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Applying a Cognitive-Behavioral Model to Conceptualize Burnout and Coping for Teachers in Urban Schools

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

APPLYING A COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL MODEL
TO CONCEPTUALIZE BURNOUT AND COPING FOR
TEACHERS IN URBAN SCHOOLS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

BY

DANIEL A. CAMACHO

CHICAGO, IL

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ABSTRACT

Teachers in urban schools, facing a myriad of daily stressors and oftentimes without sufficient knowledge and skills to manage the social and emotional needs of their students and themselves, experience stress and burnout at levels that cause them to leave the teaching profession at alarming rates. Research pertaining to teaching stress, burnout, and coping has largely been devoted to enumerating the stressors that teachers experience, the impact of burnout on teachers and their students, and relating type of coping strategies that teachers employ. This body of literature falls short of illuminating what makes the teaching profession so inherently stressful, the cognitive and behavioral processes that mediate the experience of daily stress and burnout, and protective skills and attitudes that would prevent burnout.

The current study sought to address this gap in research and practice by applying a cognitive-behavioral model to investigate the cognitive and behavioral processes that are implicated in burnout. Additionally, the present study examined coping strategies teachers utilized in managing their distress, how efficacious they felt in using these strategies, and their openness to seeking professional psychological help. Results indicated that teachers' experiences are largely characterized by negative thoughts and feelings, which contribute to maladaptive physiological and behavioral processes, and that teachers who experience high levels of burnout more frequently

report maladaptive physiological responses to challenging classroom situations. High burnout teachers reported more coping strategies yet felt less efficacious in their efforts. Overall, teachers were modestly open to receiving professional psychological services. Lastly, coping self-efficacy was more helpful in explaining variance in burnout than help-seeking attitudes and years of teaching experience.

Suggestions for future research include investigation into how to promote the health of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral pathways that mediate burnout. Suggestion for practice include training and support provided to teachers to educate them about the distressing nature of their profession, how to cope effectively with such stress, and potentially provide professional psychological services.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Teachers in today's schools encounter increasing demands to be effective in meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of their students. Teachers in urban schools may more acutely experience such demands, given that students in urban environments are more likely to experience social-emotional difficulties (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; National Research Council, 1993). In turn, teachers in urban schools, who disproportionately serve low-income and minority students, encounter notably higher levels of stress than teachers in other schools (Abel & Seward, 1999). Faced with professional demands oftentimes without adequate support to meet their students' needs, teachers are increasingly experiencing burnout, a process of repeated emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of a lack of personal accomplishment, which leads them to leave the teaching profession at alarming rates (Ingersoll, 2001; Metlife, 2004). According to a National Commission to Teach America's Future report, that national turnover rate has risen to 16.8% while in urban schools it is over 20%, a rate which eclipses the student dropout rate in certain districts (Carroll, 2007).

Additionally, for teachers that encounter emotional exhaustion yet stay in the profession, the risk of negatively impacting the academic and social-emotional experiences of their students is very real. Studies show that the students of teachers who

lack resources to effectively manage the social and emotional challenges of their school setting demonstrate lower levels of on-task behavior and performance (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). Under such conditions, teachers may become quicker to utilize exceedingly punitive responses to challenging student behaviors that do not model emotional regulation, as these punitive measures contribute to further challenging student behavior and teacher emotional exhaustion (Osher et al., 2007). This dynamic, which Jennings & Greenberg refer to as a “burnout cascade,” by which a teacher’s ability to effectively manage student behavior is compromised by emotional exhaustion, can have a self-sustaining and detrimental impact on how teachers relate to their students, engage in their work, and the climate of their classroom in both the short-term and long-term (2009). Likewise, teachers who experience burnout are less likely to demonstrate caring behavior towards students and are less dedicated to their work (Farber & Miller, 1981).

Given the detrimental impact of burnout on the emotional experiences of teachers and those of their students, investigating the processes by which the daily emotional demands of a teaching role lead to burnout is warranted. Such research has briefly addressed how teachers can cognitively and behaviorally cope with the stress associated with challenging classroom situations (Aldwin, 2007; Epstein & Meier, 1989; Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to the transactional model of stress and coping, individuals react to challenging situations by engaging in cognitive and behavioral adaptation strategies to manage the event. For teachers, these strategies may include action-focused coping to take direct action to eliminate the source of stress or emotion-focused coping strategies to lessen feelings of stress (Kyriacou, 2001). While

research has outlined types of coping strategies teacher utilize to lessen their emotional distress, researchers have not yet investigated the degree to which teachers are open to seeking counseling or mental health services or feel efficacious in using coping strategies to manage such distress.

Moreover, aside from a surface-level understanding of how teachers cope with stressful situations that arise in their profession, little is known about the psychological processes about how teachers make sense of challenging classroom situations and how such processes may be conducive or harmful to emotional health. Also, scant research addresses exactly what teachers do to cope with stressful classrooms situations and how such strategies may contribute to or prevent burnout. Cognitive-behavioral theory, a framework widely used in the practice of professional psychology, can provide an explanation of the aforementioned psychological process and associated coping behaviors that mediate the teachers' experience of emotional distress and burnout.

According to cognitive-behavioral theory, certain critical incidents, or situations, activate cognitive schema, or internalized thought patterns and or beliefs (about the self, world, etc.) (Sharf, 2008). These cognitive schemas, when maladaptive, lead an individual to experience negative and self-defeating thoughts, which produce emotional distress and behaviors that reduce an individual's capacity to function. Maladaptive cognitive schemas oftentimes cause an individual to make a negative attributional bias, during which this individual attributes the cause of an external event in a negative and self-defeating way (e.g. "it is all my fault") (Hayes & Hesketh, 1989). On the other hand, when adaptive, these cognitive schemas permit an individual to experience neutral and

positive thoughts, which lead to neutral or positive emotions and healthy physiological processes and behaviors.

In employing a cognitive-behavioral framework to further understand teacher stress and burnout, this investigation seeks to further what we know about teachers' psychological experiences and how we can improve them in order that teachers remain in the profession longer and have the resources to promote the academic and developmental growth of their students. Numerous researchers have speculated that such investigations into the emotional and psychological complexities of what takes place within schools would be essential to advance understanding of students' and teachers' well-being and development and how to promote both (Brown, 2013). Further understanding of the intrapsychic processes that contribute to stress and burnout can have significant implications for efforts by counselors and mental health professionals to better treat the social and emotional needs of teachers.

Sources of Teacher Stress

Researchers have commonly defined the term "teacher stress" as a teacher's experience of unpleasant negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, frustration, or depression, produced by some aspect of his/her work (Kyriacou, 2001). Given that stress may result from occupational characteristics, such as poor work conditions, lack of control, poor social relations, lack of social support, lack of rewards, work overload, and routinization, the daily realities of these teachers oftentimes entail multiple stressors (Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Lait & Wallace, 2002). Based on multiple studies, teachers have reported the following aspects of their work as major

sources of stressful: (a) teaching unmotivated students, (b) maintaining discipline, (c) time pressures and workload, (d) coping with change, (e) being evaluated by others, (f) dealings with colleagues, (g) self-esteem and status, (h) administration and management, (i) role conflict and ambiguity, and (j) poor working conditions (Travers & Cooper, 1996; Pithers & Soden, 1998).

Of the sources of stress elaborated above, many are inherent to the broader teaching profession while many of these factors may differ depending on school-specific context. More specifically, while time pressures and workload likely impact a teacher's experience of stress across context, the extent to which maintaining discipline and administration and management impact a teacher's experience likely vary depending on numerous characteristics of the school, students, and staff with whom a teacher works. Furthermore, given that urban school teachers are more likely to teach students who face social and emotional difficulties which impact students' motivation to learn, work at schools at which maintaining discipline is a priority, and work at schools equipped with less educational resources, their experiences are likely characterized by higher levels of stress (Abel & Seward, 1999). For these reasons, much of the past research about teacher stress and burnout has pertained to urban school teachers (Rottier et al, 1983). The current study seeks to investigate further these teachers' context-specific experiences and *how* these experiences cause them stress.

Burnout and Its Impact on Teachers and their Students

Although burnout has been documented in the occupational stress literature since the early 1970s, only more recently has it been defined and more concretely

operationalized. Freudenberger (1974) first defined *burnout* as becoming exhausted from excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources, in response to chronic stress in jobs where individuals work with people (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). As burnout has become a more popular field of research, Maslach and Jackson (1981) has provided the most commonly used operationalization of the term. According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), burnout can be characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. *Emotional exhaustion* entails the experience of perpetual negative emotions, decreased feelings of adequate emotional resources, and feelings of being unable to provide for others emotionally. As a result of one's feelings of having depleted emotional resources, *depersonalization* occurs when an individual develops negative attitudes towards students. Lastly, reduced *personal accomplishment* refers to the feeling of no longer being effective in one's work with students and other school-related responsibilities. Likewise, the frequency and intensity of feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment determine the level of burnout teachers experience (Iwanicki, 2001).

Because feeling a sense of emotional health and support, caring responsiveness towards students, and feelings of effectiveness are significant for one's success in a teaching role, in turn deficiencies in these areas bear negative implications for teachers. Emotional exhaustion is oftentimes characterized by a psychological state of fatigue, debilitation, and loss of energy, all of which pose a threat to personal well-being and symptoms commonly used to diagnose clinical depression (Evers et al., 2004). Furthermore, stress and burnout are associated with poor physiological health in teachers

(Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998). Additionally, depersonalization may cause teachers to demonstrate negative and indifferent attitudes towards students by using derogatory labels for them, exhibiting cold or distant attitudes, physically distancing themselves from students, and through psychological withdrawal (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Lastly, teachers who feel a low sense of self-efficacy in performing their professional responsibilities may experience low levels of job satisfaction and leave the profession earlier, contributing to high rates of teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2001).

A teacher's experience of burnout also negatively impacts various aspects of students' experiences. Students show lower levels of engagement and academic performance when their teachers lack the social and emotional reserves to manage the challenges of their profession (Marzano, Marzon, & Pickering, 2003). As decreases in student on-task behavior and subsequent increases in troublesome student misbehavior occur, teachers experiencing burnout may lack the resources to regulate their emotions in an effective manner to productively restore student engagement. The resulting dynamic has the potential to "cascade"—as students disengage with greater frequency and a teacher experiences increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalized attitudes towards students, and feelings of effectiveness—to produce a rapid deterioration in classroom climate (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Thus, teacher burnout may have pressing implications for the academic and social-emotional outcomes of the students they teach.

Teacher Coping With Stress

Given that burnout is considered a state of physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion which may develop in teachers who have not been successful in coping with

stress associated with the profession over a long period of time, understanding how teachers cope with the stress associated with their profession is important (Gugliemi & Tatrow, 1998). Much of the research about coping with stress has utilized Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping to account for the psychological and behavioral processes that mediate the experience of stressors and outcomes related to well-being. According to this model, individuals respond to challenging situations by first engaging in a cognitive appraisal process through which they assess the extent to which they have the competence to handle the classroom situation and then choose cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage the event.

According to the transactional model, when teachers perceive that they have the competence to eliminate the source of stress, they engage in direct action techniques to deal with the source of stress or ensure that the cause of the stress can be successfully dealt with in the future (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Kyriacou, 2001). Such direct action techniques depend on the source of the stress, but oftentimes entail organizing oneself more effectively, developing new teaching knowledge and skills to deal with challenging situations, or taking action to change a working condition to make it less challenging. When teachers perceive that they cannot directly eliminate sources of stress, they engage in emotion-focused, or palliative, coping techniques (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Kyriacou, 2001). Palliative coping techniques can be physical and mental and are geared towards lessening the feeling of stress. Such actions oftentimes entail trying to keep problems in perspective, avoiding confrontations, trying to relax after work, keeping feelings under control, devoting more time to tasks, discussing problems and expressing

feelings, having a healthy home life, and recognizing one's own limitations (Borg & Falzon, 1990; Cockburn, 1996; Benmansour, 1998).

In elaborating the various types of coping techniques teachers employ, researchers have investigated teachers' coping *resources*, the capacities, skills, and abilities that generally serve as the foundation for coping strategies (McCarthy, Lambert, & Brack, 1997). Matheny, Aycock, Pugh, Curlette, and Cannella (1986) outlined a taxonomy of coping resources that serve to either combat or prevent stress. Such resources include skills and abilities, such as self-disclosure, problem-solving skills, and relaxation procedures, to combat stress after an event has triggered the stress response. More preventive coping resources enable individuals to recognize and manage life demands so as to avoid the experience of stress in the first place.

A critical missing piece of this coping literature is an understanding of the extent to which teachers are open to receiving mental health or counseling services to cope with their emotional distress. The Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH; Fischer & Turner, 1970) scale offers a valid and reliable construct in measuring teachers' help-seeking attitudes to cope with the prolonged emotional distress associated with the teaching profession. While the ATSPPH scale has been utilized to measure help-seeking attitudes in undergraduate samples (Ang, Lau, Tan, & Lim, 2007), in ethnic minority groups in the United States (Duncan, 2003; Kim & Omizo, 2006; Tata & Leong, 1994; Wallace & Constantine, 2005), cross-cultural samples (Wrigley, Jackson, Judd, & Komiti, 2005; Yeh, 2002), and male adult prisoners (Skogstad, Deane, & Spicer, 2006), only one study to date has examined help-seeking attitudes in a population of

teachers (Ang, Lim, Tan, & Yau, 2004). In a sample of trainee teachers in Singapore, Ang et al. (2004) found that teachers on average demonstrated slightly positive attitudes towards seeking professional help and that females had more positive help-seeking attitudes than males. The present study seeks to employ the ATSPPH to measure help-seeking attitudes in a sample of urban teachers in the United States. Findings of this investigation will have implications for our understanding about how to best treat the psychological needs of distressed teachers.

Previous research has already established the ability of the ATSPPH to distinguish between individuals who had and had not sought help for psychological problems in numerous samples (Fischer & Turner, 1970). Likewise, individuals who score higher in ATSPPH are more likely to actually seek professional help, a coping behavior that can protect against burnout. Although previous research in the teacher burnout literature has not yet explored this topic, there is reason to believe that ATSPPH serves in a protective fashion against burnout as teachers' progress in the profession. More specifically, it is possible that teachers who have spent more years teaching in an urban school demonstrate more openness to receiving professional psychological help as an adaptive coping behavior and that this openness, i.e. to openly dealing with emotions and seeking mental health experts, is crucial to preventing or lessening the experience of burnout. This study thus seeks to examine the potential role of ATSPPH in moderating the relationship between number of years teaching at an urban school and burnout. Such an examination would provide further insight into measures that can prevent teacher burnout.

