par 3.2). With regard to gender and burnout, female teachers experience burnout due to extra childcare responsibilities at home whereas male teachers encounter burnout due to long working hours resulting in no distinct gender differences in burnout encounters (par 3.3).

With regard to personality, burnout is more severe among introvert teachers because introvert teachers are quiet and reserved while extrovert teachers are cheerful and optimistic resulting in a tendency to engage in activities which can overcome stressful conditions (par 3.4). Higher burnout among introvert teachers relates to a situation in which they spend their entire day in their classrooms without interacting with their colleagues which deprive introvert teachers of the opportunity of buffering the accumulated stressors of the day through talking with their peers (par 3.4.2). However, the finding that personality is a predictor of teacher burnout, is inconsistent with the finding of the quantitative part of this study. This disparity may be attributed to the methods of data analysis used in analysing qualitative and quantitative data. It is not

always the case that qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis produce the same results.

Regarding work overload and burnout, overloaded teachers also encounter long working hours consisting of lesson preparation and the marking of assignments and tests after the formal school day is over (par 3.6.1). Part of teacher overload is the fact that teachers fulfil multiple roles, including being a motivator, manager, observer and counsellor (par 3.6.1).

Role ambiguity causing burnout among teachers relates to teachers not understanding their roles, experiencing insecurity and frustration because of a lack of information regarding their tasks and responsibilities accompanied by unclear goals and directions (par 3.6.2). This finding contradicts the finding of the quantitative part of this study. This contradiction may be attributed to the methods of data analysis used in analysing qualitative and quantitative data. This issue is explained in detail in paragraph 6.4.8.

Regarding role conflict as a reason for burnout, this relates to teachers being expected to act in ways that contradict their needs, capacity and values which in many instances relate to competent teachers exposed to situations that limit their abilities to carry out their duties effectively (par 3.6.3).

The results of the qualitative part of this study indicated that lack of staff development is not a predictor of teacher burnout. This finding refutes the findings of the previous researchers (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013:5; Van der Heijden, Van Vuuren, Kooij and de Lange, 2015:23). These studies showed that there is a direct relationship between lack of staff development and teacher burnout (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013:5; Van der Heijden, Van Vuuren, Kooij and de Lange, 2015:23). Lack of career development opportunities is a predictor of teacher burnout because not having the opportunity to progress, frustrates teachers resulting in burnout whereas proper staff development endeavours serve as the best strategy to prevent burnout (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2013:5; Van der Heijden, Van Vuuren, Kooij and de Lange, 2015:23). However, the finding that lack of personnel development is not a predictor of burnout is supported by the findings of the quantitative part of this study.

A positive relationship exists between school organisational climate and teacher burnout because when teachers perceive their school's organisational climate as favourable, they experience emotional security and satisfaction prompting teaching energy (par 3.8). School organisational climate factors such as norms, values, beliefs and traditions buffer teacher burnout in the sense of teachers knowing that their own norms, values and traditions are aligned with that of the school (par 3.8.1). Along the same lines, school culture as the way things are done, influences the way in which teachers interact with each other, with their learners and with parents (par 3.9). School culture-related situations resulting in increased stress for teachers include bad management styles by school management teams, inflexible rules, a lack of support resulting in a feeling of not belonging and lack of professional autonomy characterised by failure to involve teachers in the school's decision-making processes (par 3.9). School type as a predictor of burnout suggests that teachers teaching in public schools encounter higher levels of burnout than their colleagues at private schools because of uncomfortable working conditions at many public schools relating to shortages of furniture and unclean and unsafe work environments (par 3.10).

#### **8.2.1.9 Coping strategies for teacher stress**

The coping strategies that teachers use to counter stress include constructive, less constructive and neutral strategies. Constructive coping strategies include problem solving, physical exercises and social support. Problem solving entails techniques associated with teachers avoiding unnecessary stressful circumstances (par 3.12.2), defining the cause of unavoidable stress, identifying solutions to the stressful event, evaluating alternatives in terms of costs and benefits and selecting the best solution to the stressful situation (par 3.12.2). Physical exercising as a stress countering technique distracts sufferers from their worries and negative self-image while the blood flows to the brain releasing hormones that stimulate the nerve system prompting the development of a positive perspective on life (par 3.12.3). Social support includes seeking support from family members, friends and colleagues with this support relating to seeking advice, enjoying emotional support and sympathy, and having an understanding sounding-board for problems experienced (par 3.12.4).

Regarding less constructive coping strategies, which relieve stress temporarily while in the long run causing more damage by aggravating the intensity of stress, these coping strategies are regarded as unhealthy, dysfunctional and counterproductive (par 3.13). Less constructive coping strategies include disengagement that relates to giving up attempts of resolving the stressful situations, ignoring stressors, and putting school work aside and indulging in constant day dreaming (par 3.13.1). Disengagement results in cumulative workloads and feelings of lowered self-esteem (par 3.13.1). Avoidance as evading the source of stress provides only short-term stress relief relating to sleeping to avoid stress, excessive house cleaning and eating junk food and over-eating as compensation measure against stress (par 3.13.1). A neutral coping strategy to buffer stress pertains to spending time alone to meditate, thereby creating a state of tranquillity resulting in peace of mind and calmness (par 3.14).

## **8.2.2 Empirical study findings**

Empirical study findings include programmes to cope with stress, consequences of burnout on teachers' work performance, coping strategies employed by teachers to counter stress and variables predicting burnout among teachers.

### **8.2.2.1 Programmes to cope with stress**

Results of the empirical study suggested three programmes to equip teachers with stress coping measures, namely, the programme of social and emotional learning, the programme of workplace wellness and the programme of joining social groups (par 5.4.1).

Social and emotional learning programmes at school entail school management inviting motivation speakers and counsellors to counsel teachers on skills to identify and solve their personal problems (par 5.4.1). Workplace wellness programmes involve encouraging teachers to engage in screening of health risk assessments such as blood glucose, blood pressure, body weight, cancer, psychological stress and general physical health (par 5.4.1). Joining social groups relating to socialising for friendship and support function as constructive stress relievers (par 5.4.1).

