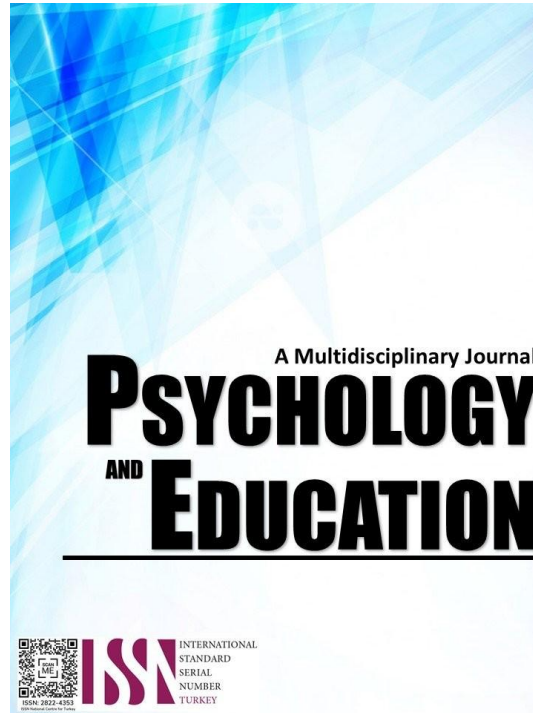


# THE UNTOLD STORIES OF PART-TIME TEACHER BURNOUT: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY INTO STRESS MANAGEMENT AND COPING MECHANISMS



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## The Untold Stories of Part-Time Teacher Burnout: A Qualitative Inquiry into Stress Management and Coping Mechanisms

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### Abstract

Burnout remains a significant challenge for teachers, yet the struggles of part-time staff are often overlooked. Teaching is a demanding profession, and constant stress can harm both physical and mental health, leading to exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. This study examined in depth how part-time teachers experience burnout and how they manage stress. Using a semi-structured interview guide with seven (7) participants, the study found that burnout stems mainly from job instability, lack of recognition, and pressure to handle multiple responsibilities. Teachers shared coping strategies, including time management, mindfulness, social support, and faith-based practices. While these personal methods help reduce stress, they do not address deeper systemic problems. The study highlights the need for schools to provide better working conditions, mental health support, and a more inclusive environment to promote teacher well-being.

**Keywords:** *burnout, coping mechanisms, mental health, part-time teachers, stress management, teacher well-being*

### Introduction

Burnout among part-time instructors has increasingly emerged as a significant concern, despite the limited attention it has received in existing literature compared to full-time teacher burnout. Burnout in this study is operationally defined as a prolonged state of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy that results from chronic teaching-related stressors. It is treated not merely as a condition, but as an experienced outcome of sustained exposure to demanding teaching environments. Among part-time instructors, this burnout manifests through delayed reactions, diminished enthusiasm, perceived decline in teaching quality, emotional volatility, and observable fatigue.

Mental health is closely associated with burnout, as it reflects an individual's psychological, emotional, and social well-being. From a personal perspective, mental health is affected when teachers struggle to balance multiple responsibilities such as managing numerous students, preparing lessons, retaking classes, fulfilling administrative tasks, and meeting family obligations. When coping mechanisms are insufficient, accumulated stress can lead to anxiety, emotional exhaustion, sleep disturbances, and decreased motivation. As noted by Atashpanjeh et al. (2020), chronic exposure to such stressors can significantly impair job performance and emotional stability.

From a professional perspective, mental health is influenced by workplace conditions, including excessive workloads, administrative pressures, inadequate compensation, and limited institutional support. Studies have shown that teachers are at high risk of burnout due to excessive workplace stress (Garcia-Carmona et al., 2018). Emotional burnout syndrome negatively affects professional development, productivity, and job satisfaction, often resulting in emotional detachment and physical fatigue (Arystanbay & Tykezhanova, 2023). When teachers experience reduced professional efficacy, their instructional quality declines, potentially affecting student engagement and academic outcomes (Madigan & Kim, 2024). In the Philippines, additional stressors such as low salaries relative to living wages, long working hours, and large class sizes further compromise teachers' psychological well-being (Jardinico et al., 2024). These systemic conditions directly impact mental health by creating persistent financial strain and work-life imbalance.