Also, as researchers begin to more critically examine the coping resources teachers have at their disposal, more attention is warranted to studying how efficacious teachers feel in actually utilizing these resources. For such an investigation, *coping self-efficacy* (CSE), an individual's perceived ability to cope effectively with life challenges, may prove to be a new and promising construct. The Coping Self-efficacy Scale measures an individual's perceived ability to use problem-focused coping, stop unpleasant emotions and thoughts, and get support from friends and family, in managing psychological distress (Chesney, Neilands, Chambers, Taylor, & Folkman, 2006). The current study will use this scale to investigate how coping self-efficacy relates to teachers' experience of burnout and their attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help.

Teachers' Interpretation of Challenging Classroom Events

In addition to illuminating behaviors teachers use to help manage their stress, research has more recently begun to examine the processes by which a challenging situation produces stress. Kyriacou & Sutcliffe's (1978) conceptualization of stress as a negative emotional experience being triggered "by the teacher's perception that their work situation constitutes a threat to their self-esteem or well-being" introduces the idea that certain cognitive processes mediate challenging workplace situations and the experience of negative emotions. In McCormick & Barnett's (2010) investigation of 416 classroom teachers in high schools in Australia, they found that certain psychological mechanisms, i.e. attributions and schemas, likely play a role in how individual teachers perceive stress. More specifically, they found that stress attributed to personal and student

domains, which respectively relate to self-perceived efficacy as a teacher and student misbehavior, predicted the three dimensions of burnout—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment (McCormick & Barnett, 2010). These results suggest that classroom events that trigger a teacher to doubt his/her effectiveness and pertain to student misbehavior are likely emotionally-charged and contribute to stress. However, these findings fail to capture the cognitive process by which a classroom event causes a teacher to experience thoughts which activate negative emotions and subsequent distress.

In an effort to account for the missing link between challenging classroom events (e.g. student behavior) and teachers' short-term experience of emotional distress and long-term experience of burnout, Mei-Lin Chang proposes an antecedent appraisal model (2009). Chang's model posits that a teacher's judgments pertaining to an antecedent, i.e. a student's behavior and other teaching tasks, trigger unpleasant emotions. These habitual patterns by which a teacher's judgment triggers unpleasant emotions can explain the pathway by which classroom events, and particularly student misbehavior, lead to a teacher's experience of emotional exhaustion and eventually burnout. Chang's model serves as a unique contribution to the field of teacher burnout that helps examine *why* teachers experience repeated emotional distress which results in burnout. In turn, Chang (2009) calls for further investigations, like the present study, to focus on the antecedent appraisals that teachers make in response to student behavior and other teaching tasks in order to increase teachers' understanding of how their emotions are triggered as well as how to effectively regulate these emotions. The cognitive behavioral framework

employed in the present study will advance Chang's model by illustrating how such antecedent appraisals, or thought patterns, lead teachers to feel, physiologically react, and behave in ways that contribute to or reduce burnout.

Using a Cognitive Behavioral Framework to Conceptualize Teacher Burnout

Likewise, cognitive-behavioral theory provides a useful way to conceptualize *why* and *how* challenging classroom situations trigger a teacher to experience negative emotions. A cognitive-behavioral theory has been widely used by professional psychologists to conceptualize mental health disorders such as clinical depression and anxiety. Furthermore clinical treatment that flows from this model has proven effective in treating these disorders (Coull & Morris, 2011). According to a cognitive-behavioral model, an individual's early experiences cause an individual to develop cognitive schema, or internalized thought patterns and or beliefs (about the self, world, etc.) (Sharf, 2008). Certain situations, or critical incidents, trigger these schemas and as a result an individual experiences automatic thoughts in response to these situations. The content of these thoughts, i.e. whether they are neutral, positive, or self-defeating, impact the emotional, behavioral, and physiological responses of an individual and future mental health outcomes.

Applying a cognitive-behavioral framework can help account for how teachers are affected by challenging classroom situations in ways that lead them to experience negative emotions and physiological distress and practice ineffective coping behaviors. For example, if a teacher's cognitive schema pertaining to his/her effectiveness includes a belief of "If I do not successfully control the behaviors of my students, then I am an

ineffective teacher,” student misbehavior will likely trigger automatic thoughts such as “I am ineffective as a teacher,” an automatic thought which will in turn contribute to feelings of frustration and sadness, a physiological response of loss of energy, and will lead a teacher to execute coping behaviors which may prove ineffective. Moreover, the repeated activation of this negative thought pattern over time will likely cause a teacher to experience emotional exhaustion, reduced physiological health, and a breakdown in coping behaviors that help manage emotional distress.

Summary, Hypotheses, & Implications

In examining the extant literature devoted to understanding teacher stress and burnout, researchers have investigated the sources of teacher stress, how chronic stress contributes to burnout, the impact of burnout on teachers and their students, as well as how teachers attempt to cope with stress. However, much less is known about the psychological processes according to which teachers interpret challenging classroom situations, cope with them, how such cognitive and behavioral processes may be conducive or harmful to emotional health. In filling the gap in this body of research, the present study seeks to employ a cognitive-behavioral framework to provide an explanation for why and how challenging classroom situations cause a teacher emotional distress and contribute to burnout. According to a cognitive behavioral framework, challenging classroom situations will trigger automatic thoughts which lead to variable affective, behavioral, and physiological responses that will have implications for a teacher’s experience of burnout.

Likewise, the main research questions this study seeks to investigate are:

Research Question 1: How do teachers interpret challenging classroom situations with students? How do the ways teachers interpret challenging situations impact their affective, behavioral, and physiological responses?

Research Question 2: How do teachers cope with stress from challenging classroom situations? How does their perceived effectiveness in utilizing these coping strategies to manage their emotional distress relate to burnout and help-seeking attitudes?

Research Question 3: To what extent are teachers in urban schools open to seeking professional psychological help in coping with emotional distress? Do help-seeking attitudes moderate the relationship between number of years of urban teaching experience and burnout?

With respect to the above research questions, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: Teachers high in burnout will more frequently interpret challenging classroom situations in negative and self-defeating ways (e.g. “It is my fault a student is misbehaving,” “I am failing as a teacher”) that have negative implications for their affective, behavioral, and physiological responses. Teachers low in burnout will more frequently interpret challenging classroom situations in more neutral or positive ways (e.g. “I cannot control everything that happens in class”) that promote positive affective, behavioral, and physiological responses.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers high in burnout will report less coping strategies, feeling less efficacious in using coping strategies to manage their emotional distress, and less positive help-seeking attitudes. Teachers low in burnout will report more coping strategies and will report feeling more efficacious in using coping strategies to manage their emotional distress, and more positive help-seeking attitudes.

Hypothesis 3: Teachers will overall demonstrate slightly positive help-seeking attitudes. Teachers’ openness to seeking professional psychological help will moderate the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout. More specifically, for teachers who express greater openness to seeking professional help, the relationship between years of urban teaching and burnout will be more negative than for teachers who are less open to seeking professional help.

In illuminating the cognitive and behavioral processes that underlie burnout in the teaching profession, this study has the potential to meaningfully inform practical interventions by counselors and mental health workers as well as teacher training. More

specifically, in understanding the thought patterns which contribute to positive emotions and adaptive physiological and behavioral responses to classroom situations, counselors working with teachers can more effectively work to improve their psychological experiences in order to reduce feelings of burnout, remain in the profession longer, and have the resources to feel self-efficacious in managing their emotional distress. When integrated into teacher preparation and support in a preventive manner, training teachers to make adaptive interpretations of challenging classroom situations can promote positive emotional health, which has implications for their continued ability to contribute to the positive academic and personal development of their students. Continued support throughout the school year may also entail providing professional development, to individual teachers and on a whole-school level, that reinforces healthy interpretations of classroom events, bolsters their self-efficacy in managing emotional distress, and provides them access to mental health services.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conceptualizations of Teacher Stress

In developing an understanding of what is inherently *stressful* about a teacher's role, it is first necessary to comprehend how *teacher stress* is defined, conceptualized and, based on these conceptualizations, what produces stress. According to the definition first proposed by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1977), teacher stress is a teacher's experience of a negative affective state, marked by such emotions as "anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression" that results from some aspect of a teacher's work. This negative emotional experience is triggered during a particular work situation by the perception that the teacher cannot fulfill the demands placed upon him or her (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977). In following the sequence of events that result in stress according to this model, a teacher experiences a work situation, perceives that he will be unable to meet the demands of this situation, and subsequently experiences the negative affective, or emotional state, that constitutes stress.

While the above conceptualization of teacher stress has become popular in the field of educational research over the last couple of decades, recently educational policy (Monk, 1988; Hanushek, 2008) has emphasized an education production approach. This approach emphasizes that certain "inputs," such as administrative demands, school

climate, and other external workplace factors, exert pressure on teachers and thus contribute to certain teacher “outputs,” such as job satisfaction and teacher retention.

Within this model, it is assumed but not explicitly elaborated, that these external factors exert pressure on the teacher and this experience of stress is what mediates the relationship between the “inputs” and “outputs.” This education production approach is also similar to prevalent conceptualizations of stress which use the term *stress* to refer to the extent of the pressure and demands exerted on the individual, while the term *strain* refers to how a teacher reacts to these demands (Kyriacou, 2001). Both these aforementioned frameworks for stress, in comparison to that of Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, fail to acknowledge what specifically it is about the daily psychological experience of dealing with external demands that produces stress for teachers. Furthermore, these frameworks do little to account for the reality that teachers who experience a similar level of “inputs” may yield different “outputs,” i.e. external demands may influence individual teachers differently depending on a myriad of factors (e.g. coping strategies, years of experience).

Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) transactional model of stress and coping provides the framework through which researchers like Kyriacou and Sutcliffe have come to investigate teacher stress. This theory suggests that an individual’s experience of a challenging workplace situation lead to different short-term and long-term affective, physiological, and psychosocial outcomes via the following mediating processes: cognitive appraisal and coping. Thus, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) introduced the concept that the processes of cognitive appraisal and coping, in response to a workplace

stimuli, bring about the negative affective state that we commonly consider stress.

According to them, cognitive *appraisal* entails a primary and secondary process—a primary appraisal includes evaluative judgements of the extent to which the situation poses a threat to the individual's well-being and a secondary appraisal includes a judgment about what, if any, coping actions would help in resolving the challenging workplace scenario. Furthermore, a number of personal (e.g. self-efficacy, values, and goals) and environmental variables (e.g. demands and resources) impact the extent to which an individual appraises a situation as a threat and summon the coping strategies to resolve this situation.

The transactional model of stress and coping, in detailing that stress occurs after a cognitive process triggered by a workplace situation, has influenced numerous studies and models pertaining to teacher stress. Significant among this field research is Mei-Lin Chang's antecedent appraisal model, which she proposed after completing a comprehensive review of literature pertaining to teaching stress and burnout (2009). Chang argues that teacher's judgments in response to student behavior and other teaching tasks cause the unpleasant emotions that lead to teacher burnout when this sequence of events occurs chronically. The repeated pathway by which teachers' judgments lead to unpleasant emotions are what Chang terms *habitual patterns*. Based on her model, it is the *judgments* made in response to classroom situations that elicit the negative emotional experience that characterizes teacher stress. After studying the emotional responses of 554 teachers, Chang found that the judgments teachers made about student behavior—in particular in the way teachers appraise the congruence of their goals with what is

happening in the classroom, the importance of these events, and the extent to which they felt agency, control, and ability to cope with the event—influenced the unpleasant emotions teachers experienced. Thus, according to Chang the habitual patterns by which teachers appraise classroom situations, are the cause of stress.

Similar to Chang's use of teachers' *judgments* to explain how stress is produced, Lambert, McCarthy, Fitchett, Lineback, & Reiser (2015) assert that stress occurs when teachers make a cognitive appraisal that their classroom *demands* exceed their classroom *resources*. The Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD) scale, which Lambert, McCarthy, O'Donnell, and Wang (2009) developed to identify elementary school teachers most at risk for stress, operationalizes these demands and resources. The two scales that compose this measure, the Classroom Demands and Classroom Rewards scale, include items that assess the extent to which various aspects of the classroom are respectively "demanding" and "helpful" to teachers. According to this measure, teachers who experience the highest amount of demands in proportion to resources should be most vulnerable to experience stress. Lambert et al. (2015) likewise found that groups of elementary teachers who perceived high demands in relation to resources had lower levels of job satisfaction and were more likely to be planning to leave the profession, suggesting that they experience higher levels of stress.

While the above models advance the conceptualization of stress as a cognitive process which is tied to an affective state and is initially triggered by particular situation, these models come up short in capturing the phenomenology of a teacher's stress reaction. Firstly, teachers, who need to react to numerous environmental stimuli, lack the

time and cognitive capacity to make the multiple appraisals proposed by the models of Lazarus & Folkman (1984), Chang (2009), and Lambert et al. (2015), to make the in-the-moment decisions their jobs necessitate. Furthermore, although each model suggests that certain appraisals or interpretations of events lead to the negative emotional state known as stress, they do little to elaborate on the *content* of these appraisals and interpretations. It seems reasonable to believe that, according to previous transactional models, teachers perceive that their professional demands exceed their resources and that this mismatch eventually results in stress. However, based on these conceptualizations of stress, it is difficult to imagine what teachers are actually thinking (e.g. what exactly are the content of their appraisals?) that leads them to experience unpleasant emotions and thus feel stress. What does it *mean* to teachers (i.e. about how they view themselves and their effectiveness) when they cannot meet the demands of their profession? The current models of teacher stress fall short in explaining this.

In providing an alternative to the aforementioned shortcomings of previous models of teacher stress, the cognitive-behavioral model provides a viable alternative. Cognitive-behavioral theory, which professional psychologists use to account for symptoms of anxiety and depression in the treatment of these mental health disorders, provides an explanation for the causes of psychological distress. According to cognitive-behavioral theory, an individual's early experiences cause an individual to develop cognitive schema, or internalized thought patterns or beliefs, about the self, world or in a teacher's case, about his/her role (Sharf, 2008). Certain situations, or critical incidents, activate these schemas and as a result an individual experiences automatic thoughts. The

content of these thoughts, i.e. whether they are of neutral, positive, or of negative valence, impact the emotional, behavioral, and physiological responses of an individual and future mental health outcomes. Negatively-valenced automatic thoughts (e.g. “I am a failure”) will produce negative emotions, maladaptive behavioral responses, and physiological activation. For example, a teacher who has learned from training that not having behavioral control over students signifies that he/she is an ineffective teacher will likely experience thoughts of “I am not an effective teacher” in reaction to a critical incident, e.g. failing to control students’ behavior in class. In turn, this teacher might experience anger, respond by yelling at a misbehaved student, and may feel physiologically “on edge” in the process. All three of these reactions, which often transpire simultaneously, constitute the stress response of the teacher.

Similar to previous models of teacher stress, the cognitive-behavioral model purports that certain events, or *antecedents*, trigger psychological distress, and that cognitive processes mediate this antecedent and the actual experience of stress. However, the cognitive-behavioral model of stress builds upon previous models in a number of ways. For one, it more fully accounts for factors, i.e. past experiences and cognitive schema, which precede the antecedents which trigger stress. Additionally, the *automatic thoughts* which occur in response to situations and are responsible for producing stress, provide a more nuanced account of the type of cognitions that are responsible for causing stress. Lastly, the cognitive-behavioral model provides a more comprehensive depiction of a stress response by including emotional, behavioral, and physiological reactions as short-term outcomes.