### **8.2.2.2 Consequences of burnout on teachers' work performance**

Burnout diminishes teachers' productivity and attacks career motivation which results in a lack of work satisfaction (par 5.4.4.2). Burnout causes continual teacher absenteeism with victims developing negative attitudes towards learners resulting in poor teacher-learner relations because of teachers' aggressive and violent approaches (par 5.4.4.2).

### **8.2.2.3 Coping strategies employed by teachers to counter stress**

The results of the empirical study illustrated that teachers buffer stress by employing a combination of constructive stress coping strategies (par 5.5.1), less constructive stress coping strategies (par 5.5.2) and neutral stress coping strategies (par 5.5.3). Teachers consult professional counsellors when faced with stress which allows them the opportunity to talk about their problems, thus relieving them from a dilemma of struggling with difficult cases on their own (par 5.5.1). Entertainment to alleviate stress includes listening to music, playing video games on cell phones and watching television (par 5.5.1). Physical exercises to counter stress include aerobics, yoga and visiting the gym (par 5.5.1). Disengagement entails intentionally ignoring the problem with the belief that divine intervention will take its course (par 5.5.2). Disengagement also involves avoiding talking about one's personal problems and resorting to over eating, eating too little or too infrequently and eating junk food while abusing alcohol and smoking (par 5.5.2). Teachers alleviate stress by watching comedies and spending time alone which provides breathing space (par 5.5.3).

### **8.2.2.4 Variables predicting burnout among teachers**

The results of the empirical study confirmed stressors predicting burnout among primary school teachers in Lesotho relating to work overload, school climate, role conflict, school type, and learner discipline. With regard to work overload, teachers teach many grades, many subjects, many learners and many hours of teaching (par 7.2.1). In one school in Lesotho, for example, seven grades are taught by only three teachers (par 7.2.1) with another example of one teacher teaching five grades (par 7.2.1). Organisational climate causing teacher burnout include bad leadership styles,

lack of participatory decision-making, lack of teacher support, lack of security and burdening teachers with routine duties (par 7.2.4) while role conflict of a pedagogic, administrative, extracurricular and managerial nature hinders teacher well-being (par 7.2.6). In the Lesotho context being a teacher also involves being an accountant clerk, a secretary who welcomes visitors in the absence of the principal and a cook who serves children their lunch with the feeding scheme (par 7.2.6).

Burnout caused by school type pertains to the poor physical working environment, and shortages of teaching facilities and teaching resources experienced in public schools (par 7.2.7), which is exacerbated by poor learner indiscipline as a torture making teachers to hate teaching (par 7.3.2).

### **8.3 CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this study was to answer the following principal research question:

- How can teachers be equipped to cope with stress in order to prevent work-related burnout?

The principal research question was then divided into the following five sub-questions:

- What is the relationship between stress and burnout?
- What are the stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers?
- What are the consequences of burnout among teachers?
- What strategies can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout?
- What roles can the Ministry of Education and Training play as a way of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout?

From research findings answering these research questions, conclusions drawn are discussed next.

### **8.3.1 The relationship between stress and burnout: As aligned with sub-question one**

There is a direct relationship between stress and burnout, which is demonstrated by the following associations between stress and burnout:

- Some of the causes of stress and burnout overlap (par 5.4.2), such as work overload that is a predictor of both stress and burnout (par 7.2.1).
- Some signs and symptoms of stress and burnout overlap (par 5.4.2), such as continual tiredness and a low resistance to illness (par 5.4.2).
- It is difficult to know where normal stress stops and where burnout begins (par 5.4.2), making it difficult to draw a clear line of demarcation between stress and burnout.
- Stress is a starting phase of burnout (par 5.4.2) warranting immediate action against stress to prevent eventual burnout.

### **8.3.2 Stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers: As aligned with sub-question two**

Burnout is a syndrome which is triggered by a number of factors such as age, personality, work overload, role ambiguity and insufficient remuneration (par 3.2; par 3.5.1; par 5.4.3; par 6.4; par 7.2).

Burnout is rife among young teachers who still lack skills of working under pressure (par 3.2), completing daily lesson planning, dealing with undisciplined learners and being accommodating to school boards whose composition is usually characterised by people who lack information and knowledge on school management (par 5.4.3.16). The personality of introvert teachers is vulnerable to burnout due to introvert teachers' nature of being reluctant to discuss their problems with other people who might help (par 3.4). Work overload predicts teacher burnout relating to long working hours extending beyond statutory teaching hours to include lesson preparation, assignment and examination marking, and dealing with a high teacher-learner ratio and teaching many grades (par 5.4.3.1).

Role ambiguity predicts burnout among teachers because of confusion about duties and tasks which includes unclear roles relating to be a curriculum developer and implementer, teacher, administrator, policy maker, invigilator, counsellor and social worker (par 3.6.2; par 5.4.3.2). Insufficient teacher remuneration represents a stressor specifically in the Lesotho society where teachers receive less remuneration than nurses.

### **8.3.3 Consequences of burnout among teachers: As aligned with sub-question three**

Burnout causes health problems such as hypertension, muscle pain, coronary problems, metabolic problems, continuous neck pain, headaches, heart attacks and back pain (par 5.4.4.1). Burnout also causes behavioural problems such as drug abuse, drinking problems, tobacco addiction and negligence of own personal appearance such as stopping combing and cutting hair and shaving their beards (par 5.4.4.1).