From a general or systemic perspective, teacher mental health is shaped by broader educational and societal structures. Inadequate facilities, insufficient teaching materials, and the necessity to self-fund classroom resources increase emotional and financial burdens. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these stressors by requiring sudden shifts to online instruction without sufficient training or technological resources (Thomas & Reyes, 2024). The cumulative effect of these pressures contributes to a motivation gap, disengagement from tasks, and, in some cases, attrition from the profession (Montgomery & Johnson, 2021; Yang & Chee, 2023). Thus, burnout is not solely an individual weakness but a systemic outcome of sustained occupational strain.

Addressing burnout requires recognizing its direct link to mental health and its multidimensional causes. Interventions such as streamlining administrative duties, providing financial assistance, implementing wellness programs, and strengthening peer support systems have been identified as essential strategies for improving teacher well-being (Sevilla et al., 2025). Supporting teachers' mental health is not only a personal concern but also a national educational priority.

This qualitative study seeks to explore the lived experiences of part-time teachers to better understand how burnout develops and how mental health is shaped by their personal circumstances, professional responsibilities, and broader systemic conditions. By uncovering their "untold stories," this research aims to provide deeper insight into the stressors they encounter, the coping mechanisms they employ, and the consequences of burnout as an experiential result of teaching. Furthermore, this study aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), by promoting mental health awareness

among educators; SDG 4 (Quality Education), by recognizing that teacher well-being directly influences educational quality; SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), by highlighting the need for fair workload distribution and adequate compensation; and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), by addressing disparities affecting teachers in underserved contexts.

Ultimately, understanding burnout among part-time teachers requires recognizing it as a lived mental health experience shaped by personal responsibilities, professional demands, and systemic educational conditions. Burnout in this study is not viewed merely as an abstract concept, but as a concrete outcome of prolonged exposure to teaching-related stressors that affect emotional stability, professional identity, and overall well-being. By exploring the lived experiences of part-time educators, this qualitative research seeks to uncover how burnout develops, how teachers interpret and cope with it, and how it influences their motivation, job satisfaction, and teaching performance. Giving voice to the “untold stories” of part-time instructors is essential in developing targeted interventions that support their mental health and sustain their professional growth. Understanding these experiences is not only beneficial for teachers themselves but also critical to ensuring quality education for students. By situating teacher burnout within broader personal, professional, and systemic contexts, this study aims to contribute to the creation of more responsive institutional policies and a more humane, supportive educational environment.

## Research Questions

This study primarily aimed to uncover the essence of the lived experiences of part-time faculty members regarding burnout and the coping mechanisms they employ to manage it. By focusing on their personal accounts, the research sought to understand how teaching-related stressors affect their mental health, professional well-being, and overall functioning. Furthermore, the study intended to use these insights as a basis for proposing appropriate administrative actions that may better support part-time teachers and promote a healthier and more sustainable working environment. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of part-time faculty members in relation to burnout?
2. How do part-time faculty members cope with burnout-related challenges?
3. What administrative actions can be proposed to support part-time teachers?

## Literature Review

### *Lack of studies in the local context*

Most teacher burnout research is from Western regions, as Dreer (2023) and Mijakoski (2022) show that international studies have investigated Asian and Philippine educational contexts less frequently. Existing research conducted in Cebu has explored teacher stress, but these studies are predominantly quantitative and focused on general teaching populations rather than part-time educators. Recent local data indicate that Cebuano teachers perform well yet experience high levels of work-related stress during their teaching. However, this relationship has not been examined through the lens of their internal stress experiences. The educational environment in Cebu warrants interpretive research, given the paucity of local academic studies on the topic.