A Multiply-Stressed Profession

No matter how you conceptualize what causes it, stress is a common experience for individuals in the teaching profession. A 2012 Met Life survey revealed that a little more than half of teachers experienced “great stress” at least several days per week. According to international surveys administered by the International Labor Organization—United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization Joint Committee, 25-33% of teachers suffer “significantly” from stress (Macdonald, 1999). Kyraciou (2001) writes that teaching is a “high stress” profession, more specifically that approximately a quarter of teachers rate their teaching experience as “very or extremely stressful” on questionnaires. Sources for teacher stress abound, but most found in the teacher stress literature pertain to the following areas: the sociopolitical climate, school-specific factors, and classroom-level factors. While the factors elaborated below represent a comprehensive review of sources of stress found in the literature, it is also important to note that an inexhaustible amount of macro-level, e.g. common attitudes regarding the teaching profession in different countries, and individual-level differences, e.g. a teacher’s belief systems, all potentially play a part in how a teacher experiences stress.

The Sociopolitical Climate of the Teaching Profession

Since the inception of the No Child Left behind (NCLB) Act in 2001 and the subsequent educational reform movement, education policy in the United States has changed numerous aspects of teachers’ daily experiences. NCLB was a piece of legislation which, in the name of keeping schools accountable for holding high and measurable expectations for student academic achievement, requires all public schools

receiving federal funding to administer a standardized test annually. States have been tasked with the responsibility for developing standards for subject areas and thus developing the standardized tests used to assess students' growth with respect to these standards. Schools are responsible for increasing their students' scores on these tests, a process called making Adequate Year Progress (AYP). Schools who fail to make AYP are subject to sanctions, which range from being labeled as "in need of improvement" to potential corrective actions (e.g. replacing staff, instituting a new curriculum) and school restructuring. As school success and failure has become increasingly dependent upon increasing student standardized test scores, teachers have been forced to narrow their curriculum to cater to standardized tests, have become increasingly evaluated based on their students' improved test scores, and at times fired when their schools fail to make AYP (Kumashiro, 2012; Nieto, 2003).

In turn, numerous educational researchers insist that the educational policy put forward by the educational reform movement over the past couple of decades, and the resulting sociopolitical climate these developments have created, have made the teaching profession more stressful. Kumashiro asserts that, according to current educational policy, we narrowly define what it means to be a good teacher "merely in terms of the ability to raise test scores" while labeling all others who may demonstrate success with students in other ways, as bad (2012). The way the conversation about student achievement and learning is framed, i.e. schools' rewards or consequences depending on the success or failure of teachers to increase these test scores, has transformed teaching into a profession "that is blamed for all that is wrong with education." This is most

prevalently the case, Kumashiro argues, in schools that do not already have high levels of student achievement, lack adequate educational resources, and serve a disproportionate amount of low-income and minority children—urban schools (2012). Additionally, as student improvement in test scores have dominated the definition of what constitutes a “good” teacher, media sources in the past (e.g. the Boston Globe, the Gothamist in New York City) have published annual rankings of the performances of schools and individual teachers. Such increased public scrutiny includes increased access to and use of this information by news outlets and parents to compare teachers and schools with respect to educational quality (Kruger, Wandle, & Struzziero, 2007). The above aspects of the sociopolitical climate of the teaching profession have left many teachers feeling increasingly scrutinized and demoralized in demanding environments that offer little support (McNeil, 2000).

Stressors at the School Level

In addition to macro-level social and political pressures, various factors of teachers’ school environment have the potential to cause stress. Main sources of stress identified by educational researchers include teaching students who lack motivation, maintaining discipline, being evaluated by others, administration and management, and poor working conditions (Travers & Cooper, 1996; Benmansour, 1998; Pithers & Soden, 1998). While all of these sources of stress may be considered inherent to the teaching profession, the extent to which these factors pose teachers stress depends on various school factors. For example, schools that lack firm discipline policies and systems by which positive student behavior and achievement is recognized may in turn have students

that demonstrate less motivation to behave and achieve. In the NCLB-influenced educational landscape that places pressure on schools that do not meet AYP, “under-performing” schools, many of which are in urban areas and already provide suboptimal working conditions, may feel the weight of this pressure more acutely than schools that are producing high test scores. This pressure may take the form of more “top-down” management procedures, more frequent teacher evaluations, and less teacher support, all of which would combine to create a contextualized environment characterized by teacher stress.

Despite the wide range of variability that contextual school-based factors can differentially impact teachers’ experiences with stress, research suggests that organizational stress within schools is a common experience. In his qualitative analysis of 981 teachers’ descriptions of work stress, Blasé (1986) found that organizationally-based stressors, in particular those that pertained to teachers’ lack of control of their time and teachers having too many demands to meet, were identified most frequently by teachers. Additionally, Blasé (1986) found that teachers experienced stress in relation to certain administrative behaviors, such as an administrator providing unclear expectations, demonstrating inconsistency and indecisiveness, and failing to provide opportunities for teacher input.

These organizational and administrative aspects, in combination with student-related factors, all play a role in creating a “school climate.” According to prevailing definitions, school climate pertains to the quality of relationships between individuals at school, i.e. between students, teachers, and administrators, and how these relationships

play out through the processes of teaching and learning, collaboration, support, and management (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009). Studies show that teachers' perceptions of school climate are a key predictor of teacher stress, thus suggesting a relation between these factors (Borg, 1990; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Additionally, principal behavior, leadership, and management styles, all of which make up school climate, in turn impact teacher stress (Black, 2008; Hurren, 2006; Ramalho, Garza, & Merchant, 2010). The relationships that are crucial to school climate, particularly between teachers, parents, and administrators, when unsatisfying, have been found to be sources of stress (Troman, 2000). Lastly, Grayson and Alvarez (2008) note the relationship between multiple dimensions of school climate, such as teacher relationships within the workplace, amount of time provided to classwork and learning activities, and the number of interruptions due to administrative tasks, and dimensions of teacher burnout.

Stressors at the Classroom and Individual Level

Teachers also confront multiple pressures at the classroom level on a daily basis. At this level, the weight of administrative and organizational demands, such as large class sizes, mandated curricula, instructional strategies, high-stakes testing that constrains their autonomy, and the implementation of other whole-school requirements, take their toll on teachers (French, 1993; Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998; Moriarty, Edmonds, Blatchford, & Martin, 2001). In addition to these demands, numerous educational researchers cite stress associated with managing student misbehavior, which is also termed as dealing with disruptive students, managing children with problem behaviors, maintaining discipline,

managing the classroom, etc., as a major and chronic source of their stress (Pratt, 1978; Blase, 1986; Travers & Cooper, 1996; Benmansour, 1998; Pithers & Soden, 1998). More specifically, when teachers experience negative interactions with behaviorally difficult students on a daily basis, this interaction pattern becomes a source of negative thoughts and emotions, which can in turn impact teachers' cognitive functioning and motivation (Makinen & Kinnunen, 1986; Emmer & Stough, 2001)

Hargreaves (1998) writes that the expectations placed on teachers to manage the emotional lives of their students in addition to teaching subject matter place a heavy burden on teachers. Numerous aspects of students' backgrounds, such as their behaviors, the personal issues they face on a daily basis, and variable family structures and amount of support outside of school, all have the potential to contribute to teacher stress (Chaplain, 2008; Forlin, 2001; Gordon, 2002). High-stakes testing, which has been found to be a major source of student stress, is a daily reality that has implications for whether or not students can progress to the next grade (Jones & Egley, 2004). Likewise, teachers are increasingly responsible for helping their students manage their stress levels. Performing their instructional tasks while simultaneously feeling burdened, overwhelmed, and underprepared to meet the mental health needs of students in their classroom, teachers are especially vulnerable to stress (Ball, 2011; Roeser & Midgley, 1997; Williams, Horvath, Wei, VanDom, & Jonson-Reid, 2007). For teachers in urban schools, whose students more commonly face social and emotional difficulties which impact their motivation to learn and behave in the classroom, their experiences with stress are compounded by the daily realities of their job (Abel & Seward, 1999).

Likewise, while stress associated with student misbehavior and other classroom-level demands seems to be a common denominator for teachers, the extent to which teachers experience these factors as stressful can vary according to how individual teachers uniquely experience these aspects of their professions. Fullan (2001) describes how teaching as a profession can be characterized by a narrow focus on day-to-day events, isolation from other colleagues, and limited time and energy for reflection. Additionally, isolated teachers may individually struggle with their frustrations, concerns, anxieties, and struggles (Fullan, 2001). The individual stress experiences of teachers may range in acuity depending on a teacher's personality and past personal and professional experiences. For example, teachers with certain "type A" personalities may experience a perceived lack of control over student misbehavior as more stressful than a teacher with a more laid-back personality. In line with the cognitive-behavioral model which provides an explanation for individual-level differences in cognitions, teachers' unique sets of past experiences in turn lead them to internalize different self-beliefs which cause them to react to stressors in individually unique ways. Furthermore, the teacher stress literature has demonstrated that teachers experience varying levels of stress according to other individual factors including age, gender, locus of control, level of emotional intelligence, coping skills, and their career goals (Bellman, Foster, Still, & Cooper, 2003, Jepson & Forrest, 2006; Chan, 2008; Kay-Cheng, 1986; Stauffer, 2012).

Teacher Coping with Stress

Given the myriad of stressors that teachers confront on a daily basis, the strategies they use to cope with stress take on a great deal of importance. Within the teacher coping

literature, Lazarus & Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping has long been used to frame studies that investigate *when* teachers need to cope with stress and *how* they cope. More specifically, Lazarus & Folkman purport that teachers make appraisals—a *primary* appraisal to assess the extent to which the situation poses a threat to the individual's well-being and a *secondary* appraisal includes a judgment about how (i.e. what, if any, coping actions to take) to cope with the situation. Kyriacou (2001) further elaborates that coping strategies generally fall into one of two categories, palliative and direct action techniques. Direct action techniques include things a teacher can do to eliminate the source of stress, such as organizing oneself more effectively, having a face-to-face conversation with a student to quell misbehavior, developing new teaching knowledge or skills, or negotiating with colleagues and administrators. Palliative techniques include physical and mental strategies to ameliorate the feelings of stress, such as changing how one appraises a situation, relaxation techniques, keeping feelings under control, recognizing one's limitations, and discussing problems and expressing feelings (Kyriacou, 2001; Borg & Falzon, 1990).

Additionally, over the last decade school-based initiatives to help teachers cope with stress have become more common. Kyriacou (2001) mentions that certain schools in the United Kingdom, are making counseling services available to staff members who are experiencing high levels of stress. A British government-funded "Helpline" for teachers permits them to receive free telephone counseling (TBF, 2000). Also, he notes that an increased number of teachers are participating in in-service workshops designed to help teachers reduce their levels of stress, efforts which particularly target emotional

rumination through the use of palliative techniques as a key entry point to reducing stress (Roger & Hudson, 2000). In a similar vein, Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction interventions, which are designed to train teachers to notice their body sensations, nonjudgmentally observe their thoughts and feelings related to stress, and practice self-compassion, have become a new avenue for stress management (Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, Bonus, & Davidson, 2013). A number of mindfulness-based trainings have been found to decrease psychological symptoms of burnout such as anxiety and depression (Napoli, 2004; Gold, Smith, Hopper, Herne, Tasey, & Hulland, 2010). The CARES program, a professional development program which combined emotion skills instruction with mindfulness-based stress reduction and compassion exercises, also found that participants experienced improvements in well-being, self-efficacy and stress, as compared to individuals who did not participate (Jennings, Frank, Snowberg, Coccia, & Greenberg, 2013). The knowledge and skills that teachers gave gained in the above interventions seemed to be helpful in enabling them to manage their stress.

Likewise, the knowledge and skills that teachers utilize to combat stress compose their *coping resources*, which Matheny, Aycock, Pugh, Curlette, and Cannella (1993) refer to as the various assets individuals possess to deal with life demands. These assets can include self-disclosure, problem-solving, and relaxation techniques (Matheny, Aycock, Pugh, Curlette, and Cannella, 1986). Research has also found that teacher self-efficacy and social connectedness with students and colleagues are two personal resources that can serve a vital role in preventing teacher stress (McCarthy et al., 2014; Klassen, Perry, & Frenzel, 2012). Furthermore, the concept of preventive resources has

been operationalized in the Preventive Resources Inventory (PRI) and measures the following domains—perceived control in coping successfully with life’s demands, maintaining a healthy perspective of stressful situations, an individual’s social resourcefulness, one’s ability to anticipate and plan for life demands, accepting and overcoming shortcomings in dealing with life demands, and an ability to accept one’s own limitations (McCarthy, Lambert, Beard, & Dematatis, 2002). While the coping resources enumerated above have more increasingly been incorporated into workshops and professional development for teachers already in the field, for them to truly be *preventive* of stress, they need to be infused into teacher preparation programs so that teachers are equipped to cope with stress before they enter the field. When teacher preparation programs neglect to integrate these sets of higher-order knowledge and skills, which are necessary to cope in a multiply-stressed profession such as teaching, they put teachers increasingly at risk for chronic stress and burnout.

Coping Self-Efficacy

While the PRI taps into various dimensions of teachers’ knowledge and skills that can be used to cope with stress, in the current teacher stress literature it is not yet clear the extent to which teachers feel self-efficacious in using such resources to cope with stress. Both Bandura’s self-efficacy theory (1997) and Lazarus & Folkman’s (1984) transactional stress model have stressed the importance of understanding an individual’s perceived competence in predicting an individual’s behavior. According to these frameworks, one’s sense of coping self-efficacy will determine whether an individual will employ coping behaviors, the amount of effort expended, and an individual’s persistence

in the face of obstacles. Additionally, researchers have performed studies to gather reliability and validity evidence for scales that measure an individual's self-efficacy for coping with peer aggression, domestic violence, and post-traumatic distress (Singh and Bussey, 2009; Benight, Harding-Taylor, Midboe, & Durham, 2004; Benight, Cieslak, Molton, & Johnson, 2008). Generally, these studies have found an association between greater coping self-efficacy and less psychological symptoms associated with the distressing events mentioned above. But while each of the self-efficacy scales above have been tailored to address specific coping behaviors associated with specialized populations (e.g. adolescents dealing peer aggression, domestic violence survivors), Chesney et al.'s (2006) Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES) has presented a promising and more generalizable way of measuring this construct and has been used in less specialized populations (Chesney et al., 2006; Colodro, Godoy-Izquierdo, & Godoy, 2010). Likewise, further studies employing this instrument are necessary.