### **8.3.4 Coping strategies employed by teachers to prevent burnout: As aligned with sub-question four**

Teachers prevent burnout by employing constructive coping strategies relating to social support that represents seeking support from family members, friends and colleagues to gain advice, discuss troubling feelings and obtain assistance with solving problems (par 3.12.4 and par 5.5.1). Teachers resort to restorative coping experiences entailing visiting nature-related outdoor entertainment places, city entertainment places, churches, green landscapes and restaurants (par 3.12.10 and par 5.5.1). The most popular nature-related outdoor places visited by teachers in Lesotho are Maletsunyane Falls at Semonkong, Sehlabathebe National Park, Bokong Nature Reserve, Liphofung Nature Reserve and Tsehlanyane National Park. Other places of interest, which are visited by teachers are Katse Dam, Muela Dam, Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village and Mohale Dam (par 5.5.1).

Teachers also resort to less constructive coping strategies which alleviates stress temporarily while in the long run aggravating the intensity of stress (par 3.13), such as

fighting, crying, mood swings and punishing learners (par 5.5.2). Teachers also prevent burnout by adopting neutral coping strategies pertaining to venting anger and aroused feelings to friends, family and colleagues (par 3.14 and par 5.5.3) by twittering and e-mailing these people acting as soundboards to stress sufferers (par 5.5.3).

Part of stress coping strategies are the programmes initiated by schools to assist with stress and burnout prevention. In this regard, social and emotional learning programmes entail stress coping assistance with the help of motivational speakers and counsellors to equip teachers with skills to understand and manage their emotions (par 5.4.1). School boards facilitate these endeavours that are functional in enabling teachers to tackle their negative feelings thereby transforming those negative feelings into positive energy (par 5.4.1). Joining social groups as encouraged by school management such as subject-related friendship groups and staff socialising groups serve to equip teachers with emotional support to alleviate occupational stress (par 5.4.1). These groups serve as forums to solve problems, share joys and share information about stress buffering techniques (par 5.4.1).

### **8.3.5 The role of the Ministry of Education and Training with teacher stress coping strategies: As aligned with sub-question five**

The results of the empirical study suggested a number of roles which can be affected by a society's Ministry of Education and Training to assist teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout (par 5.6). These roles pertain to clarifying teachers' job description to solve the problems of role ambiguity and role conflict (par 5.6). A formal induction of new teachers as a resourceful strategy initiated by the office of the Ministry of Education and Training can inform novice teachers about the know-how of the profession in practice (par 5.6). Ensuring that teacher salaries are on par with equivalent professional careers is a functional tool to buffer teacher burnout because reasonable salaries enhance job satisfaction and teaching energy (par 5.6). Means to keep the teacher-pupil ratio at reasonable levels despite an alarming birth rate would counter teacher stress thus buffering teacher burnout (par 5.6).

## 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings of this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers, it is recommended that:

- School boards in collaboration with the offices of the educational secretariats and secretariat for government-controlled schools must encourage teachers to establish social and emotional learning programmes (par 5.4.1). The school boards must then invite motivational speakers and counsellors to empower staff about stress coping techniques. Through social and emotional learning programmes, teachers can share their stress-related personal experiences in pursuit of stress coping endeavours.
- With the aim of offsetting the escalating work overload of teachers which is characterised by working hours extending beyond statutory teaching hours (par 3.6.1), including multiple responsibilities (par 5.4.3.1) and teaching many grades (par 5.4.3.1), the Ministry of Education and Training must employ more teachers in order to alleviate teacher stress and possible burnout (par 5.6).
- With a view to combating the problems relating to role ambiguity and role conflict which encourage principals to take advantage of teachers and requesting them to perform tasks which are not related to their job descriptions (par 6.4.1), the Ministry of Education and Training should clarify and update teachers' job descriptions. This exercise will enable teachers to focus on the duties and responsibilities which are part of their job description thus alleviating stress that is associated with fulfilling roles that are not part of a teacher's job description (par 5.6).
- Insufficient teacher remuneration being a stressor which triggers burnout among teachers (par 5.4.3.12), the Ministry of Education and Training must offset this problem by increasing teachers' salaries to reasonable levels that are on par with equivalent professional performance (par 5.6).
- Lack of promotion opportunities serving as a notable stressor in Lesotho primary schools (par 5.6) must be countered by the Ministry of Education and Training establishing positions such as assistant special teacher, specialist

teacher, senior specialist teacher and head of department, the latter position that is only available in post primary schools in Lesotho.

- Due to the security risk of teaching in dilapidated classrooms, the Ministry of Education and Training in collaboration with school proprietors must prioritise the renovation of classrooms and staffrooms (par 5.6).

## **8.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Data for this study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho were collected from primary school teachers only. A holistic approach on this problem needs to be explored. In this regard, the participation and involvement of other stakeholders such as secondary school teachers, education officers, parents, school boards, learners and educational secretaries is relevant for a whole-school perspective on stress resulting in burnout.

Burnout is a stress-related syndrome which is triggered by a variety of variables. Two of these variables are organisational conflict and organisational change. Regarding organisational conflict as a burnout stressor, research will be meaningful on the how and what of organisational conflict causing stress with measures enabling teachers to manage organisational conflict in such a way that stress is limited to manageable levels. Regarding organisational change as a predictor of teacher stress and burnout, questions relating to the ways in which change triggers burnout among teachers, the factors influencing change in schools and the measures of coping with change-related stress will be meaningful as further research endeavours.

## **8.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study on stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho has provided information on factors predicting burnout and coping strategies for teachers to alleviate stress in order to prevent burnout. Limitations of this study pertain to the following:

- The samples for both the qualitative and quantitative part of the study were limited to 30 participants and 500 respondents. A larger sample could possibly have provided findings on a more comprehensive scale.
- In ascertaining the reliability and validity of the research instruments, the researcher did not apply all methods of evaluating the instruments. Some methods that could have been applied, pertain to the split-half method and test-rest method. The split-half method entails a procedure of treating the odd-numbered question items of a research instrument as one scale and the even-numbered items as another scale. The scores of the two scales are then correlated with a view to establish the reliability and validity estimates. The test-rest method involves piloting a study by administering a research instrument twice to the same group with a time interval of at least five weeks with a view to determine whether the results will be consistent. Applying these two methods could possibly have increased the reliability and validity of research findings for this study.
- In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaires and semi-structured individual interviews. Supplementing these research methods with systemised observation of stress encounter and coping mechanisms could possibly have contributed to the depth of understanding of the phenomenon of stress and burnout.