### *Limited qualitative studies*

The present research shows an excessive preference for quantitative research methods. Teachers experience burnout at a rate higher than in other professional fields, according to recent large-scale quantitative studies (Gallup, 2024), which provide statistical evidence. Research about non-teaching employees in Valencia City and Sarangani (2025) shows that all school personnel face challenges with workload distribution and salary issues, not just teachers. Quantitative research designs demonstrate an existing crisis, yet they fail to provide comprehensive insights into teachers' actual emotional states (Dreer, 2023; Mijakoski, 2022). The majority of qualitative research examines full-time teachers and novice educators, while part-time teachers who combine instructional work with other activities remain mostly unstudied (Amzat et al., 2021).

Building from these findings, existing quantitative studies consistently demonstrate that workload pressure, administrative demands, and salary-related concerns contribute significantly to burnout across educational settings. Research further suggests that employees who navigate multiple institutional roles may experience identity-role conflict due to varying expectations across organizations. Moreover, several studies highlight a resilience paradox in which educators maintain satisfactory performance despite reporting high levels of emotional exhaustion. While these findings establish the measurable prevalence and contributing factors of burnout, they do not sufficiently explain how part-time faculty members personally interpret, internalize, and cope with these experiences. Therefore, an interpretive qualitative approach is necessary to explore the deeper meanings behind these conditions and to generate contextualized insights that may inform responsive administrative support.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to examine the lived experiences of part-time teachers at St. Cecilia's College–Cebu, Inc. Phenomenology was appropriate because the study focused on how participants experienced and made sense of burnout, work-related stress, job dissatisfaction, and the coping strategies they used

to manage these challenges. The study was grounded in an interpretative epistemological stance, which assumes that knowledge is constructed through individuals' subjective interpretations of their lived experiences. Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, allowing participants to narrate their experiences in their own words while enabling the researcher to ask follow-up questions for clarification and deeper exploration. The analysis strictly followed the systematic procedures of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis as outlined by established IPA scholars.

First, each interview was transcribed verbatim to ensure the accuracy of participants' accounts. Second, the researcher engaged in repeated reading of each transcript to develop familiarity with the data. During this stage, detailed initial noting was conducted, including descriptive comments (content-focused observations), linguistic comments (use of language and expression), and conceptual comments (interpretative insights).

Third, emergent themes were identified from the initial notes by condensing significant statements into concise thematic phrases that captured the psychological essence of the participants' experiences. Fourth, connections among emergent themes were examined within each case, clustering related themes into superordinate themes. This step ensured that each participant's experience was analyzed independently before cross-case comparisons were made.

Fifth, the process was repeated for each participant to preserve idiographic commitment, a core principle of IPA that emphasizes detailed case-by-case analysis. Finally, patterns across cases were identified to determine shared themes and notable divergences among participants. These overarching themes represented the collective yet nuanced lived experiences of part-time teachers regarding burnout and coping mechanisms.

Through this structured IPA process, the study was able to move beyond surface descriptions and interpret how participants made meaning of their experiences. This approach ensured depth, rigor, and alignment with phenomenological inquiry.

## **Participants**

The study involved seven (7) key informants selected through purposive sampling. All participants were part-time college instructors at St. Cecilia's College–Cebu, Inc., who simultaneously held full-time employment in other organizations. The selection criteria were aligned with the study's primary focus: examining the lived experiences and plight of part-time teachers. Participants were required to (a) be officially employed as part-time faculty members, (b) possess at least a bachelor's degree, and (c) have a minimum of four (4) years of teaching experience to ensure substantial exposure to teaching-related demands.

The informants ranged in age from 31 to 54 years old, allowing the study to capture perspectives from early mid-career to more experienced educators. They represented various academic departments and handled subjects under Business Administration and Management Accounting, Tourism Management, Hospitality Management, Information Technology, Criminology, and Elementary and Secondary Education programs. This variation in age, academic background, and subject areas strengthened the interpretative and idiographic analysis by allowing the researcher to identify both shared patterns and nuanced differences in how burnout and coping were experienced across disciplines.