Openness to Seeking Professional Psychological Help

Although the literature pertaining to teacher stress and coping has advanced greatly in the last ten years in the concepts and constructs elaborated above, gaps in this literature still exist. Namely, despite the existence of a number of studies that investigate efforts that promote teachers' well-being and ability to manage stress, most of the investigations pertaining to mental health in schools solely concentrate on the needs of students. Jennings & Greenberg suggest that, in order to promote social and emotional competencies for students, we must also carry out efforts to promote the teachers' abilities to balance the countless social and emotional demands of their profession

(2009). The pre-existing research has documented school-based as well as external resources that serve to promote necessary knowledge, skills, and capacities to foster successful stress management, such as mindfulness-based teacher workshops, the teacher Helpline, and counseling services that certain schools offer (Napoli, 2004; Gold et al., 2010; TBF, 2000; Kyriacou, 2001; Jennings et al., 2013).

However, on a basic level, educational researchers still do not know the extent to which teachers are open to seeking mental health services, such as the efforts mentioned above. As a disposition that can serve as a coping resource, a quality that promotes coping self-efficacy, and potential mediator between stress and certain coping strategies, further investigation into teachers' willingness to seek professional mental health services is crucial to understanding teachers' coping behaviors. Studies that have employed the Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH), one of the most extensively used instruments to assess help-seeking attitudes, has often focused on investigating these attitudes in student populations—ethnic minority college students, international university students, and Asian-American adolescents (Duncan, 2003; Kim & Omizo, 2003; Topkaya, 2014; Omizo, Kim, & Abel, 2008). The only study that examined help-seeking attitudes among teachers included a population of 163 Singaporean trainee teachers and found that these teachers' help-seeking attitudes were slightly positive (Ang et al. 2004).

The current nascent state of research pertaining to teachers' help-seeking attitudes leaves many questions to be answered about the role mental health services can serve in helping teachers cope. Research consistently suggests that individuals who hold more

positive help-seeking attitudes are more likely to actually seek psychological help in comparison to those who hold more negative help-seeking beliefs (Cepeda-Benito & Short, 1998; Cramer, 1999; Deane & Todd, 1996; Kelly & Achter, 1995). However, the extent to which help-seeking attitudes actually relate to an individual's levels of stress, burnout, or psychological distress is not yet clear. Especially given the importance of certain dispositions, knowledge and skills, e.g. coping resources and social-emotional competencies, for effective teacher coping, it would be helpful to know how help-seeking attitudes relate to measures of stress and coping self-efficacy. Also, given that Ang et al.'s (2004) study administered the ATSPPH to a young population whose mean age was 25 years old and had limited teaching experience, a population with a broader range of age and experience would be illuminating. Lastly, understanding levels of help-seeking attitudes in a multiply-stressed subpopulation of educators, such as urban teachers, would give us a better idea of how we can meet the social and emotional needs of this vulnerable population.

Framing Burnout

Viewed within the transactional model of stress and coping, burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and attitudinal exhaustion that results from being unable to effectively cope with the chronic stressors of one's workplace (Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). While Freudenberger's original definition of *burnout* stresses the nature of emotional exhaustion that excessive workplace demands elicit on an individual, Maslach and Jackson's (1981) tripartite definition and operationalization of the concept has been the most widely accepted in the history of

burnout literature. Accordingly, Maslach and Jackson define burnout as a condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Teachers grappling with emotional exhaustion experience a tired feeling that develops over time as a teacher's emotional resources become depleted. This negative affective experience is also marked by a perceived inability to physically and emotionally provide for students due to these perpetual feelings of fatigue and stress (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Depersonalization is an attitudinal state of cynicism pertaining to students, teachers, and colleagues marked by cold, distant and even pejorative views and actions towards others. Lastly, reduced feelings of personal accomplishment pertain to teachers' decreased sense that they are contributing to students' development. Likewise, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) consists of three scales—Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. On these scales, higher burnout levels occur when an individual indicates high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and lower levels of personal accomplishment.

When framed within a cognitive-behavioral framework, burnout is the endpoint of the inability to cope with chronic stressors and, more specifically, it results from the repeated process via which negative cognitions produce maladaptive emotional, physiological, and behavioral sequelae. In this sense, the cognitive bases by which this model explains burnout are similar to the Chang's (2009) notion of habitual patterns and McCormick & Barnett's (2010) concept of attributions of stress. Furthermore, it is the process by which these cognitions, or automatic thoughts, *repeatedly activate* distressing

emotions, behaviors, and physiological responses that may explain the emotional exhaustion component of burnout. As this chronic state of fatigue colors that way teachers see students, parents, and colleagues, and negatively impacts their competence to instruct and balance the myriad demands of their job, depersonalization and reduced feelings of personal accomplishment soon set in. Additionally, in accordance with the cognitive behavioral model, burnout will eventually occur after an individual is perpetually unable to cope at a number of levels—immediately after a classroom situation triggers a negative cognition, in the short-term after a negative cognition activates an affective, behavioral, or physiological response, and in the long-term after weeks and months of the chain of events elaborated above. Likewise, in understanding an individual's inability to cope or prevent the onset of burnout, one must examine coping efforts at each of these levels.

Prevalence of Burnout

Educational research suggests that burnout is a common experience in the teaching profession. As previously mentioned, internationally approximately 25-33% of teachers suffer significantly from stress (Macdonald, 1999). To put it more concretely, one out of three to four teachers suffers significantly from stress. While there are currently no statistics that officially document the prevalence of burnout, Farber (1991) estimates that 5% to 21% of all teachers in the United States will be burned out at a given moment in their career. Alarming, burnout is also one of the most common reasons that effective teachers leave their profession (Roloff & Brown, 2011).

With respect to the demographic features of teachers who suffer most acutely from the condition, research has yielded mixed results. For example, certain studies conclude that younger teachers are more acutely impacted while others suggest that older teachers display higher burnout levels (Anderson & Iwanicki, 1984; Byrne, 1991; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986). Research does however suggest that men generally score higher on certain dimensions of burnout, such as depersonalization, while women report higher level of emotional exhaustion (Lau, Yuen, & Chan, 2005). Regardless of the individual-level factors that uniquely predict this condition, its prevalence demonstrates that it exerts a large toll on the personal and professional lives of teachers, their students, schools, and the broader educational landscape.

Impact on Teachers, Students, and their Schools

Teacher burnout exerts a toll on students through the numerous ramifications of this condition on teachers' lives. On an emotional and physiological level, burnout produces feelings of anxiety and depression, high blood pressure, headaches, frequent illness, and even cardiovascular disease (Dimsdale, 2008; Gunnar & Quevedo, 2007; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Lieter, 2001; Hock, 1988; McEwen, 2008). Furthermore, teachers who are emotionally and physiologically exhausted, maintain depersonalized attitudes towards others, and feel professionally diminished, are less effective in their teaching roles. The students of these teachers display less on-task behavior and lower levels of engagement (Marzano, Marzon, & Pickering, 2003). When teachers are burnt-out, they are more likely to report antisocial and oppositional behaviors, suggesting that they are

more likely to judge student behaviors as aversive and thus employ punitive measures to address challenging behaviors (Kokkinos, Panayiotou, & Davazoglou, 2005; Osher et al., 2007). The “burnout cascade” that Jennings & Greenberg (2009) describe elaborates the interactional pattern that occurs when emotionally-depleted teachers respond to student misbehavior in an emotionally-unregulated manner, which further fuels student misbehavior and engagement.

In turn, teachers’ experience of burnout has numerous implications for the academic and social-emotional learning of their students as well as the broader school climate. For teachers, a diminished capacity to engage and instruct students has a direct impact on the learning and academic achievement of their students (Roeser, Skinner, et al., 2012; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Additionally, when the symptoms of burnout cause greater work absenteeism, this condition can have an indirect effect on student learning and achievement (Miller, Murnane, & Willett, 2007). Emotionally exhausted and disenchanted teachers are unable to model social and emotional skills, such as emotional regulation and problem-solving skills, which are critical in promoting the social and emotional competencies of their students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). When these teachers express more negative emotions towards disruptive students for undesired behaviors and neglect to give positive feedback, this pattern of interactions leads to increased conflicts and unsatisfactory relationships in the classroom (Van Acker, Grant, & Henry, 1996). It is no wonder that teachers in urban schools, which contain a greater percentage of students with social and emotional problems, also experience higher levels of stress and burnout (Abel & Sewell, 1999).

Furthermore school climate, which has been conceptualized as the cumulative “quality of relationships” among individuals in the school, may subsequently suffer. Given the role of school climate in predicting teacher satisfaction and different dimensions of burnout, a self-perpetuating cycle may occur—where teacher burnout negatively impacts the broader school climate by creating an environment more conducive to burnout (Grayson & Alvarez, 2007). Schools that employ teachers experiencing burnout, in addition to incurring costs to students’ learning and teacher well-being, also suffer from the financial costs that result from teacher absenteeism and turnover, mental health and medical claims, declining teacher performance, and early retirement (Burke, Greenglass, & Schwarzer, 1996; Leithwood, Menzies, Jantzi, & Leithwood, 1999).

Broader Impact of Burnout

Burnout also has implications for the broader educational landscape. As a construct highly related to burnout, stress is often related to job satisfaction and teacher retention (Yoon, 2002). Likewise, chronic stress and burnout make teachers less satisfied with their jobs and less likely to remain in a teaching role at their schools. In the latest Metlife Survey of the American Teacher, an increased percentage (51%) of teachers reported feeling under great stress several days a week while a decreased percentage (39%) of teachers are “very satisfied” (Metlife, 2012). This same survey also suggests that less satisfied teachers are more likely to work in high-need schools in which the budget declined in the last year, a common characteristic of urban schools in low-income neighborhoods.

Educational researchers suggest that between 25% and 50% of teachers leave the profession within their first 5 years of service, citing stress as one of the biggest factors (Roulston, Legette, & Womack, 2005; Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Sewellis, & Parker, 2000). Furthermore, as previously mentioned, burnout is one of the most common reasons that effective teachers leave their profession (Roloff & Brown, 2011). A report by the National Commission to Teach America's Future estimates that on a yearly basis the national turnover rate is 16.8% while in urban schools it is over 20% (Carroll, 2007). This amounts to, according to Richard Ingersoll's projections in a recent Alliance for Excellent Education report, approximately half a million teachers who leave the profession each year and costs the United States up to \$2.2 billion annually. Thus, potential losses at multiple levels—of teachers leaving their schools and professions, of students receiving a quality education, and of federal money spent on education—demonstrate the vast cost of not treating teacher burnout and the teacher dissatisfaction and attrition that results.

Summary

A review of the current state of literature pertaining to stress, coping, and burnout in the teaching professions reveals strengths as well as gaps in this research. For one, this body of literature has produced a number of models to conceptualize how aspects of a teacher's work environment cause stress, particularly illuminating the role of cognitive processes implicated in stress. Additionally, the individual-level, school-level, and sociopolitical stressors associated with teaching have been well-documented. Also, coping research has uncovered different types of coping strategies and coping resources

critical to teacher stress management and has increasingly studied the impact of efforts to equip teachers with these strategies. Furthermore, *burnout* has been defined, operationalized, and researched in a systematic fashion and its impact on social, emotional, psychological, and physiological health have been well-investigated.

With respect to the gaps in the above literature, it is necessary to more fully understand the nature and content of cognitions that produce teacher stress and contribute to burnout in the long-term. Informed by this knowledge, a more explicit connection between negative cognitive patterns and levels of burnout can develop. In increasing our knowledge of effective coping strategies and resources, it will be important to investigate the extent to which teachers feel self-efficacious in coping with stress and display positive help-seeking attitudes, and the potential roles of both constructs in preventing burnout. Closing the gaps in this body of research will increase awareness of specific negative cognitions that produce stress and burnout, and of coping resources (e.g. coping self-efficacy, help-seeking attitudes) to promote in preventing both. Likewise, findings will inform preventive teacher preparation initiatives and professional development by critically examining and debunking teacher cognitions that produce stress and by promoting skills and attitudes vital to effective stress management.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Participants

Participants included 165 teachers currently working full-time in an urban traditional public or charter school in the United States. An *urban* school was defined, in line with what the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development standards (2012) for qualifying as an urban county, as a school that is located in a county with a population of 200,000 or more. Other inclusion criteria required participants to have worked as a teacher for at least one year and have earned a national teaching certification in the United States to qualify for inclusion. These teacher preparation programs could include traditional routes to teacher training (e.g. university-based programs) as well as alternative routes (e.g. Teach for America and Teaching Fellows).

An a priori power analysis was conducted to determine the sample size needed to achieve sufficient statistical power. With respect to quantitative data, this study was designed to detect relationships between the following variables: Coping Self-Efficacy, Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help, Burnout, and Years of urban teaching experience. Because this study was the first to examine relationships between many of the aforementioned measures, an average effect size pertaining to these variables was not available. In order to be conservative, a medium effect size ($r = .3$) was chosen for the power analysis (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

G*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007), a computer program, was used to perform the a priori power analysis. According to this program, in order to detect an effect size of .3, with a power value of .80, and an alpha value of .05, a total sample size of 84 was needed. A two-tailed parameter was used because past literature does not suggest the direction of the relationships between some of the variables, e.g. Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Coping Self-Efficacy, used in this study.

After the number of participants sufficient to attain adequate statistical power completed the study's online survey, data were cleaned and stored in a single master database. Overall, a total of 344 sets of responses were stored on this database, 165 of which included completed surveys. Incomplete surveys included participants who consented to the survey but did not complete any of the survey's components as well as participants that initiated the survey but neither continued nor skipped to the end. For the purpose of maximizing the statistical power, data from incomplete surveys were not excluded from the statistical analyses. However, the summary of demographic data below only includes the 165 participants' information who completed all of the survey's components and thus whose data contributed to all of the study's analyses. 11 participants who did not fully complete all MBI items or who did not provide sufficient responses to the open-ended questions used to assess cognitive and behavioral processes were excluded from designation in these burnout groups. As part of the qualitative analysis of this study, participants whose scores from their fully-completed MBI ranked in the lowest third and highest third were designated, respectively, in "low burnout" and "high

burnout” groups. Low burnout and high burnout groups were each composed of 52 participants. Summaries of demographic data for specific burnout groups, in addition to whole-sample data, will additionally be provided separately.

Whole Sample Demographic Data

Personal background. Demographic variables that pertained to teacher participants’ personal background included their age, gender, and ethnicity. Participant age ranged from 23 years old to 61 years old, with a mean of 35.69 ($SD=9.90$) years old and a median participant age of 33 years old. With respect to the participants’ gender, 94.5% ($n = 156$) of the sample identified as female and 5.5% ($n = 9$) of the sample identified as male. With respect to participants’ race/ethnicity, 90.9% ($n = 150$) identified as Caucasian, 4.8% ($n = 8$) identified as Latino(a), 1.8% ($n = 3$) identified as an “Other” category, 1.2% ($n = 2$) identified as African American, and 1.2% ($n = 2$) identified as Asian American. Within the “Other” category, participants identified as Native American, a “mix,” and Caucasian/Native American.