## **8.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Teaching is one of the most stressful and demanding professions. If a teacher is exposed to stressful situations for a long time without any efforts being made to redress the situation, there is a likelihood that the teacher would eventually be exposed to the risks of burnout. Teachers cope with stress and prevent burnout by employing a combination of stress coping strategies and, although they are aware that less constructive stress coping strategies are not effective in counterbalancing stress permanently, teachers still employ these mechanisms in pursuit of immediate relief. Burnout as the end result of acute stress diminishes teachers' work efficiency which often also results in the bad treatment of learners. Predicted by variables such as age, gender, personality, teaching experience, workload, role ambiguity, role conflict, lack of personnel development, school organisational climate, school organisational culture

and type of school, burnout is triggered by threatening experiences and buffered by pleasant involvements.

As stress cannot be avoided, the importance of coping with stress effectively in order to alleviate the negative influences of possible burnout, coping strategies include social and emotional support through school-based initiatives, workplace wellness programmes and joining work-related social groups while also relying on family and friends for support. Group effort is always the best solution to life problems, the latter which include acute stress eventually resulting in burnout.

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## Appendix A

### A LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

#### Request for permission to conduct research at the National University of Lesotho

Title: Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho

05/05/2017

**Mrs. E. Sebatane**

Department of Bachelor of Education - Primary

**00266 58860851**

[ediesebatane@gmail.com](mailto:ediesebatane@gmail.com)

Dear Mrs. Sebatane

I, Isaiah Motho Makhetha, am doing research under supervision of Prof. H. M. Van der Merwe, a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Doctor of Education at the University of South Africa. I request you to give me permission to invite students in the programme of Bachelor of Education in Primary Education – Part-Time Studies to participate in a study entitled **stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho**.

The aim of the study is to establish some important stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers and to establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout. Your department has been selected because the student teachers in your department have relevant information for this study.

The focus of this study is on burnout and coping strategies among primary school teachers in Lesotho. The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between burnout which is a dependent variable and teacher's age, gender, personality and experience, work overload, role ambiguity, lack of staff development, organisational climate, organisational culture, type of school and general organisational commitment which are the independent variables. The study also intends to establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout. The researcher will adapt a mixed-methods research approach consisting of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The sample for the quantitative part of

the study will consist of 350 teachers. The sample for the qualitative part of the study will comprise 20 teachers. Data will be collected through the use of questionnaires and individual interviews.

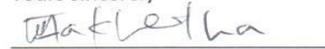
17

The benefits of this study are that teachers will be informed about the main stress-related factors which result in burnout. They will also be informed about the functional strategies that can be employed to prevent burnout. The officers in the Ministry of Education and Training will be availed with information which will help them to draw policies regarding the well-being of teachers.

Potential risks: This study is assessed as a risk category 2 (low risk). The research problem (topic) is uncontroversial and therefore, the type of information to be collected from participants is regarded as non-sensitive. Participants for this study are adults and as such are not considered to be a vulnerable research population.

Feedback procedure: During a process of data collection, participants will be informed that those who would like to get a copy of a thesis should tell the researcher and the researcher will write their names. When the study is complete, then arrangements will be made for them to get copies of the study.

Yours sincerely



Isaiah Motho Makhetha

Student at University of South Africa

## Appendix B

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM (RETURN SLIP)

05/05/2017

Title: Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Isaiah Motho Makhetha and I am doing research under the supervision of Prof. H. M. Van der Merwe, a professor, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a Doctor of Education at the University of South Africa. I am inviting you to participate in my study entitled **Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho.**

#### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

The purpose of this study is to find out the main stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers and to establish some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout.

#### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

The main reason for you to be selected as participant in this study is the fact that you are a practising teacher in one of the primary schools in Lesotho. I assume that you have valuable data for my study. I am a part-time lecturer in the programme of Bachelor of Education – Primary. Currently, I am teaching 4<sup>th</sup> year students in the programme. The total number of student teachers who will participate in this study is 370.

#### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

You will participate in two different ways in this study, namely, filling in a questionnaire and possibly also partaking in an individual interview. The time allocated for completing the questionnaire is 5 minutes while a maximum of 45 minutes will be used for taking part in an individual interview with me.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw without penalty at any time and without giving a reason. However, it must be indicated that it will not be possible to withdraw once you have submitted your questionnaire.

### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

You will benefit from participating in this study in the following ways:

- You will get some information about the stress-related factors which result in burnout among teachers.
- You will be informed about the strategies which can be employed by teachers in order to prevent burnout.

### **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

There are no risks involved in participating in this study. The questionnaires will be completed at the campus of the National University of Lesotho. The interviews will also be conducted at the university campus. Furthermore, there is no sensitive information which will be required from you.

### **WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

The information which you will provide will be treated with a high level of confidentiality. Your name will not be recorded anywhere in my thesis and as such no one will be able to connect you to the answers you will give.

Your anonymous data may also be used for other academic purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. However, under such circumstances, privacy will be protected in any publication of the information. For example, reports of such studies will be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such reports.

**HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by me for a period of five years in a locked cupboard in my study room for future research or academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on my password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval. After five years, hard copies of your information will be shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of my computer.

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

Your participation in this study will not be rewarded by money. Any kind of incentive which will be available for your participation will be a copy of the thesis if you wish to get a copy. During your participation in this study, you will not incur any costs as data will be collected while you are on campus for your scheduled module sessions at the National University of Lesotho.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education Ethics Review Committee (CEDU REC), UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

**HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

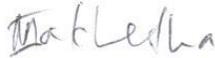
If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Isaiah Motho Makhetha on +266 58032961 or immakhetha@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for 2019.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Mrs. E. M. Lepota on 22312721 or l.lepota@lce.ac.ls.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof. H. M. Van der Merwe on +27834421503 or vdmerhm@unisa.ac.za or fax +27866421647

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



---

Isaiah Motho Makhetha

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to fill in the questionnaire.