The purposive selection ensured that participants had direct and sustained experience with the dual demands of part-time teaching and full-time employment. By focusing specifically on part-time faculty members, the study maintained a clear emphasis on understanding their unique challenges, particularly regarding workload pressures, emotional exhaustion, professional role conflict, and coping strategies. This careful participant selection supported a richer exploration of the essential meanings embedded in their lived experiences.

## **Instrument**

The study employed a semi-structured interview guide comprising six open-ended questions to elicit detailed narratives from part-time teachers at St. Cecilia's College–Cebu, Inc. The guide focused on balancing a full-time job with part-time teaching, addressing challenges, and sharing life lessons and coping strategies. These questions were designed to capture both the practical mechanics and emotional aspects of juggling two demanding roles. To ensure their reliability, the questions were validated and approved by three external research experts.

One of the key instruments for data collection and assessment in the study was the researchers themselves. Their insights were crucial to the analysis of the responses. The goal was to ensure that the collected data were accurate and sufficient to identify common pain points and support mechanisms, thereby guiding institutional policies and resources to better address the needs of tertiary educators in similar dual-career trajectories. Ultimately, this instrument aimed to provide a holistic picture of the dual-career journey.

## **Procedure**

The data collection procedure was carried out systematically to ensure methodological rigor and ethical integrity throughout the study. Prior to data gathering, the researchers secured the necessary institutional approvals and developed a semi-structured interview guide aligned with the study's phenomenological focus. The instrument underwent expert validation to ensure that the questions could elicit rich, in-depth responses relevant to the lived experiences of part-time teachers. Selected participants were formally invited through personal communication and official transmittal letters, which clearly explained the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of



participation, and the assurance of confidentiality.

Data were gathered through one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted in private and mutually agreed-upon locations within the school to ensure participants' comfort and psychological safety. The researcher, serving as the primary instrument of data collection, fostered a respectful and open environment that encouraged participants to share their experiences freely. With informed consent, all interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy, and field notes were taken simultaneously to document nonverbal cues and initial reflections. Immediately after each session, summary notes were prepared to capture emerging insights and contextual observations.

Following data collection, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of participants' narratives. All identifying information was removed to maintain confidentiality, and digital files were securely stored in password-protected repositories accessible only to the researchers. The transcripts and field notes served as the primary sources for interpretative phenomenological analysis, through which recurring themes and essential meanings related to burnout and coping were identified. This comprehensive process ensured that the study adhered to ethical standards, methodological consistency, and fidelity to participants' lived experiences.

### **Data Analysis**

The researchers used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), based on the hermeneutic cycle methodology, to analyze the data, which examines how participants connect their personal narratives with their research findings. The analysis process did not follow a traditional linear path; instead, it employed an iterative loop to interpret multiple elements of the study. The Initial Engagement phase began with researchers examining the transcripts multiple times to identify descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual elements. The researchers gained access to the participant's social environment because they studied how the participant's double identity as a teacher and non-teacher affected his particular way of experiencing life.

The researchers situated each participant within their broader social context, carefully examining how cultural expectations, workplace structures, economic demands, and interpersonal relationships shaped the participant's lived experiences. Rather than simply describing the participant's dual identity as both a teacher and a non-teacher, the researchers repeatedly moved between individual statements and the broader contextual influences affecting them. Through this hermeneutic movement, the researchers interpreted how personal meaning was constructed in relation to societal pressures, professional roles, and lived realities. This continuous interpretative engagement allowed a deeper understanding of how the participant made sense of stress, responsibility, and professional identity.