Teaching background. Variables that pertained to participants’ teaching background included the highest degree they obtained, the subject of their highest degree, the grade(s) and subject(s) they taught, their years of overall teaching experience, their years of urban teaching experience, and their school location. 44.2% ($n = 73$) of participants had obtained a Bachelor’s degree, 53.3% ($n = 88$) of participants obtained a Master’s degree, and 2.4% ($n = 4$) of participants obtained a degree classified as “other.” Within this “other” degree classification, participants reported obtaining a Bachelor’s

degree and certification, and the three other participants reported currently completing a Master's degree.

With respect to the highest degree teacher participants earned, they reported a vast range of subjects from Asian studies to chemical engineering to different education-related degrees. The majority of participants, 70.30%, reported earning an education-related degree ($n = 116$), such as Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary Education, English Education, Urban Education, Mathematics Education, and Music Education. The remaining participants who provided a response to this question ($n = 46$) made up 27.88% of the participant population. Other frequently mentioned degrees not directly related to teaching and instruction were Biology, English, History, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Psychology.

The grades participants taught fell into four broader school categories—pre-kindergarten, elementary school (K-5), middle school (6-8), and high school (9-12). Accordingly, 3.0% ($n = 5$) of the participants were pre-kindergarten teachers, 32.12% ($n = 53$) were elementary school teachers, 35.15% ($n = 58$) were middle school teachers, 28.48% ($n = 47$) were high school teachers, and two participants did not provide a response to this prompt. Of these teachers, 50.30% ($n = 83$) only taught one subject area while 48.48% ($n = 80$) taught multiple subjects, and two participants did not provide this information. Some of the most commonly mentioned subjects for single-subject teachers included English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Multiple-subject teachers taught any one of a diverse permutations of subjects, e.g. Math and Social

Studies or English and Science, and a number of them taught all subjects to their students ($n = 21$).

Participants' overall teaching experience ($n = 164$) ranged from 1 to 33 years of experience, with a mean of 9.61 ($SD = 7.84$) years of experience and a median of 7 years of experience. Participants' years of urban teaching experience ($n = 163$) ranged from 0 to 33 years of experience, with a mean of 8.44 ($SD = 7.47$) years of experience and a median of 6 years of experience.

Participants held teaching positions in urban areas all over the United States. For the purpose of summarizing the regional context in which these participants taught, their school locations were grouped into one of the five following regions—the Midwest, the Southeast, the Southwest, the Northeast, and the West. 29.09% ($n = 48$) of participants held teaching positions in the Midwest, 26.67% ($n = 44$) taught in the Southeast, 16.97% ($n = 28$) taught in the Southwest, 15.15% ($n = 25$) taught in the Northeast, 10.30% ($n = 17$) taught in the West, and 3 participants did not provide their school location.

School context. Variables that pertained to participants' school context included participants' class size, the extent which student discipline was a concern in their class and school, availability of technology and instructional resources, and availability and sources of professional and social-emotional support. Participants' average class size ($n = 164$) ranged from 4 to 50 students, with a mean of 24.82 students ($SD = 6.77$) and a median of 25.00. On a 1-4 scale (1= Never, 2= Once a week, 3= More than once a week, 4= Every day) used to assess the frequency in which student discipline was a concern in class, participants ($n = 163$) averaged a 3.44 ($SD = .87$). On the same scale, participants (n

= 163) on average scored a 3.87 ($SD = .41$) when asked to assess the frequency in which student discipline was a concern. Both of these ratings indicate that on average, student discipline is between a weekly and daily concern in their classrooms and schools.

Participants ($n = 163$) also rated the availability of technology and other instructional resources at their schools using a 1-4 scale (1=Not available at all, 2=Somewhat available, 3=Available most of the time, and 4=Available all of the time). Means for these items were, respectively, 2.91 ($SD = .69$) and 2.69 ($SD = .76$), indicating that participants perceived these resources to be somewhat available at the least and bordering on available most of the time.

Participants rated the amount of professional ($n = 163$) and social-emotional support ($n = 162$) they receive on a 1-3 scale (1=No support, 2=Some support, 3=A lot of support). Means for these items were, respectively, 2.12 ($SD = .51$) and 1.87 ($SD = .64$), demonstrating that participants report receiving some professional support but no to some social-emotional support. When participants were asked to specify their major sources of professional support, they commonly mentioned administrators, other teachers, and professional development. When participants were asked to specify their major sources of social-emotional support, they frequently listed friends, family, significant others, co-workers, therapists, and sometimes administrators.

Summary of demographic, teaching background, and school context data.

The above data helped provide a demographic profile of the average participant of this study. In terms of age, gender, and ethnicity, the average participant of this study's sample was in her mid-30s, was female, and Caucasian. This average participant earned a

Master's degree, held some degree in an education-related subject area, taught in a secondary school (middle school or high school), taught one subject, and possessed approximately 10 years of general teaching experience and 8-9 years of urban teaching experience. Furthermore, the average participant taught in the Midwest or Southeast region of the United States, had a class size of between 24 and 25 students, and felt that student discipline was a concern in their class and school between more than once a week and every day. Lastly, the average participant felt that technology and other teaching resources were available in their school between most of the time and all of the time, received some professional support at their schools, and between no and some social-emotional support.

Design

The current study used a mixed methods design, which entailed the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, to enhance the completeness of the data in answering the research questions (Bryman, 2006). The participants completed a demographic questionnaire which included relevant background information from participants, such as information about their demographics, teaching background, and school context. To measure burnout, the study used the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The sample of participants was then split into thirds and the group of participants with the highest MBI scores was designated as the “high burnout group” and the group of participants with the lowest MBI scores was designated as the “low burnout group.” The summed scores of the three subscales of the MBI—the Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment (after this scale

was reverse-coded)—was used in this process. Higher scores on these subscales signified higher levels of burnout. To illuminate the cognitive and behavioral processes by which teachers react to a challenging classroom, this study used a survey which included open-ended questions to collect qualitative data that align to each stage of the cognitive-behavioral model. To measure perceived effectiveness in utilizing coping strategies to manage emotional distress, this study used the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES; Chesney et al., 2006). To measure attitudes towards seeking mental health services to cope with distress, this study used the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale—Short Form (ATSPPH; Chesney et al., 2006).

Measures

Demographic questionnaire. Participants completed a questionnaire which required them to report demographic information related to their personal background, teaching background, and school context. Personal Background information included their age, gender, and ethnicity. Teaching background information their included highest level of educational attainment, type of degree attained, the subject(s) they taught, number of years of teaching experience overall, number of years teaching in an urban school, and school location. School Context information included class size, the extent to which student discipline was a concern in their classrooms and schools, the availability of technology and other resources at their schools, and the amount of professional and social-emotional support they received.

Maslach burnout inventory. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), developed by Maslach & Jackson (1981, 1986), was used to measure teacher burnout. The MBI is composed of 22 items and divided into 3 subscales—Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. The Emotional Exhaustion subscale includes 9 items which describe feelings of fatigue, drainage of emotional resources, and tiredness that interfere with student interactions (sample item: “I feel emotionally drained from my work”). The Depersonalization subscale includes 5 items that represent negative and distant attitudes towards students (sample item: “I don’t really care what happens to some students”). The Personal Accomplishment subscale includes 8 items that reflect teachers’ perceptions about their effectiveness in fulfilling their goals of helping students learn (sample item: “I feel I am positively influencing other peoples’ lives through my work”). The 22 items of the MBI are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale on which the participant indicates how often a feeling had been experienced, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). Higher scores on the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization subscales and lower scores on the Personal Accomplishment signify increased burnout. As it is typically used, scores on the three subscales after summed up after the Personal Accomplishment subscale is reverse-scored.

With respect to the psychometric properties of the MBI, research has provided reliability and validity evidence for the subscales. In a meta-analytic review of reliability of the MBI in forty-five empirical studies across diverse settings, the average reliability for the Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment subscales were, respectively, .88, .71, and .78 (Aguayo, Vargas, de la Fuente, and

Lozano, 2011). Furthermore, Iwanicki & Schwab (1981) found Cronbach alpha estimates of 0.90, 0.76, and 0.76 for these subscales in a sample of 469 teachers in the United States. Test-re-test reliability estimates for these subscales for a time period of a few weeks ranged from 0.60-0.82 and for a time period of a year ranged from 0.54-0.60 (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). With respect to validity, studies by Iwanicki & Schwab (1981) and Gold et al. (1992) lend support to MBI's three-factor structure. Also, correlations of .74 and .79 between scores on the MBI and the Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure (SMBM; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996; Shirom & Melamed, 2006) support convergent validity.

Coping self-efficacy scale. To measure teachers' perceived effectiveness in utilizing coping strategies to manage their emotional distress, participants completed the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES, Chesney et al., 2006). The CSES consists of 26 items measures how confident participants feel they can use problem-focused coping, stop unpleasant and emotions and thoughts, and get support from friends and family, when they are feeling down. Items are rated on a scale from 0 to 10 scale—0 signifies “cannot do at all,” 5 signifies “moderately can do,” and 10 signifies “certain can do.” Ratings are summed up to produce an overall score, with higher total scores indicating that an individual feels more efficacious using the aforementioned coping strategies.

Chesney et al. (2006) reported a 13-item reduced form of the CSE scale with three factors: Use problem-focused coping (6 items), Stop unpleasant emotions and thoughts (4 items), and Get support from friends and family (3 items). Coefficient alpha estimates for these three subscales in a sample of HIV-positive men ranged from .80 to .91

(Chesney et al., 2006). Additionally, test-retest correlations for this sample ranged from .40 to .80. With respect to validity, each of the three CSES subscale scores related to measures of psychological distress and well-being, and ways of coping. For example, individuals who scored higher on the Get support from friends and family subscale reported higher levels of perceived social support ($r = .60$) and were less likely to use distancing ($r = -.22$) as a coping style (Chesney et al., 2006). In line with Chesney et al.'s (2006) recommendation for using the CSES for descriptive purposes, the full 26-item scale will be used in this study.

The CSES has already been administered to a population of HIV-positive men in the United States and a British-based community sample (Chesney et al., 2006; Colodro, Godoy-Izquierdo, & Godoy, 2010). The results of these studies have confirmed appropriate reliability and construct validity in both samples. Additionally, in the British community sample healthy participants scored significantly higher on CSE than unhealthy participants, which may suggest relationships between CSE and aspects of medical and psychological health (Colodro et al., 2010).

Attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help scale. To investigate the extent to which teachers are open to pursuing mental health or counseling services to cope with their emotional distress, participants completed the Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale—Short form (ATTSPHS-SF; Fischer & Farina, 1995). The ATSPPHS short form is a 10-item measure designed to assess respondents' attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help. On a 4-point Likert-type scale (i.e. 0=disagree, 3=agree), participants indicate their level of

agreement or disagreement with each item (sample item= “If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention”). Scores for the instrument range from 0 to 30, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward seeking psychological help. Half of the items on the scale are reverse-coded to bolster the scale’s internal validity.

With respect to reliability, past researchers have reported Cronbach alpha estimates of 0.84 in a sample of college students during the scale’s development, and subsequent Cronbach alpha estimates of 0.87 (Cepeda-Bonito & Short, 1998) and 0.75 (Duncan, 2003) for other samples of college students. The test-retest reliability of the scale was reported to be .80 in Fischer & Farina’s (1995) study. With respect to convergent validity, higher scores on the ATSPPHS short form were related to less treatment-related stigma and greater intentions to seek treatment in the future in samples of college students and primary care patients (Elhai, Schweinle, & Anderson, 2006).

Survey to measure cognitive and behavioral processes. To investigate the cognitive and behavioral processes by which teachers respond to a challenging classroom situation, participants completed a survey which contains questions designed to elicit qualitative and quantitative data. Each question pertains to a different step of the cognitive-behavioral model, which provides a framework for conceptualizing how challenging classrooms cause teachers to think, feel, and behave in ways that have differential implications for their long-term emotional health. For example, question 1 on the survey asks for participants to list characteristics of an ideal teacher to probe for the “schemas” or “basic beliefs” teachers maintain. Question 2 on the survey is designed to

elicit responses that pertain to the challenging classroom situations, or “critical incidents,” that teachers have encountered over the past week. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are designed to elicit responses that pertain to teachers’ “automatic thoughts” in response to the challenging classroom situation, and their subsequent emotions, behavioral responses, physiological responses, and coping strategies.

Procedure

This study used a convenience sample of urban middle school and high school teachers within the United States. Participants were recruited for this web-based study through listservs, directors of Graduate School of Education programs at which teachers are enrolled in classes, personal contacts, and Facebook groups. Additionally, snowball sampling, which entailed encouraging participants to send the invitation to the study to anyone who may be eligible, was used. On the invitation to participate, the study was described as examining the “experiences of teachers working in urban schools, including stressful experiences associated with the daily realities of the teaching profession.” This study description also included the significance of the study to “learn more about how best to support teachers who work in urban schools,” inclusion and exclusion criteria for participation, the estimated time to complete the study, and information about entering a raffle to win a cash prize for participation.

Once participants clicked on the study link, they accessed the Opinio online survey, which included an informed consent letter. After participants clicked a link indicating consent to participate, the survey provided a brief set of directions. Participants subsequently completed the demographic questionnaire and the rest of the measures. Due

to the logical progression of the data being collected, participants always completed the demographic questionnaire, then subsequently the MBI, the Survey to measure cognitive and behavioral processes, the CSES, and finally the ATSPPH-SF.

Participants had the option of providing an e-mail address to register to win one of two \$50 VISA gift-card prizes. The e-mail addresses were not connected to survey data, and were maintained in a confidential file.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics. After data were collected and cleaned, descriptive statistics were generated for the following variables—Burnout, Coping Self-efficacy, and Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help, and Years of Urban Teaching Experience—relevant to the research questions being investigated. This included standard indicators of central tendency of spread, such as mean, median, and range. Additionally, data for demographic variables for both low and high burnout groups were summarized. Chi-square tests and t-tests were performed to determine inter-group differences with respect to these demographic variables.

Content analysis. This study used content analysis as a method for systematically describing the meaning of the qualitative data produced by open-ended questions in the survey (Schreier, 2014). Accordingly, this study used both *concept-driven* and *data-driven* categories to build a coding frame for this data. Concept-driven categories were created based on previous knowledge or theory while data-driven categories were created as they emerge from the data until *saturation*, when the data stops producing additional categories, occurred (Schreier, 2014).

In this manner, applying the cognitive-behavioral model to analyze this data lent structure to the construction of concept-driven categories for data from certain questions (Sharf, 2008; Schreier, 2014). According to this model, cognitive schema or beliefs become triggered in response to certain critical incidents. The model posits that if critical incidents, i.e. challenging classroom events, produce negative automatic thoughts, this will in turn cause an individual to experience negative emotions, display maladaptive behaviors, and cause physiological distress. Likewise, because the application of the model does not predict the content of the schemas or critical incidents reported by participants, the coding frame for qualitative data from questions 1 and 2 on the survey was constructed using categories that emerged from the data in a data-driven manner. Additionally, because the application of the model does not predict the nature of the coping behaviors individuals utilize in response to emotional distress, qualitative data for question 7 was coded using data-driven categories.