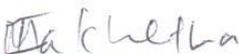
I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
05/05/2017

## **Appendix C**

### **A LETTER REQUESTING AN ADULT TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW**

Dear participant

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, Isaiah Motho Makhetha, am conducting as part of my research as a doctoral student entitled “Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho” at the University of South Africa. Permission for the study has been given by the Department of Educational Leadership and Management and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic.

I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you should agree to take part. The importance of this study in education is substantial and well documented. Stress coping strategies and burnout prevention are important in a day to day life of teachers. In this interview I would like to have your views and opinions on this topic. This information can be used to improve wellbeing of teachers.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately 35 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during

this study will be retained on a password protected computer for 5 years in my locked study room.

The benefits of this study are that in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of your studies for the Bachelor's degree in Primary Education at the National University of Lesotho, you will be studying a course named Introduction to Educational Research Methods for which you will be conducting action research. Participating in this study will give you an opportunity to be exposed to practical know-how on collecting data to answer your research questions satisfactorily. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Isaiah Motho Makhetha on +266 58032961 or immakhetha@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for 2019.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +26658032961 or by e-mail at immakhetha@gmail.com.

I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form.

Yours sincerely

_____	<i>Isaiah Motho Makhetha</i>	_____
Isaiah Motho Makhetha	Researcher's signature:	05/05/2017

#### CONSENT FORM

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study entitled stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Name: Isaiah Motho Makhetha

Researcher's Signature: *Isaiah Motho Makhetha*

05/05/2017

## Appendix D

### COVERING LETTER FOR A QUESTIONNAIRE

**Titles of questionnaire:** Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educators Survey, Demographic and Personality Questionnaire, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Overload Scales and School Environmental Questionnaire.

Dear respondent

This questionnaire forms part of my *doctoral* research entitled: “Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho” for the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of South Africa. You have been selected by a stratified sampling strategy from the population of 600 students enrolled for the Bachelor’s degree in Primary Education at the University of Lesotho. Hence, I invite you to take part in this survey. The aim of this study is to investigate stress-related factors resulting in burnout among teachers and to determine some functional strategies that can be employed by teachers to prevent burnout. The findings of the study will benefit teachers in the sense of providing them with feasible strategies to alleviate stress and to prevent possible burn-out.

You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire, comprising four sections as honestly and frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. No foreseeable risks are associated with the completion of the questionnaire which is for research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

You are not required to indicate your name or organisation and your anonymity will be ensured; however, indication of your age, gender, and occupation position will contribute to a more comprehensive analysis. All information obtained from this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you have the right to omit any question if so desired, or to withdraw from answering this survey without penalty at any stage. After the completion of the study, an electronic summary of the findings of the research will be made available to you on request.

Permission to undertake this survey has been granted by the University of South Africa and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. If you have any research-related

enquiries, they can be addressed directly to me or my supervisor. My contact details are: +266 58032961; e-mail: [immakhetha@gmail.com](mailto:immakhetha@gmail.com) and my supervisor can be reached at +27834421503, Department of Educational Leadership and Management, College of Education, UNISA, e-mail: [vdmerhm@unisa.ac.za](mailto:vdmerhm@unisa.ac.za).

By completing the questionnaire, you imply that you have agreed to participate in this research. Please return the completed questionnaire to the office of the Coordinator – BEd Primary Programme before 15/07/2017

**4.8 INTERVIEW CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I \_\_\_\_\_ grant consent that the information I share during the interviews may be used by Isaiah Motho Makhetha, for research purposes. I am aware that the interview discussions will be hand recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the interview discussions to any person outside the interview in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Name: Isaiah Motho Makhetha

Researcher's Signature: Isaiah Motho Makhetha

05/05/2017

## Appendix E

### MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY- EDUCATORS SURVEY

Put a tick in the column which applies to you

Statement	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
I feel emotionally drained from my work							
I feel used up at the end of the day							
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work							
I can easily understand how my learners feel about things							
I feel I treat some learners as if they were impersonal objects							
Working with people all day is really a strain for me							
I deal effectively with the problems of my learners							
I feel burned out from my work							
I feel I am positively influencing other people's lives through my work							
I have become more indifferent towards people since I took this job							

I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally							
I feel very energetic							
I feel frustrated by my job							
I feel I am working too hard in my job							
I do not really care what happens to some learners							
Working directly with people puts too much stress on me							
I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my learners							
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my learners							
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job							
I feel as though I am at the end of my tether							
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly							
I feel learners blame me for some of their problems							

## Appendix F

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERSONALITY QUESTIONNAIRE

**Instructions:** Filling in your answer in the spaces provided and put a tick in the appropriate brackets next to your choice.

#### Demographic Information

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is age a predictor of teacher burnout? [ ]
3. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
4. Is gender a predictor of teacher burnout? [ ]
5. Number of years of experience (teaching experience): \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is teaching experience a predictor of teacher burnout? [ ]

#### Personality

7. How can you describe your personality?  
Introvert (quiet/reserved person): [ ]  
Extrovert (talkative): [ ]  
Agreeable (cooperative/kind/forgiving): [ ]  
Emotional instability (feelings of insecurity/changing moods): [ ]
8. Is personality a predictor of teacher burnout? [ ]

## Appendix G

### ROLE CONFLICT, ROLE AMBIGUITY AND OVERLOAD SCALES

Put a tick in the column which applies to you

Statement	Yes	No
I feel certain about how much authority I have		
There are clear, planned goals and objectives for my job		
I know that I have divided my time for job tasks properly		
I know what my responsibilities are		
I know exactly what is expected of me		
Explanation is clear of what has to be done at my work place		
I have to do things that should be done differently		
I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it		
I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out an assignment		
I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently		
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people		
I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others		
I receive an assignment without adequate resources and materials to execute it		
I am requested to perform unnecessary tasks		
There are many learners in the grades which I am teaching		
I am teaching more than one grade		
I am overloaded with work		