Through the Identification of Emergent Themes, the researchers engaged in a clear process of double hermeneutics, interpreting how participants themselves interpreted their own experiences. The analysis moved in continuous loops between verbatim extracts, preliminary interpretations, clustered themes, and the overall structure of meaning. Each theme was refined by revisiting transcripts, comparing cases, and reconstructing interpretations to ensure coherence and depth. This iterative hermeneutic cycle allowed the researchers to move from surface descriptions to a more profound understanding of how environmental, cultural, and economic conditions interact to shape burnout and identity tension among dual-career professionals. The final themes, therefore, were not merely categorized patterns but deeply interpreted representations of the essence of participants' lived experiences.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study addressed ethical concerns by implementing several measures that honored individualism, demonstrated compassion, and maintained impartiality. Regarding individualism, the paramount priority was safeguarding the dignity of the part-time teacher participants, ensuring their privacy, and maintaining their confidentiality. They were treated with compassion, particularly given their voluntary participation in the study and the absence of any declared conflicts of interest. This was evident through: (a) no coercion in soliciting their participation, (b) no misleading or exaggerating the study's purpose, and (c) providing clear information about potential benefits and risks so they could make informed choices. Lastly, the principle of impartiality was upheld. In this regard, all participants were treated equally, regardless of background or position; everyone had an equal opportunity to participate and to share their experiences and perspectives on the questions and issues explored in the study. Each contribution was valued, taking into account individual needs, societal impact, and merit.

The semi-structured interview guide questions served as the primary tools for collecting the necessary data for this study. The researchers ensured that participants received clear information about the study's objectives, the methods employed (semi-structured interviews and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis), and the potential outcomes, thereby enabling them to understand their role and their right to withdraw without repercussions. Participants were explicitly informed that their recorded interviews would be transcribed verbatim and used solely for research and analytical purposes under strict confidentiality.

To ensure accuracy and credibility, the researchers conducted member checking after transcription. Each participant was provided with a copy of their transcribed interview and given sufficient time to review it to verify that their statements were accurately captured. Participants were allowed to clarify, modify, or expand their responses if necessary. This process ensured that the transcripts genuinely reflected their intended meanings before proceeding with data analysis.

Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the process. Pseudonyms were used during transcription, and identifiable institutional markers were masked or removed. Participants were informed that only the primary researchers would have access to the

raw data, which were stored in password-protected digital files. All data will be securely kept for research documentation purposes and destroyed after the completion of the study in accordance with ethical research guidelines. No individual was included in the research without being fully informed and providing voluntary written consent.

## Results and Discussion

### *Characterization of the Key Participants*

To gain a deeper understanding and connection to the key participants, it was essential to have a basic background of the interviewees who willingly participated in this study. The figure presented below outlines the participants' demographic background, length of service in teaching, and whether they were working in a non-teaching or teaching profession in their full-time jobs and knowing and understanding who these participants were provided a fundamental perspective that could contribute to the analysis of their experiences, insights, and narratives throughout the subsequent sections of this research.

The table below shows the characteristics of each participant, which covers their gender, age, length of service in the teaching industry, and whether they are in non-teaching or teaching roles in their full-time Occupation.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of the Key Informants*

No.	Codename	Gender	Age
1	Participant A	Male	36
2	Participant B	Male	44
3	Participant C	Female	54
4	Participant D	Male	37
5	Participant E	Male	31
6	Participant F	Male	33
7	Participant G	Male	33

Table 1 illustrates that the participants of this study represented a diverse array of backgrounds, highlighting their varied professional experiences and years of service within the industry. Specifically, participants ranged from recent graduates to seasoned professionals with more than a decade of experience, representing diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Additionally, their roles spanned both teaching and non-teaching full-time positions. This diversity in experience and expertise provided a comprehensive understanding of the industry's challenges and innovations. Of the seven key informants, Participant E, aged 31, had the most teaching experience, with 18 years of service. His long tenure signified deeper experience in teaching, from being a newbie in the industry to adapting to changes and various learnings that built a solid foundation across his profession, teaching, full-time and part-time.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Participants A and G, aged 36 and 33, respectively, are non-teaching employees in full-time positions. Despite working full-time in non-teaching work, they showed different purposes, values, and principles in their part-time job. Their approaches to certain situations had a greater impact on the study.