However, the application of the cognitive-behavioral model did lend structure to the coding and analysis for the remaining questions. Specifically, open-ended responses for questions 3 and 4 were coded and analyzed in a concept-driven way, according to whether these responses demonstrated negative, positive, or neutral thoughts and feelings that occurred in response to the challenging classroom situation. Additionally, responses from questions 5 and 6 were coded according to whether these responses could be characterized as maladaptive, neutral, or adaptive physiological and behavioral responses. In this analysis physiologically and behaviorally *maladaptive* responses were defined,

respectively, as contributive to physiological strain and as responses ineffective at resolving the challenging classroom situation.

Two independent coders coded multiple sections of the qualitative data in the manner elaborated above to achieve coding consistency and to modify the coding frame to better describe the data before the main data analysis phase (Schreier, 2014). Subsequently, the rest of the qualitative data were coded. After the coding process, frequencies and percentages, i.e. the number and percentage of times participants' responses pertained to one of the established categories for each open-ended question, were calculated and compared across groups (low-burnout group vs. high-burnout group). The categories constructed for each open-ended question demonstrated the *nature* and *prevalence* of cognitive and behavioral processes that occurred in response to a challenging classroom situation. The comparison of inter-group frequencies and percentages illustrated the *difference*, or lack of one, in the nature and prevalence of cognitive and behavioral processes and coping strategies between burnout groups. Chi-square analyses were used to determine the significance of these differences. Likewise, the results of these comparisons provided further insight into the relationship between teachers' interpretations of challenging classroom situations and their experiences of burnout. Also, they revealed how teachers coped with emotional distress over time.

Correlations. Pearson correlations were computed to examine the relationships in the sample between Coping Self-Efficacy and Burnout, between Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Coping Self-Efficacy, and between

Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help and Burnout. A p-value of 0.05 or lower constituted a significant finding.

Multiple regression analysis. A hierarchical multiple regression was used to conduct a moderation analysis, i.e. to determine if ATSPPH moderated the relationship between Years of urban teaching experience and Burnout. In this analysis, Years of urban teaching experience, ATSPPH, and the interaction of the two variables (the moderator term) were considered predictor variables and Burnout was considered the outcome variable.

In the first step of this analysis, Years of teaching experience and ATSPPH was regressed against Burnout to determine how much variance the two aforementioned predictor variables combined accounted for in the outcome variable. A significant F value ($p < .05$) would signify that these two variables predict significant levels of burnout and the R^2 would indicate how much variance Years of urban teaching experience and ATSPPH account for in Burnout. Additionally, standardized beta weights were considered to determine the nature of the relationship between these two predictor variables and Burnout.

During the second step of this analysis, the interaction term was added to the regression equation. If the interaction term explained additional variance in Burnout as demonstrated by an increase in ΔR^2 and this F value ($p < .05$) is significant, this would signify that the moderator term accounts for variance in Burnout above and beyond Years of urban teaching experience and ATSPPH. This would then support the hypothesis that

ATSPPH moderates the relationship between Years of urban teaching experience and Burnout.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

As previously mentioned, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to address this study's research questions. Quantitative data was collected via the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale, and Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale, and qualitative data was collected via open-ended survey questions that assessed participants' cognitive and behavioral processes. This chapter will summarize the descriptive statistics for the quantitative measures and relate the data analyses that will address the following research questions:

1A. How do teachers interpret challenging classroom situations with students?

B. How do the ways teachers interpret challenging situations impact their affective, behavioral, and physiological responses?

2A. How do teachers cope with stress from challenging classroom situations?

B. How does their perceived effectiveness in utilizing these coping strategies to manage their emotional distress relate to burnout and help-seeking attitudes?

3A. To what extent are teachers in urban schools open to seeking professional psychological help in coping with emotional distress?

B. Do help-seeking attitudes moderate the relationship between number of years of urban teaching experience and burnout?

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analyses of the four major variables—Burnout Coping Self-Efficacy, Attitudes Towards Professional Psychological Help, and Years of Urban Teaching Experience—used to answer Research Question 2B and 3 are presented in Table 4 for the whole sample of participants in addition to low burnout and high burnout groups.

Subsequently, descriptive analyses for the demographic variables for low burnout and high burnout groups will be related.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Major Quantitative Measures

		N	Mean	SD	Median	Sample Range
Maslach Burnout Inventory	Whole Sample	248	100.47	13.24	100.0	68-135
	Low Burnout	52	86.04	6.30	88.0	68-95
	High Burnout	52	115.15	6.30	114.0	107-130
Coping Self-Efficacy Scale	Whole Sample	152	157.93	44.30	154.5	17-260
	Low Burnout	45	171.64	46.01	166.0	90-260
	High Burnout	48	149.98	47.67	151.0	17-230
Attitudes Towards Professional Psychological Help Scale	Whole Sample	160	23.65	2.80	24.0	13-31
	Low Burnout	48	24.27	2.37	24.0	19-29
	High Burnout	49	23.67	2.94	24.0	18-31
Years of Urban Teaching Experience	Whole Sample	263	7.47	6.78	5	0-33
	Low Burnout	52	8.88	7.45	7	0-30
	High Burnout	51	8.59	7.55	5	1-33

Low burnout group. The low burnout group consisted of a group of teacher participants ($n= 52$) whose scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory ranked in the lowest third of the participants who completed the online survey. This signifies that the group of participants whose personal background, teaching background, and school context data is summarized below, qualifies as the “least burned out” of this study’s participants. Their MBI scores ranged from 68 to 95, with a mean ($SD=6.30$) of 86.04 and a median of 88.

Personal, teaching background, and school context data. The ages of the participants in the low burnout group ranged from 24 to 61 years old, with a mean of 37.25 ($SD=9.27$) years old and a median participant age of 36 years old. With respect to these participants’ gender, 98.1% ($n = 51$) of the sample identified as female and 1.9% (n

= 1) of the sample identified as male. In terms of participants' race/ethnicity, 96.2% ($n = 50$) identified as Caucasian and 3.8% ($n = 2$) identified as Latino(a).

36.5% ($n = 19$) of low burnout participants obtained a Bachelor's degree, 57.7% ($n = 30$) of participants obtained a Master's degree, and 5.8% ($n = 3$) of participants obtained a degree classified as "other." Within this "other" degree classification, one participant reported obtaining a Bachelor's degree plus certification, and the other two participants reported currently completing a Master's degree. 73.08% ($n = 38$) of participants earned an education-related degree, 25% ($n = 13$) earned a degree not directly related to education, and one participant did not provide a response. 1.9% ($n = 1$) of the participants were pre-kindergarten teachers, 26.92% ($n = 14$) were elementary school teachers, 36.54% ($n = 19$) were middle school teachers, and 34.62% ($n = 18$) were high school teachers. Of these teachers, 51.92% ($n = 27$) only taught one subject area while 44.23% ($n = 23$) taught multiple subjects, and two participants did not provide this information. Participants' overall teaching experience ($n = 52$) ranged from 1 to 30 years of experience, with a mean of 10.29 ($SD = 7.61$) years of experience and a median of 7.5 years of experience. Participants' years of urban teaching experience ($n = 52$) ranged from 0 to 30 years of experience, with a mean of 8.88 ($SD = 7.45$) years of experience and a median of 7.0 years of experience.

With respect to school location, 23.08% ($n = 12$) of low burnout participants taught in the Midwest, 23.08% ($n = 12$) taught in the Southeast, 21.15% ($n = 11$) taught in the Southwest, 9.62% ($n = 5$) taught in the Northeast, 21.15% ($n = 11$) taught in the West, and one participant did not provide his/her school location. Participants' average

class size ($n = 52$) ranged from 4 to 50 students, with a mean of 25.37 students ($SD = 7.91$) and a median of 25.50.

These teachers indicated that student discipline was a concern in class between more than once a week and every day ($M = 3.17$, $SD = .94$) and in school closer to every day ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .49$). Technology and other instructional resources at these teachers' schools were both available most of the time ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .64$; $M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.80$). They also reported receiving between some and a lot of professional support ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 0.51$) and some social emotional support ($M = 2.08$, $SD = 0.56$). When participants were asked to specify their major sources of professional support, they commonly mentioned administrators, other teachers and grade-level teams, and professional development. When participants were asked to specify their major sources of social-emotional support, they frequently listed friends, family, significant others, co-workers, social workers and counselors at school, administrators, and therapists.

High burnout group. The high burnout group consisted of a group of teacher participants ($n = 52$) whose scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory ranked in the highest third of the 165 participants who completed the online survey. This signifies that the group of participants whose personal background, teaching background, and school context data is summarized below qualifies as the “most burned out” of this study's participants. Their MBI scores ranged from 107 to 130, with a mean ($SD = 6.30$) of 115.15 and a median of 114.

Personal, teaching background, and school context data. The ages of the participants in the high burnout group ranged from 23 to 61 years old, with a mean of

35.48 ($SD=10.25$) years old and a median participant age of 32 years old. With respect to these participants' gender, 94.2% ($n = 49$) of the sample identified as female and 5.8% ($n = 3$) of the sample identified as male. In terms of participants' race/ethnicity, 88.5% ($n = 46$) identified as Caucasian, 7.7% ($n = 4$) identified as Latino(a), 1.9% ($n = 1$) identified as Asian, and 1.9% ($n = 1$) identified as an "Other" identity, i.e. a "mix."

48.1% ($n = 25$) of high burnout participants obtained a Bachelor's degree, 50% ($n = 26$) of participants obtained a Master's degree, and 1.9% ($n = 1$) of participants obtained a degree classified as "other." Within this "other" degree classification, one participant reported obtaining "some" of her Master's degree. 75% ($n = 39$) of participants earned an education-related degree and 25% ($n = 13$) earned a degree not directly related to education. 1.9% ($n = 1$) of the participants were pre-kindergarten teachers, 32.69% ($n = 17$) were elementary school teachers, 28.85% ($n = 15$) were middle school teachers, and 36.54% ($n = 19$) were high school teachers. Of these teachers, 46.15% ($n = 24$) taught only one subject area while 51.92% ($n = 27$) taught multiple subjects, and one participant did not provide this information. Participants' overall teaching experience ($n = 52$) ranged from 1 to 33 years of experience, with a mean of 10.19 ($SD= 8.14$) years of experience and a median of 8.0 years of experience. Participants' years of urban teaching experience ($n = 51$) ranged from 1 to 33 years of experience, with a mean of 8.59 ($SD= 7.55$) years of experience and a median of 5.0 years of experience.

With respect to school location, 32.69% ($n = 17$) of low burnout participants taught in the Midwest, 32.69% ($n = 17$) taught in the Southeast, 15.38% ($n = 8$) taught in

the Southwest, 13.46% ($n = 7$) taught in the Northeast, and 5.77% ($n = 3$) taught in the West. Participants' average class size ($n = 52$) ranged from 4 to 36 students, with a mean of 24.08 students ($SD = 6.68$) and a median of 25.0 students.

These teachers indicated that student discipline was a concern in class between more than once a week and every day ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .90$) and in school closer to every day ($M = 3.85$, $SD = .42$). Technology and other instructional resources at these teachers' schools were somewhat available to available most of the time ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.76$; $M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.73$). These teachers also reported receiving between some professional support ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 0.48$) and between no to some social emotional support ($M = 1.71$, $SD = 0.67$). When participants were asked to specify their major sources of professional support, they commonly mentioned administrators, other teachers, instructional coaches and other professional organizations. When participants were asked to specify their major sources of social-emotional support, they frequently listed friends, family, other teachers, and sometimes administrators.

Table 2. Personal Background Data for all Participant Groups

		Whole Sample (N = 165)	Low Burnout (N = 52)	High Burnout (N = 52)
Age (mean in years)		35.69	37.25	35.48
Gender (% of whole)	Female	94.5	98.1	94.2
	Male	5.5	1.9	5.8
Ethnicity (% of whole)	Caucasian	90.9	96.2	88.5
	Latino(a)	4.8	3.8	7.7
	African-American	1.2	0	0
	Asian	1.2	0	1.9
	Other	1.8	0	1.9

Table 3. Teaching Background Data for all Participant Groups

		Whole Sample (N = 165)	Low Burnout (N = 52)	High Burnout (N = 52)
Degree earned (% of whole)	Bachelor's	44.2	36.5	48.1
	Master's	53.3	57.7	50.0
	Other	2.4	5.8	1.9
Type of Degree (% of whole)	Education-related	70.30	73.08	75.0
	Non education-related	27.88	25.0	25.0
Grades Taught (% of whole)	Pre-kindergarten	3.0	1.9	1.9
	Elementary School	32.12	26.92	32.69
	Middle School	35.15	36.54	28.85
	High School	28.48	34.62	36.54
Subjects Taught (% of whole)	One subject	50.30	51.92	46.15
	Multiple subjects	48.48	44.23	51.92
Years of general teaching experience (mean)		9.61	10.29	10.19
Years of urban teaching experience (mean)		8.44	8.88	8.59
School Location (% of whole)	Midwest	29.09	23.08	32.69
	Southeast	26.67	23.08	32.69
	Southwest	16.97	21.15	15.38
	Northeast	15.15	9.62	13.46
	West	10.30	21.15	5.77

Table 4. School Context Data for all Participant Groups

	Whole Sample (N = 165)	Low Burnout (N = 52)	High Burnout (N = 52)
Class Size (mean)	24.82	25.37	24.08
Student Discipline a Concern in class (mean)	3.44	3.17	3.52
Student Discipline a Concern in school (mean)	3.87	3.81	3.85
Availability of Technology (mean)	2.91	3.06	2.83
Availability of other Teaching Resources (mean)	2.69	3.06	2.56
Professional Support Received (mean)	2.12	2.31	1.92
Social-Emotional Support Received (mean)	1.87	2.08	1.71

Notes: Student Discipline items rated on 1-4 scale (Never---Every day), Availability items rated on 1-4 scale (Not available at all---available all of time), Support items rated on 1-3 scale (No support---A lot of support)

Differences between burnout groups in demographic data. School context data was examined across burnout groups. The number of participants in respective burnout groups significantly differed by Availability of Other Teaching Resources ($t(102) = 3.334, p = 0.001$), Professional Support Received ($t(101.682) = 3.980, p = 0.000$), and Social-Emotional Support Received ($t(98.683) = 3.026, p = 0.003$). They did not however differ significantly by Age ($t(101) = .921, p = 0.359$), Gender ($X^2(1, N = 104) = 1.040, p = 0.618$), Ethnicity ($X^2(3, N = 104) = 2.693, p = 0.317$), Degree Earned ($X^2(2, N = 104) = 2.033, p = 0.339$), Grade Taught ($X^2(3, N = 104) = 1.047, p = 0.839$), Type of Degree ($X^2(1, N = 103) = 0.003, p = 0.567$), Subjects Taught ($X^2(1, N = 101) = 0.487, p = 0.309$), Years of Teaching Experience ($t(102) = .062, p = 0.950$), Years of Urban Teaching Experience ($t(101) = .201, p = 0.841$), School Location ($X^2(4, N = 103) = 7.094, p = 0.133$), Class Size ($t(102) = .898, p = 0.371$), Student Discipline Concern in Class ($t(102)$

= -1.918, $p = 0.058$), Student Discipline Concern in School ($t(102) = -.434$, $p = 0.665$), and the Availability of Technology ($t(99.089) = 1.676$, $p = 0.097$).