## Appendix H

### SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Put a tick in the brackets which apply to you

1. Over the past two years, did you attend?
  - a. Workshop.
  - b. Short training course.
  - c. Long training course.
2. Lack of training opportunities causes burnout among teachers. Yes  No
3. Unsupportive school climate such as unfavourable school norms/regulations, values, beliefs and traditions cause burnout among teachers. Yes  No
4. Bad school cultures such as bad management styles and inflexible rules cause burnout among teachers. Yes  No
5. Working in a school where there are uncomfortable working conditions such as shortage of furniture, poor, unclean and unsafe work environment such as old and dusty offices and classrooms cause burnout among teachers. Yes  No
6. Teachers who are not favoured by their managers/principals are likely to experience a problem of burnout. Yes  No

## **Appendix I**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ON THEMES RELATED TO STRESS AND BURNOUT**

This interview guide covers four sections as illustrated below:

#### **Interview schedule on the relationship between stress and burnout**

1. What is your definition of burnout?
2. What is your interpretation of the relationship between stress and burnout?
3. What do you experience as your main stressors and how do you anticipate these stressors to result in possible burnout for you?

#### **Interview schedule on the consequences of burnout among teachers**

1. How does burnout affect your wellbeing?
2. How does burnout affect your work?
3. Some people argue that burnout causes teacher attrition. What is your view on this issue?

#### **Interview schedule on teacher stress and depression coping strategies**

1. Which positive stress coping strategies do you use in order to prevent burnout?
2. Which negative stress coping strategies do you use in order to prevent burnout?
3. Which neutral stress coping strategies do you use in order to prevent burnout?

#### **Interview schedule on the roles that can be played by the Ministry of Education and Training as a way of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout**

1. What roles can the Ministry of Education and Training play as a way of equipping teachers to cope with stress in order to prevent burnout? Discuss at least six roles.

APPENDIX J

# Critical Values of the *F* Distribution

DF FOR DENOMINATOR	x	DF FOR NUMERATOR											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	.10	39.9	49.5	53.6	55.8	57.2	58.2	58.9	59.4	59.9	60.2	60.5	60.7
	.05	161	200	216	225	230	234	237	239	241	242	243	244
	.01												
2	.10	8.53	9.00	9.16	9.24	9.29	9.33	9.35	9.37	9.38	9.39	9.40	9.41
	.05	18.5	19.0	19.2	19.2	19.3	19.3	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.4
	.01	98.5	99.0	99.2	99.2	99.3	99.3	99.4	99.4	99.4	99.4	99.4	99.4
3	.10	5.54	5.46	5.39	5.34	5.31	5.28	5.27	5.25	5.24	5.23	5.22	5.22
	.05	10.1	9.55	9.28	9.12	9.01	8.94	8.89	8.85	8.81	8.79	8.76	8.74
	.01	34.1	30.8	29.5	28.7	28.2	27.9	27.7	27.5	27.3	27.2	27.1	27.1
4	.10	4.54	4.32	4.19	4.11	4.05	4.01	3.98	3.95	3.94	3.92	3.91	3.90
	.05	7.71	6.94	6.59	6.39	6.26	6.16	6.09	6.04	6.00	5.96	5.94	5.91
	.01	21.2	18.0	16.7	16.0	15.5	15.2	15.0	14.8	14.7	14.5	14.4	14.4
5	.10	4.06	3.78	3.62	3.52	3.45	3.40	3.37	3.34	3.32	3.30	3.28	3.27
	.05	6.61	5.79	5.41	5.19	5.05	4.95	4.88	4.82	4.77	4.74	4.71	4.68
	.01	16.3	13.3	12.1	11.4	11.0	10.7	10.5	10.3	10.2	10.1	9.96	9.89
6	.10	3.78	3.46	3.29	3.18	3.11	3.05	3.01	2.98	2.96	2.94	2.92	2.90
	.05	5.99	5.14	4.76	4.53	4.39	4.28	4.21	4.15	4.10	4.06	4.03	4.00
	.01	13.7	10.9	9.78	9.15	8.75	8.47	8.26	8.10	7.98	7.87	7.79	7.72
7	.10	3.59	3.26	3.07	2.96	2.88	2.83	2.78	2.75	2.72	2.70	2.68	2.67
	.05	5.59	4.74	4.35	4.12	3.97	3.87	3.79	3.73	3.68	3.64	3.60	3.57
	.01	12.2	9.55	8.45	7.85	7.46	7.19	6.99	6.84	6.72	6.62	6.54	6.47
8	.10	3.46	3.11	2.92	2.81	2.73	2.67	2.62	2.59	2.56	2.54	2.52	2.50
	.05	5.32	4.46	4.07	3.84	3.69	3.58	3.50	3.44	3.39	3.35	3.31	3.28
	.01	11.3	8.65	7.59	7.01	6.63	6.37	6.18	6.03	5.91	5.81	5.73	5.67
9	.10	3.36	3.01	2.81	2.69	2.61	2.55	2.51	2.47	2.44	2.42	2.40	2.38
	.05	5.12	4.26	3.86	3.63	3.48	3.37	3.29	3.23	3.18	3.14	3.10	3.07
	.01	10.6	8.02	6.99	6.42	6.06	5.80	5.61	5.47	5.35	5.26	5.18	5.11
10	.10	3.29	2.92	2.73	2.61	2.52	2.46	2.41	2.38	2.35	2.32	2.30	2.28
	.05	4.96	4.10	3.71	3.48	3.33	3.22	3.14	3.07	3.02	2.98	2.94	2.91
	.01	10.0	7.56	6.55	5.99	5.64	5.39	5.20	5.06	4.94	4.85	4.77	4.71
11	.10	3.23	2.86	2.66	2.54	2.45	2.39	2.34	2.30	2.27	2.25	2.23	2.21
	.05	4.84	3.98	3.59	3.36	3.20	3.09	3.01	2.95	2.90	2.85	2.82	2.79
	.01	9.65	7.21	6.22	5.67	5.32	5.07	4.89	4.74	4.63	4.54	4.46	4.40
12	.10	3.18	2.81	2.61	2.48	2.39	2.33	2.28	2.24	2.21	2.19	2.17	2.15
	.05	4.75	3.89	3.49	3.26	3.11	3.00	2.91	2.85	2.80	2.75	2.72	2.69
	.01	9.33	6.93	5.95	5.41	5.06	4.82	4.64	4.50	4.39	4.30	4.22	4.16
13	.10	3.14	2.76	2.56	2.43	2.35	2.28	2.23	2.20	2.16	2.14	2.12	2.10
	.05	4.67	3.81	3.41	3.18	3.03	2.92	2.83	2.77	2.71	2.67	2.63	2.60
	.01	9.07	6.70	5.74	5.21	4.86	4.62	4.44	4.30	4.19	4.10	4.02	3.96
14	.10	3.10	2.73	2.52	2.39	2.31	2.24	2.19	2.15	2.12	2.10	2.08	2.05
	.05	4.60	3.74	3.34	3.11	2.96	2.85	2.76	2.70	2.65	2.60	2.57	2.53
	.01	8.86	6.51	5.56	5.04	4.69	4.46	4.28	4.14	4.03	3.94	3.86	3.80
15	.10	3.07	2.70	2.49	2.36	2.27	2.21	2.16	2.12	2.09	2.06	2.04	2.02
	.05	4.54	3.68	3.29	3.06	2.90	2.79	2.71	2.64	2.59	2.54	2.51	2.48
	.01	8.68	6.36	5.42	4.89	4.56	4.32	4.14	4.00	3.89	3.80	3.73	3.67
16	.10	3.05	2.67	2.46	2.33	2.24	2.18	2.13	2.09	2.06	2.03	2.01	1.99
	.05	4.49	3.63	3.24	3.01	2.85	2.74	2.66	2.59	2.54	2.49	2.46	2.42
	.01	8.53	6.23	5.29	4.77	4.44	4.20	4.03	3.89	3.78	3.69	3.62	3.55