The contrast between the most experienced and least experienced instructors, along with the age range of 31-54, indicated essential implications for the study. First, it highlighted the longevity of their service; otherwise, it significantly shaped the instructors' ability to manage classrooms and handle responsibilities effectively. While years of service correlated with maturity and life experience, it did not necessarily equate to familiarity with stress management and coping mechanisms. Second, the wide range of tenure among participants enabled a richer thematic analysis, as it captured both long-term systemic issues seen by skilled instructors and the fresh perspectives of newer professionals who might identify emerging challenges or unmet support needs. Finally, the presence of instructors at various stages of their careers suggested a dynamic teaching environment in which professionalism, classroom management, and continuous professional development were essential to sustaining effective teaching operations in educational institutions.

### *Emergent Themes*

#### *Theme 1: Role Strain and Emotional Exhaustion*

The first theme, Role Strain and Emotional Exhaustion, reflects the multidimensional burden experienced by part-time teachers as they navigate institutional demands and personal expectations. Objectively, participants described heavy workloads, multiple class preparations, compliance requirements, and classroom management challenges. Subjectively, these demands were internalized as fatigue, pressure, self-doubt, and emotional depletion. Through IPA coding, categories such as overlapping responsibilities, class management pressures, mental fatigue, and health deterioration clustered into a broader experience of exhaustion.

Participants described how overwhelming teaching loads and administrative tasks extended beyond working hours, leaving little time for rest or recovery. One participant shared:

Daghan activity that day... makatulog nalang gayud ko sa kakapoy.” (There were many activities that day... I would fall asleep from exhaustion.) — Participant E

Beyond physical tiredness, exhaustion was experienced as existential strain. Participants questioned their competence and struggled to

maintain professional identity amid persistent demands:

“Maka question ko ngano dili dayun sila maka gets... basin dili kaayo ko effective as teacher.” (I sometimes question why students don’t understand... maybe I’m not effective as a teacher.) — Participant C

Health deterioration emerged as a critical category within this theme. Sleep deprivation, headaches, emotional distress, and prolonged stress were common experiences, indicating that burnout extended beyond workplace strain into overall well-being. From a psychological perspective, these experiences align with the emotional exhaustion component of burnout theory. However, phenomenologically, exhaustion was not merely a response to workload but a disruption of personal equilibrium and professional identity. Teachers perceived themselves as constantly negotiating between competence and inadequacy while striving to meet expectations despite limited resources.

### ***Theme 2: Work-Life Imbalance and Role Conflict***

The second theme, Work–Life Imbalance and Role Conflict, captures the tension between professional responsibilities and personal obligations. Participants described blurred boundaries between work and home life, schedule conflicts, and the emotional burden of unmet responsibilities. Categories such as family compromise, time scarcity, and conflicting schedules illustrated the complexity of managing multiple roles. One participant explained the challenge of overlapping commitments:

“Sometimes, my schedules overlap... I would choose my primary job over my part-time job.” — Participant B

Participants reported sacrificing personal time, health routines, and family interactions to meet professional demands, often resulting in guilt and emotional strain. Maintaining balance became difficult as work responsibilities encroached on personal life. These experiences reflect role conflict, in which competing demands across multiple roles create psychological strain. From a phenomenological perspective, the imbalance was deeply personal, as participants struggled to fulfill their identities as educators, family members, and individuals.

### ***Theme 3: Adaptive Coping and Meaning-Making***

The third theme, Adaptive Coping and Meaning-Making, reveals how participants actively constructed resilience amid stress. Rather than viewing coping as separate from burnout, IPA analysis showed that coping strategies were embedded within the lived experience of imbalance and strain. Categories included time management, peer support, spiritual grounding, emotional regulation, and reframing adversity.