Research Question 1

Research Question 1A. To answer Research Question 1A, qualitative data to open-ended responses on the survey to assess cognitive and behavioral processes was analyzed. These questions asked teachers to relate the characteristics of an ideal teacher, a challenging classroom situation, and the thoughts teachers experienced in response to this challenging classroom situation. Within the framework of the cognitive-behavioral model, the thoughts that occur in response to a trigger (e.g. the challenging classroom situation) occur because teachers have a certain cognitive schema (e.g. characteristics of an ideal teacher) for how teachers *should* act. Teachers' *actual* actions may align or fall short of this idealized schema, thus producing thoughts of positive, negative, or neutral valence.

Qualitative data for questions that assessed the characteristics of an ideal teacher and challenging classroom situations will be reported below according to categories that emerged from the data. Data from the question that assessed participants' thoughts in response to the challenging classroom situation will be reported according to pre-determined categories, i.e. whether the thought possesses a positive, negative or neutral valence. Furthermore, the frequencies by which participants' responses pertained to each category will be quantified to demonstrate the prevalence of these categories for participants of both low-burnout and high-burnout groups.

Characteristics of an ideal teacher. In analyzing the responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate the characteristics of an ideal teacher, the following categories emerged from the data: General Skills or Mindsets, Social-Emotional Qualities, Qualities of Instruction, Classroom Management, and Qualities of Teaching Background.

Responses that related general skills or mindsets described qualities, dispositions, or ways of thinking essential to teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. Common examples responses mentioned that teachers should be "organized," "flexible," always "prepared," and "able to handle any situation that arises in the classroom." Responses that related social-emotional qualities described interpersonal and intrapersonal characteristics essential to teachers' success. Examples included the importance of teachers being "calm during student outbursts," "firm but friendly," they should have a "relationship with their students," and should display "empathy" and "compassion." Responses that related qualities of instruction described characteristics of instruction that facilitated the engagement of all students. Examples included responses that demonstrated that "an ideal teacher would be able to have every student very interested in learning," a teacher should have "engaging" and "rigorous lessons," and "differentiates for their students culturally, linguistically, and academically." Responses that related aspects of classroom management described ways in which teachers should manage the behaviors of their students to ensure a physically safe classroom environment. Examples suggested that teachers should have "control over the classroom," should "explicitly communicate procedures and classroom rules," and "be consistent and students should

know what to expect.” Lastly, responses that related qualities of one’s teaching background related aspects of teachers’ preparation important to their effectiveness as a teacher. Examples included responses that teachers should be “well studied in their content area, well studied in teaching practices” and have a good “understanding of their curriculum.”

Of the low burnout group participants, 75% ($n = 39$) of responses related general skills or mindsets, 94.23% ($n = 49$) of responses related social-emotional qualities, 48.08% ($n = 25$) related qualities of instruction, 40.38% ($n = 21$) related aspects of classroom management, and 13.46% ($n = 7$) related qualities of a teacher’s background. Of the high burnout group participants, 90.38% ($n = 47$) of responses related general skills or mindsets, 86.54% ($n = 45$) of responses related social-emotional qualities, 40.38% ($n = 21$) related qualities of instruction, 28.85% ($n = 15$) related aspects of classroom management, and 26.92% ($n = 14$) related qualities of a teacher’s background. Additionally, 92.31% ($n = 48$) of responses from low-burnout participants and 98.08% ($n = 51$) responses from high-burnout participants included data that pertained to multiple categories, illustrating the need to possess numerous different types of skills as an ideal teacher. The propensity for teachers to identify more than one type of characteristic that an ideal teacher should possess did significantly differ by burnout group ($X^2(2, N = 104) = 10.910, p = 0.006$), with high burnout teachers more frequently reporting characteristics of an ideal teacher that pertained to multiple of the above categories.

Challenging classroom situations. In examining the responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate a challenging classroom situation, the following

categories emerged from the data: Student-related concerns, Lack of support, Parent Interactions, and Other Demanding Aspects of Job.

Responses that demonstrated student-related concerns described numerous instances of student misbehavior, disengagement, social-emotional challenges, external life circumstances, and academic challenges that posed challenging for participants to manage. Examples included “a student...became upset...shouted flipped over her chair, left the room, and began slamming the door over and over again” and “All the students cared about was being silly with each other. Most don't care that they are failing. They are focused on socializing not learning.” Additional examples included a student who is “several grade levels behind and doesn't have the math foundation needed to follow along” and another student who “was kicked out of his home when he arrived at around 8:30pm...” Responses that demonstrated a lack of support related participants’ sentiment that neither administrators, other teachers, nor parents adequately supported them to be effective with their students. Examples included responses such as “home support is minimal,” and “So, without any help, I have to control this child in hopes that he doesn't have an outburst and hurt himself or others in my classroom.” Responses that depicted challenging parent interactions entailed some aspect of communication with parents that participants found distressing. Examples included “parent refuses to acknowledge there is underlying issues” and “A mom spilling too much information to me regarding her husband and his child endangerment trial.” Lastly, responses that were categorized as a general demanding aspect of teaching included challenges such as teacher evaluations, not having sufficient time to complete tasks, and administrative demands. Examples

included “being overworked and not having enough breaks in the day or year” and “meetings not related to teaching.”

Of the low burnout group participants, 96.15% ($n = 50$) of responses mentioned a student-related concern, 19.23% ($n = 10$) of responses mentioned a lack of support, 5.77% ($n = 3$) mentioned parent interactions, and 5.77% ($n = 3$) mentioned other general demanding aspects of their job. Of the high burnout group participants, 92.31% ($n = 48$) of responses mentioned a student-related concern, 21.15% ($n = 11$) of responses mentioned a lack of support, 7.69% ($n = 4$) mentioned parent interactions, and 9.62% ($n = 5$) mentioned other general demanding aspects of their job.

Thoughts in response to challenging classroom situations. Responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate their thoughts in response to a challenging classroom situation were categorized according to whether they possessed a positive, negative, or neutral valence.

Thoughts that possessed a positive valence demonstrated participants’ sense of self-efficacy in handling the challenging situation, empowerment, and a positive acknowledgment of the limitations of their role. Examples of these include “I knew I could handle this,” “I can end this because I’ve done it before,” and “As long as I give it my all I need to be happy with what I was able to do.” Conversely, thoughts that possessed a negative valence demonstrated participants’ sense of ineffectiveness in handling the challenging situation, an emphasis of the typicality of the dysfunction the situation represented, and a tendency to blame students, their parents, and administrators. Examples of these include “I’m a bad teacher for not helping this student as much as I

need to,” “Just a typical day in the inner city!,” and “I’m so sick of students who don’t want to learn and parents who don’t want to parent. Why do I still do this job?” Lastly, thoughts that possessed a neutral valence demonstrated a desire to rationally understand the causes for the situation, an objective consideration of steps to resolve the situation, and a neutral acknowledgment of their role limitations. Examples of these include “I thought [this student] must be trying to get attention because he likes to be funny,” “How can I help this student to get settled?,” and “I thought that I am only one person and I can’t do everything.”

Of the low burnout group participants, 28.85% ($n = 15$) of responses possessed a positive valence, 78.85% ($n = 41$) of responses possessed a negative valence, and 32.69% ($n = 17$) were neutral. Of the high burnout group participants, 13.46% ($n = 7$) of responses possessed a positive valence, 84.62% ($n = 44$) possessed a negative valence, and 40.38% ($n = 21$) possessed a neutral valence.

Research Question 1B. To answer Research Question 1B, qualitative data to open-ended responses on the Survey to assess cognitive and behavioral processes were analyzed for questions that asked teachers to relate their emotions, physiological, and behavioral responses in response to a challenging classroom situation. Qualitative data for these questions will be reported according to pre-determined categories. For the emotions teachers related in response to the challenging classroom situation, they were categorized according to whether the emotion possessed a positive, negative, or neutral valence. For the physiological and behavioral responses teachers displayed in response to the challenging classroom situation, they were categorized according to whether the

responses were adaptive, maladaptive, or neutral. Additionally, the frequencies by which participants' responses pertained to each category will be quantified to demonstrate the prevalence of these categories for participants of both low-burnout and high-burnout groups.

Emotions. Responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate their feelings or emotions in response to a challenging classroom situation were categorized according to whether they possess a positive, negative, or neutral valence.

Emotions that possessed a positive valence described participants' feelings of confidence and connection to students. Examples included participants reporting "I felt confident. I am the leader in the class" and "I felt...connected to the student." Emotions that possessed a negative valence oftentimes described participants' feelings of sadness, frustration, exhaustion, and helplessness. Common examples included "I felt frustrated and angry," "Anxiety. Fear. Dread. Feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope" and "Helpless. Emotionally Charged. Barely in control." Emotions that possessed a neutral valence described participants' feelings that could neither be classified as positive or negative. Examples included participants reporting "I felt compelled to plan things out..." "I felt challenged..." and "I felt relaxed."

Of the low burnout group participants, 7.69% ($n = 4$) of responses related a positive emotion, 94.23% ($n = 49$) of responses related a negative emotion, and 7.69% ($n = 4$) of responses related a neutral emotion. Of the high burnout group participants, 7.69% ($n = 4$) of responses related a positive emotion, 100% ($n = 52$) related a negative

emotion, and 3.85% ($n = 2$) related a neutral emotion. In some responses, multiple emotions of different valence were related.

Physiological responses. Responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate their physiological responses to a challenging classroom situation were categorized according to whether they were adaptive, maladaptive, or neutral in resolving the situation.

Adaptive physiological responses were characterized by positive physiological reactions that contributed to teachers' ability to more effectively handle the classroom situation in a manner that did not increase their physiological strain. Examples of adaptive physiological responses included responses like "My body felt calm" and "My body has learned to calm down in situations..." Maladaptive physiological responses were characterized as adverse physiological reactions that activated teachers' stress response and made it more difficult for teachers to resolve the classroom situation effectively. Examples of maladaptive physiological responses included responses like "Shoulders up to my ears, stuttering when talking, heart beat was high than usual" and "My heart was pounding, I felt nervous and shaky." Physiological responses were classified as neutral when participants reported that they did not experience a physiological response or did not notice. Examples of neutral physiological responses included responses like "I did not experience anything physical" and "I did not notice a difference."

Of the low burnout group participants, 21.15% ($n = 11$) of responses related an adaptive physiological response, 65.38% ($n = 34$) of responses related a maladaptive

physiological response, and 21.15% ($n = 11$) of responses related a neutral physiological response. Of the high burnout group participants, 9.62% ($n = 5$) of responses related an adaptive physiological response, 84.62% ($n = 44$) of responses related a maladaptive physiological response, and 13.46% ($n = 7$) of responses related a neutral physiological response.

Behavioral responses. Responses to the open-ended question that asked participants to relate their behavioral responses to a challenging classroom situation were categorized according to whether they were adaptive, maladaptive, or neutral in resolving the situation.

Adaptive behavioral responses were behaviors that led to a positive resolution of the challenging situation while maintaining positive teacher-student and teacher-administrator relationships. Some examples of adaptive behavioral responses included “I [kept] a calm but stern voice with him” and “I gave the students their cue to stop talking and pay attention to me. This refocused them and we were able to finish working.” Maladaptive behavioral responses described behaviors that were ineffective at bringing a resolution to the challenging situation and oftentimes entailed a worsening of teacher-student and teacher-administrator relationships. Examples of maladaptive behavioral responses included, “I shouted. The only thing that this kid responds to is public humiliation” and “I become sarcastic and cruel with students when I feel unsupported and vulnerable.” Neutral behavioral responses described behaviors that neither resolved nor escalated the challenging situation, including instances in which the outcome of the situation was not clear. Examples of these responses included “At this point my principal

and AP handled the situation” and “I did not really have a chance to respond to her other than locking the door. Her behavior began with my co-teacher and ended with the psychologist.”

Of the low burnout group participants, 61.54% ($n = 32$) of responses related an adaptive behavioral response, 30.77% ($n = 16$) of responses related a maladaptive behavioral response, and 13.46% ($n = 7$) of responses related a neutral behavioral response. Of the high burnout group participants, 48.08% ($n = 25$) of responses related an adaptive behavioral response, 44.23% ($n = 23$) of responses related a maladaptive behavioral response, and 25% ($n = 13$) of responses related a neutral behavioral response.