Source: Best and Kahn, 1998:403

Critical Values of the F Distribution

DF FOR NUMERATOR												x	DF FOR DENOMINATOR
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
3.03	2.64	2.44	2.31	2.22	2.15	2.10	2.06	2.03	2.00	1.98	1.96	.10	17
4.45	3.59	3.20	2.96	2.81	2.70	2.61	2.55	2.49	2.45	2.41	2.38	.05	
8.40	6.11	5.18	4.67	4.34	4.10	3.93	3.79	3.68	3.59	3.52	3.46	.01	
3.01	2.62	2.42	2.29	2.20	2.13	2.08	2.04	2.00	1.98	1.96	1.93	.10	18
4.41	3.55	3.16	2.93	2.77	2.66	2.58	2.51	2.46	2.41	2.37	2.34	.05	
8.29	6.01	5.09	4.58	4.25	4.01	3.84	3.71	3.60	3.51	3.43	3.37	.01	
2.99	2.61	2.40	2.27	2.18	2.11	2.06	2.02	1.98	1.96	1.94	1.91	.10	19
4.38	3.52	3.13	2.90	2.74	2.63	2.54	2.48	2.42	2.38	2.34	2.31	.05	
8.18	5.93	5.01	4.50	4.17	3.94	3.77	3.63	3.52	3.43	3.36	3.30	.01	
2.97	2.59	2.38	2.25	2.16	2.09	2.04	2.00	1.96	1.94	1.92	1.89	.10	20
4.35	3.49	3.10	2.87	2.71	2.60	2.51	2.45	2.39	2.35	2.31	2.28	.05	
8.10	5.85	4.94	4.43	4.10	3.87	3.70	3.56	3.46	3.37	3.29	3.23	.01	
2.95	2.56	2.35	2.22	2.13	2.06	2.01	1.97	1.93	1.90	1.88	1.86	.10	22
4.30	3.44	3.05	2.82	2.66	2.55	2.46	2.40	2.34	2.30	2.26	2.23	.05	
7.95	5.72	4.82	4.31	3.99	3.76	3.59	3.45	3.35	3.26	3.18	3.12	.01	
2.93	2.54	2.33	2.19	2.10	2.04	1.98	1.94	1.91	1.88	1.85	1.83	.10	24
4.26	3.40	3.01	2.78	2.62	2.51	2.42	2.36	2.30	2.25	2.21	2.18	.05	
7.82	5.61	4.72	4.22	3.90	3.67	3.50	3.36	3.26	3.17	3.09	3.03	.01	
2.91	2.52	2.31	2.17	2.08	2.01	1.96	1.92	1.88	1.86	1.84	1.81	.10	26
4.23	3.37	2.98	2.74	2.59	2.47	2.39	2.32	2.27	2.22	2.18	2.15	.05	
7.72	5.53	4.64	4.14	3.82	3.59	3.42	3.29	3.18	3.09	3.02	2.96	.01	
2.89	2.50	2.29	2.16	2.06	2.00	1.94	1.90	1.87	1.84	1.81	1.79	.10	28
4.20	3.34	2.95	2.71	2.56	2.45	2.36	2.29	2.24	2.19	2.15	2.12	.05	
7.64	5.45	4.57	4.07	3.75	3.53	3.36	3.23	3.12	3.03	2.96	2.90	.01	
2.88	2.49	2.28	2.14	2.05	1.98	1.93	1.88	1.85	1.82	1.79	1.77	.10	30
4.17	3.32	2.92	2.69	2.53	2.42	2.33	2.27	2.21	2.16	2.13	2.09	.05	
7.56	5.39	4.51	4.02	3.70	3.47	3.30	3.17	3.07	2.98	2.91	2.84	.01	
2.84	2.44	2.23	2.09	2.00	1.93	1.87	1.83	1.79	1.76	1.73	1.71	.10	40
4.06	3.23	2.84	2.61	2.45	2.34	2.25	2.18	2.12	2.08	2.04	2.00	.05	
7.31	5.18	4.31	3.83	3.51	3.29	3.12	2.99	2.89	2.80	2.73	2.66	.01	
2.79	2.39	2.18	2.04	1.95	1.87	1.82	1.77	1.74	1.71	1.68	1.66	.10	60
4.00	3.15	2.76	2.53	2.37	2.25	2.17	2.10	2.04	1.99	1.95	1.92	.05	
7.08	4.98	4.13	3.65	3.34	3.12	2.95	2.82	2.72	2.63	2.56	2.50	.01	
2.75	2.35	2.13	1.99	1.90	1.82	1.77	1.72	1.68	1.65	1.62	1.60	.10	120
3.92	3.07	2.68	2.45	2.29	2.17	2.09	2.02	1.96	1.91	1.87	1.83	.05	
6.85	4.79	3.95	3.48	3.17	2.96	2.79	2.66	2.56	2.47	2.40	2.34	.01	
2.73	2.33	2.11	1.97	1.88	1.80	1.75	1.70	1.66	1.63	1.60	1.57	.10	200
3.89	3.04	2.65	2.42	2.26	2.14	2.06	1.98	1.93	1.88	1.84	1.80	.05	
6.76	4.71	3.88	3.41	3.11	2.89	2.73	2.60	2.50	2.41	2.34	2.27	.01	
2.71	2.30	2.08	1.94	1.85	1.77	1.72	1.67	1.63	1.60	1.57	1.55	.10	(∞)
3.84	3.00	2.60	2.37	2.21	2.10	2.01	1.94	1.88	1.83	1.79	1.75	.05	
6.63	4.61	3.78	3.32	3.02	2.80	2.64	2.51	2.41	2.32	2.25	2.18	.01	

