

Action research: teacher burnout essay sample

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Introduction

There are times that teachers grow tired with their work. Some teachers handle stress well and manage to replenish lost energies. There are others, however, who go through their routine day in and day out—only their will power sustains them. Sadly, there are also teachers who succumbed to tiredness and feel burned out. On the whole, the experience of burn out takes a toll on the health and professional life of the teachers. This burnout also takes away the creative energies of teachers and consequently their effectiveness in teaching.

The most common symptoms of burnout are the diminishing level of interest in one's own work and pursuits. In most cases, it also creates cynicism and exhaustion. It usually comes from a lack of recovery from continuous toil and work (Freudenberger, 1974). According to Demerouti, et. al. (2001), the extreme level of the demands of a particular job leads to the exhaustion of individuals; while the unavailability of job resources leads to disengagement. Therefore, by analyzing the job demands and the job resources available to the teacher, the kinds of burnout may be better understood.

Teachers are no less affected by burnout, given their routine work. In order for teachers to be effective in the long run, burnout should be prevented. The effects of burnout vary in their intensity, as well as in the duration. Some teachers take important steps to recovery upon realizing that they are burning out. Others, however, are less prudent, and realize the dangers of burnout too late. Proper precautions and intervention methods could be devised if burnout is detected early on. As part of the intervention process,

the social support from colleagues and family members will be mobilized as a necessary assistance for the teachers struggling with burnout (Baruch-Feldman, et. al., 2002).

Preventing Burnout: Action Research Method

This research study deals with the prevention, or at least, lessening of the occurrence of burnout among teachers. It will use a qualitative method of research, namely, Action Research. Action research was coined by Prof. Kurt Lewin in 1944. This research method integrates the actions devised to solve the problem together with an effort to understand the underlying reasons for the occurrence of such problems. In short, it seeks two types of actions: one refers to those that cause the problem, and the other is about those that solve the problem (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

Action Research is considered as a qualitative method of research. There have been several strands of practice and tension in this method. For one, the main intent of the research may be affected by the intentions of the researcher or by those of the participants. There is also a tension between the attainment of identified goals or the transformation of an organization or a person. One of the strengths, and at the same time the source of criticism of action research, is its reliance on the gathering of action for the sake of generating action for an organization. As such, it gains knowledge by observing actions as they are going on rather than in a controlled environment, in which the factors and variables are more easily diagnosed and observed (Torbert, 2004).

The results of action research are usually narratives of the actions and experiences of those who participated in this method. To avoid the subjectivity of this method, Heikkinen, Huttunen, and Syrjala (2007) proposed five principles in validating the findings of action research. These principles include the following: (1) recognition of the past events that led to such situations; (2) recognizing that the process is reflexive; (3) analyzing the dialectic process used in processing the story; (4) good practices are generated; and (5) the usefulness of these practices.

Action Research for Burnout: Sample and Methodology

In conducting action research, the researcher will observe two main variables related to burnout: job demands and job resources. It will observe a group of teachers in the school and look at their habits and their actions that may contribute or discourage the occurrence of burnout. Their actions shall be noted down while there are teaching and these actions will be put in a table for better presentation and analysis. Prior to the start of this method, however, the actions, which shall be the items for observation, shall be listed down. As the research continues, the researcher will take careful note of the actions and practices of these teachers, together with their perceptions of what they are doing. This way, a total understanding of the actions and perceptions of the teachers shall be gathered.

Action Research: Analysis and Resolution

A narrative of the actions and practices of the teachers will be prepared for this project. Through these narratives, the particular actions of teachers will

be observed at a more personal level. Those actions that contribute to the occurrence of burnout will be noted and highlighted. After this, particular methods of solving or lessening the impact of burnout will be identified. Such action solutions should be practicable and easy enough to follow. These actions will also be based on the teachers' perceptions and present set of actions. Through the identification of these actions, it is hoped that the issue of burnout among teachers will be lessened.

Reference

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