Participants described drawing strength from support systems and personal beliefs:

“Most of the time uhm holiday wala koy trabaho sa full time, wala koy trabaho sa part time mao na nga time mubawi ko sa time sa akoang pamilya...problems personal and full time nga problem so mao nay makuan naku sa teaching so mawala kog kalit ma out topic.” (Ah, most of the time, yes, my family life is affected. During holidays when there is no work at my full-time job and no class for my part-time job, that’s when I make up for the time I missed with family...Personal problems and problems from my full-time job can really affect my teaching. I can suddenly get sidetracked and go off-topic.) - PARTICIPANT F

This reflects intentional boundary-setting as a coping mechanism. Others relied on peer support and spiritual grounding to sustain motivation and emotional stability. From an educational and psychological perspective, these responses reflect resilience-building and intrinsic motivation. Participants reframed hardships as opportunities for growth, interpreting challenges as part of their vocational commitment. Thus, burnout was not a static condition but a fluctuating experience shaped by contextual demands and personal interpretation.

### ***Triangulation of Findings***

Triangulation strengthened the credibility of the themes by confirming that verbal narratives aligned with nonverbal cues and reflective field notes. Visible signs of emotional weight often accompanied descriptions of exhaustion, while expressions of coping were conveyed through shifts in tone and posture. The convergence of these data sources ensured that the themes represented holistic lived realities rather than isolated textual accounts.

### ***Contribution to Education and Psychology***

The gradual decline of health was often an unseen result of long-term work stress. For part-time teachers, whose schedules were uncertain, support was limited, and rest periods were short, both their physical and mental well-being could gradually erode, affecting their personal and professional lives. The study discovered how often overlooked realities are by examining how health, whether emotional, mental, or physical, deteriorated over time.

The findings contribute to the body of knowledge in education and psychology by illustrating teacher burnout as a multidimensional and interpretative phenomenon. Beyond measurable stress indicators, the study highlights how subjective meaning-making mediates the relationship between institutional pressures and personal resilience. The integration of role strain, work–life imbalance, and adaptive coping underscores the need for institutional policies that not only reduce workload demands but also foster supportive environments

that validate teachers' experiences. By unraveling the layered meanings embedded in participants' narratives, this study advances phenomenological understanding of teacher burnout and emphasizes the interplay between structural constraints and human agency in educational settings.

## Conclusions

Grounded in the lived experiences of the participants, this phenomenological inquiry concludes that part-time teachers experience burnout as a multidimensional and evolving condition shaped by role strain, work–life imbalance, and adaptive coping processes. The findings revealed that emotional exhaustion does not arise solely from workload demands but from the continuous negotiation between professional expectations and personal responsibilities. Participants experienced role strain as they attempted to meet institutional requirements while managing commitments outside the classroom. This strain extended beyond physical fatigue and disrupted their sense of professional competence and personal equilibrium. Work–life imbalance further intensified this experience, as blurred boundaries between teaching responsibilities and other obligations created persistent internal conflict.

However, burnout was not experienced as a fixed or uniform condition. Through adaptive coping and meaning-making, participants actively constructed resilience by setting boundaries, seeking support, and reframing challenges. Thus, the lived experience of part-time teaching is characterized not only by exhaustion but also by continuous negotiation, identity adjustment, and personal interpretation of professional demands. From a phenomenological perspective, part-time teaching emerges as a dynamic experience where institutional pressures and personal agency intersect. Burnout is therefore understood not merely as a measurable outcome but as a subjective, interpretative process shaped by contextual realities and individual meaning-making.

Based on the study's findings, the institution is recommended to review the workload distribution of part-time teachers to ensure teaching and administrative responsibilities remain manageable and sustainable. Clearer scheduling guidelines may also be established to help minimize role conflict and support healthier work–life boundaries. To address challenges related to classroom management and professional adjustment, the administration may implement a structured mentorship or peer-support system for part-time educators. Additionally, the college may provide access to wellness programs, stress-management seminars, and relevant professional development opportunities to support teachers' emotional and psychological well-being. The institution may also consider developing transparent criteria for contract renewal and potential full-time opportunities to reduce uncertainty and promote career stability. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar phenomenological studies in other institutions to broaden the understanding of part-time teachers' lived experiences across different educational contexts.

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