Source: Best and Kahn, 1998:405

APPENDIX K

**Abridged Table of Critical Values for Chi Square**

<i>df</i>	<i>Level of significance</i>	
	<i>.05</i>	<i>.01</i>
1	3.84	6.64
2	5.99	9.21
3	7.82	11.34
4	9.49	13.28
5	11.07	15.09
6	12.59	16.81
7	14.07	18.48
8	15.51	20.09
9	16.92	21.67
10	18.31	23.21
11	19.68	24.72
12	21.03	26.22
13	22.36	27.69
14	23.68	29.14
15	25.00	30.58
16	26.30	32.00
17	27.59	33.41
18	28.87	34.80
19	30.14	36.19
20	31.41	37.57
21	32.67	38.93
22	33.92	40.29
23	35.17	41.64
24	36.42	42.98
25	37.65	44.31
26	38.88	45.64
27	40.11	46.96
28	41.34	48.28
29	42.56	49.59
30	43.77	50.89

Source: Best and Kahn, 1998:401

## APPENDIX L

### Critical Values of Student's Distribution (t)

df	Two-tailed test level of significance		One-tailed test level of significance	
	.05	.01	.05	.01
1	12.706	63.557	6.314	31.821
2	4.303	9.925	2.920	6.965
3	3.182	5.841	2.353	4.541
4	2.776	4.604	2.132	3.747
5	2.571	4.032	2.015	3.365
6	2.447	3.707	1.943	3.143
7	2.365	3.499	1.895	2.998
8	2.306	3.355	1.860	2.896
9	2.262	3.250	1.833	2.821
10	2.228	3.169	1.812	2.764
11	2.201	3.106	1.796	2.718
12	2.179	3.055	1.782	2.681
13	2.160	3.012	1.771	2.650
14	2.145	2.977	1.761	2.624
15	2.131	2.947	1.753	2.602
16	2.120	2.921	1.746	2.583
17	2.110	2.898	1.740	2.567
18	2.101	2.878	1.734	2.552
19	2.093	2.861	1.729	2.539
20	2.086	2.845	1.725	2.528
21	2.080	2.831	1.721	2.518
22	2.074	2.819	1.717	2.508
23	2.069	2.807	1.714	2.500
24	2.064	2.797	1.711	2.492
25	2.060	2.787	1.708	2.485
26	2.056	2.779	1.706	2.479
27	2.052	2.771	1.703	2.473
28	2.048	2.763	1.701	2.467
29	2.045	2.756	1.699	2.462
30	2.042	2.750	1.697	2.457
40	2.021	2.704	1.684	2.423
60	2.000	2.660	1.671	2.390
120	1.980	2.617	1.658	2.358
∞	1.960	2.576	1.645	2.326

Source: Best and Kahn, 1998:399

## Appendix M



### UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/06/14

Ref#: **2017/06/14/41854284/19/MC**

Dear Mr Makhetha,

Name: Mr MI Makhetha

Student#: 41854284

**Decision:** Ethics Approval from  
2017/06/14 to 2022/06/14

---

#### Researcher:

Name: Mr MI Makhetha

Email: immakhetha@gmail.com

Telephone#: 0026628322691

#### Supervisor:

Name: Prof HM van der Merwe

Email: vdmerhm@unisa.ac.za

Telephone#: 083 442 1503

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#### Title of research:

**Stress coping strategies to prevent burnout amongst primary school teachers in Lesotho**

**Qualification:** D Ed in Education Management

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Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2017/06/14 to 2022/06/14.

*The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/06/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:



University of South Africa  
Pretoria Street, Mucklenek, Boksburg, City of Johannesburg  
PO Box 95, UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2022/06/14. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

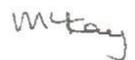
The reference number **2017/06/14/41854284/19/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



**Dr M Claassens**

**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**



**Prof V McKay**

**EXECUTIVE DEAN**

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017



University of South Africa  
 P.O. Box 17003, Midrand, 2013, South Africa  
 Telephone: +27 12 429 4111 Fax: +27 12 429 4110  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)