Table 5. What Responses Conveyed, Example Responses, and Percentages of Responses to Question about Characteristics of an Ideal Teacher

		What Responses Conveyed	Example Responses	Low Burnout	High Burnout
Characteristics of an Ideal Teacher	Social-Emotional Qualities	Interpersonal and intrapersonal characteristics essential to teachers' success	An ideal teacher should be able to “stay calm during student outbursts”	94.23%	86.54%
	General Skills or Mindsets	General qualities, dispositions, or mindsets essential to teachers' effectiveness in the classroom	Teachers should be “able to handle any situation that arises”	75%	90.38%
	Qualities of Instruction	Characteristics of instruction that facilitated the engagement of all students	“An ideal teacher would be able to have every student very interested in learning”	48.08%	40.38%
	Classroom Management	Ways in which teachers should manage student to ensure a	An ideal teacher should have “control	40.38%	28.85%

		physically safe classroom environment	over the classroom”		
	Qualities of Teaching Background	Aspects of teachers’ preparation important to their effectiveness	Teachers should be “well studied in their content area, well studied in teaching practices”	13.46%	26.92%
	Responses that pertained to multiple categories			92.31%	98.08%

Table 6. What Responses Conveyed, Example Responses, and Percentages of Responses to Question about Challenging Classroom Situation

		What Responses Conveyed	Example Responses	Low Burnout	High Burnout
Challenging Classroom Situations	Student-related Concerns	Student misbehavior, disengagement, social-emotional challenges, external life circumstances, that were difficult to manage	“A student... became upset...shouted flipped over her chair, left the room, and began slamming the door”	96.15%	92.31%
	Lack of Support	Sentiment that neither administrators, other teachers, nor parents adequately supported teachers to be effective with their students	“Home support is minimal”	19.23%	21.15%
	Parent Interactions	Aspect of communication with parents that participants found distressing	A “parent refuses to acknowledge there is underlying issues”	5.77%	7.69%
	Other Demanding Aspects of Job	Challenges such as teacher evaluations, insufficient time to complete tasks, administrative demands	“Being overworked and not having enough breaks in the day or year”	5.77%	9.62%

Table 7. What Responses Conveyed, Example Responses, and Percentages of Responses to Questions about Thoughts, Emotions, Physiological Responses, and Behavioral Responses that Pertain to each Category

		What Responses Conveyed	Example Responses	Low Burnout	High Burnout
Thoughts	Positive	Sense of self-efficacy, empowerment in handling situation	“I knew I could handle this.”	28.85%	13.46%
	Negative	Sense of personal ineffectiveness, typicality of dysfunction, student-blaming	“I’m a bad teacher for not helping this student as much as I need to...”	78.85%	84.62%
	Neutral	Desire to objectively understand causes of situation and how to resolve it	“This student must be trying to get attention because he likes to be funny”	32.69%	40.38%
Emotions	Positive	Feelings of confidence and connection to students	“I felt confident.”	7.69%	7.69%
	Negative	Feelings of sadness, frustration, exhaustion, and helplessness	“I felt frustrated and angry.”	94.23%	100%
	Neutral	Feelings that could neither be classified as positive or negative	“I felt compelled to plan things out...”	7.69%	3.85%
Physiological Responses	Adaptive	Positive physiological reaction that allowed teacher to effectively handle situation, decreased physiological strain	“My body felt calm”	21.15%	9.62%
	Maladaptive	Adverse physiological reaction that made it more difficult to resolve situation effectively, increased physiological strain	“My heart was pounding, I felt nervous and shaky.”	65.38%	84.62%
	Neutral	No physiological response or	“I did not experience	21.15%	13.46%

		respondents did not notice it	anything physical”		
Behavioral Responses	Adaptive	Led to a positive resolution of the situation while maintaining positive relationships	“I [kept] a calm but stern voice with him”	61.54%	48.08%
	Maladaptive	Ineffective at bringing a resolution to the situation, entailed worsening of relationships	“I shouted. The only thing that this kid responds to is public humiliation.”	30.77%	44.23%
	Neutral	Neither resolved nor escalated the situation, outcome of situation not clear	“I did not really have a chance to respond to her other than locking the door.”	13.46%	25%

Table 8. Frequencies of Responses that Belong to each Category and Significant Differences between Burnout Groups in Thoughts, Emotions, Physiological, and Behavioral Responses

		Low Burnout Frequency of Responses	High Burnout Frequency of Responses	Significant Difference between Burnout Groups (at $p < .05$)
Thoughts	Positive + Neutral	32	28	Not significant
	Negative	41	44	
Emotions	Positive + Neutral	8	6	Not significant
	Negative	49	52	
Physiological Responses	Adaptive + Neutral	22	12	Significant at $p < .05$
	Maladaptive	34	44	
Behavioral Responses	Adaptive + Neutral	39	38	Not Significant
	Maladaptive	16	23	

Research Question 1A & B Findings. Research Hypothesis 1A predicted that teachers high in burnout would more frequently interpret challenging classroom situations in negative ways while teachers low in burnout would interpret challenging classroom situations in more positive or neutral ways. Tables 5 and 6 show a number of relevant trends to address this hypothesis. For one, high-burnout teachers more frequently made negative interpretations and low-burnout teachers more frequently made positive interpretations, although these inter-group differences in negative interpretations were small. Also, high-burnout teachers more frequently made neutral interpretations than low-burnout teachers. Overall, teachers in both groups much more frequently interpreted challenging classroom situations in a negative rather than positive or neutral fashion. While the above trends suggest inter-group differences between burnout groups in the valence of their interpretation, these groups did not significantly differ ($X^2(1, N = 145) = 0.366, p = 0.331$) in the extent to which they made positive or neutral vs. negative interpretations. Likewise, although trends within the data suggest differences between burnout groups in the valence of their interpretations, the lack of a significance difference provides evidence unresponsive of Research Hypothesis 1A.

Research Hypothesis 1B predicted that, in addition to the more commonly negative nature of high-burnout teachers' interpretations, these teachers would also more frequently report negative feelings, maladaptive physiological, and behavioral responses than low-burnout teachers. The results above provide mixed support for this hypothesis. Tables 5 and 6 reveal higher percentages and frequencies of responses that demonstrated negative emotions, maladaptive physiological and behavioral responses among high-

burnout teachers in comparison to low-burnout teachers. However, low and high burnout groups did not significantly differ in the valence of their emotions ($X^2(1, N = 115) = 0.366, p = 0.375$) nor in the adaptiveness of their behavioral responses ($X^2(1, N = 116) = 0.962, p = 0.217$) while they did significantly differ in the adaptiveness of their physiological responses ($X^2(1, N = 112) = 4.223, p = 0.032$). Thus, while descriptive inter-group differences in trends in the emotions, physiological, and behavioral responses of participants and a significant difference between burnout groups in the adaptiveness of their physiological responses support Research Hypothesis 1B, the lack of significant differences between burnout groups in the valence of their emotions and adaptiveness of their behavioral responses provide contrasting evidence.

It is also noteworthy to take into account the following trends in the data collected to answer Research Hypothesis 1: (a) the high percentages of general skills and mindsets and social-emotional qualities that ideal teachers should possess according to both burnout groups, (b) the high percentages of student-related concerns that teachers across both burnout groups reported as challenging classroom situations, (c) the modestly high percentage of neutral interpretations across burnout groups, (d) the high percentages of negative emotions and maladaptive physiological responses reported in both low-burnout and high-burnout groups, and (e) the comparatively higher percentages and frequencies of adaptive and neutral behaviors, in relation to the lower percentages and frequencies of adaptive physiological responses, reported by participants of both groups.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2A. To answer Research Question 2A, qualitative data to open-ended responses on the Survey to assess cognitive and behavioral processes were analyzed for questions that asked teachers to relate the coping strategies they used at four different points of time after the challenging classroom situation: in direct response, the same day, the same week, and the same month. Qualitative data for questions that assessed these coping strategies will be reported below according to categories that emerged from the data. The frequencies by which participants' responses pertained to each category will be quantified to demonstrate the prevalence of these categories for participants of both low-burnout and high-burnout groups.

The following categories emerged from the responses pertaining to coping strategies employed: Action-focused strategy, Emotion-focused strategy, and No coping strategy identified. Action-focused strategies entailed participants taking action to resolve a situation or eliminate the source of stress. Participants who related these strategies often took action to re-establish classroom control, enlist other staff members for direct support, documented events that transpired in their classrooms, and tried to continue classroom instruction. Example responses included "I changed what we were doing to quiet work," "I removed the student from the classroom," and "I made sure that someone could cover my class for a few minutes." Emotion-focused strategies described strategies that involved dealing with the emotions produced by the challenging situation. Commonly mentioned strategies included relaxation techniques, seeking social support from colleagues and loved ones, exercise, and indulging in foods, beverages and

television. Examples responses included “I vented to a coworker and had a drink when I got home,” “I practiced self-care (painting my nails),” and “I go to the gym every day.” Participants who did not identify a coping strategy reported no emotional response to the classroom situation, could not identify a coping strategy, or less frequently did not provide a response to the prompt. Examples responses included “Nothing,” “I did not do anything in particular to cope with the stress,” and “no emotional response.”

In direct response to a challenging classroom situation, 57.69% ($n= 30$) of low-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 42.31% ($n= 22$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 28.85% ($n= 15$) reported no coping strategy. 61.54% ($n= 32$) of high-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 65.38% ($n= 34$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 11.54% ($n= 6$) reported no coping strategy.

During the same day as the challenging classroom situation, 15.38% ($n= 8$) of low-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 78.85% ($n= 41$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 19.23% ($n= 10$) reported no coping strategy. 5.77% ($n= 3$) of high-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 88.46% ($n= 46$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 13.46% ($n= 7$) reported no coping strategy.

During the same week as the challenging classroom situation, 3.85% ($n= 2$) of low-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 46.15% ($n= 24$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 59.62% ($n= 31$) reported no coping strategy. 19.23% ($n= 10$) of high-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 61.54% ($n= 32$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 38.46% ($n= 20$) reported no coping strategy.

During the same month as the challenging classroom situation, 7.69% ($n= 4$) of low-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 42.31% ($n= 22$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 55.77% ($n= 29$) reported no coping strategy. 15.38% ($n= 8$) of high-burnout participants reported action-focused strategies, 57.69% ($n= 30$) reported emotion-focused strategies, and 42.31% ($n= 22$) reported no coping strategy.

Table 9: Percentages of Responses to Coping Questions that Belong to each Category and Significant Differences in Coping Strategies between Burnout Groups

		Low Burnout	High Burnout	Significant Difference in coping strategy between Burnout Groups
Coping In Direct Response	Action-focused	57.69%	61.54%	Significant at $p < .05$
	Emotion- focused	42.31%	65.38%	
	No coping strategy	28.85%	11.54%	
Coping Same Day	Action-focused	15.38%	5.77%	Not significant
	Emotion- focused	78.85%	88.46%	
	No coping strategy	19.23%	13.46%	
Coping Same Week	Action-focused	3.85%	19.23%	Significant at $p < .05$
	Emotion- focused	46.15%	61.54%	
	No coping strategy	59.62%	38.46%	
Coping Same Month	Action-focused	7.69%	15.38%	Not significant
	Emotion- focused	42.31%	57.69%	
	No coping strategy	55.77%	42.31%	

Table 10. Significant Differences between Types of Coping Strategies at Four Different Points of Time According to Chi-Square Analyses

	Coping In Direct Response	Coping Same Day	Coping Same Week	Coping Same Month
Coping In Direct Response	---	Significant at $p < .01$	Significant at $p < .01$	Significant at $p < .01$
Coping Same Day	Significant at $p < .01$	---	Significant at $p < .01$	Significant at $p < .01$
Coping Same Week	Significant at $p < .01$	Significant at $p < .01$	---	Not Significant
Coping Same Month	Significant at $p < .01$	Significant at $p < .01$	Not Significant	---

Research Hypothesis 2A predicted that teachers high in burnout would report less coping strategies than teachers low in burnout. The data above indicates that high-burnout teachers reported significantly different frequencies of action-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies at two different time periods—Coping in Direct Response ($X^2(2, N = 139) = 6.32, p = 0.039$), and Coping Same Week ($X^2(2, N = 119) = 8.65, p = 0.012$)—while differences in frequencies of coping strategy were not significant for Coping Same Day ($X^2(2, N = 115) = 3.01, p = 0.230$) and Coping Same Month ($X^2(2, N = 115) = 3.31, p = 0.196$). Specifically, these findings demonstrate that high-burnout teachers more frequently reported action-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies at these time periods. This pattern provides contradicting evidence for Hypothesis 2A.

A number of other noteworthy patterns emerged from the data. For one, the use of coping strategies changed significantly between the following time periods—Coping in Direct Response and Coping Same Day ($X^2(2, N = 254) = 40.87, p = 0.000$), Coping in Direct Response and Coping Same Week ($X^2(2, N = 258) = 45.00, p = 0.000$), Coping in Direct Response and Coping Same Month ($X^2(2, N = 254) = 44.56, p = 0.000$), Coping Same Day and Coping Same Week ($X^2(2, N = 234) = 23.70, p = 0.000$), and Coping Same Day and Coping Same Month ($X^2(2, N = 230) = 25.86, p = 0.000$). Notably, action-focused strategies declined over time while emotion-focused strategies increased dramatically during the same day of the classroom situation before leveling off over the same week and month. Also, a notable increase occurred in the percentage of participants from both groups identifying no coping strategy after the day of the challenging classroom situation before these percentages leveled off.

Research Question 2B. Research Question 2B examined how teachers' coping self-efficacy, burnout and help-seeking attitudes all related to each other. Specifically, Hypothesis 2B predicted a negative relationship between burnout and coping self-efficacy and between burnout and attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help as well as a positive relationship between coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes. A significant negative relationship was found between burnout and coping self-efficacy, $r = -.250, p < .05$. However, the relationship between burnout and help-seeking attitudes was not significant, $r = -.081, p > .05$. Lastly, a positive relationship between coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes was observed, $r = .214, p < .05$. Thus, Hypothesis 2B was partially supported. More specifically, teachers higher in burnout

reported feeling less self-efficacious is using coping strategies to manage their distress and teachers higher in coping self-efficacy also reported higher levels of help-seeking attitudes.

Table 11. Correlation Matrix for Major Quantitative Measures

	Years Urban Teaching Experience	MBI	CSES	ATSPPH
Years Urban Teaching Experience	---	-.019	.128	.021
MBI	-.019	---	-.250**	-.081
CSES	.128	-.250**	---	.214**
ATSPPH	.021	-.081	.214**	---

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Research Question 3

Research Question 3A. Research Question 3A sought to determine urban teachers' level of openness to seeking professional psychological help in coping with emotional distress. Hypothesis 3A predicted that teachers would demonstrate slightly positive help-seeking attitudes. Teachers in the current study reported slightly positive help-seeking attitudes ($M = 23.65$, $SD = 2.80$), lending support to this prediction. The above mean translates to an average rating of 2.4 on each of the items on the scale.

Research Question 3B. Research Question 3B investigated a potential moderating effect of help-seeking attitudes as part of the relationship between number of years of urban teaching experience and burnout. According to Hypothesis 3B, teachers'

help-seeking attitudes should moderate the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and levels of burnout.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between the predictor variables, years of urban teaching experience and help-seeking attitudes, and the outcome variable, burnout. The combined predictor variables were found to account for 0.8% of the variance in burnout, although the model was found not significant ($F = .604, p > .05$). Furthermore, individually both years of teaching experience and help-seeking attitudes ($p > .05$) proved not significant in predicting burnout. After a moderator term was added as a predictor variable, the model was found to account for 1.2% of the variance in burnout, although the model was once again found not significant ($F = .644, p > .05$). Additionally, all three of the predictor variables, years of teaching experience, help-seeking attitudes, and the moderator term ($p > .05$) proved not significant in predicting burnout. Since the moderator term did not help account for significant variance in burnout, the above results suggest that help-seeking attitudes do not moderate the relationship between years of teaching experience and levels of burnout in this population, thus running counter to Hypothesis 3B.

Post-Hoc Analysis

According to the findings for Research Hypothesis 2B, a significant negative relationship exists between coping self-efficacy and burnout. The correlation between these two variables suggested the potential role of coping self-efficacy in predicting burnout. To determine if this relationship existed, a linear regression, with coping self-efficacy as a predictor variable and burnout as an outcome variable, was performed. The

predictor variable, coping self-efficacy, was found to account for 6.3% of the variance in burnout, and the regression model was found to be significant ($F= 9.948, p < .05$). The standardized beta coefficient for coping self-efficacy was $-.250$, suggesting that as teachers' coping self-efficacy increases, their burnout decreases.

The role of coping self-efficacy in predicting unique variance in burnout lent the possibility that it could play a moderating role in the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout, a relationship that was tested as part of the hierarchical regression model in Research Question 3B with help-seeking attitudes as the moderator. Thus, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between the predictor variables, years of urban teaching experience and coping self-efficacy, and the outcome variable, burnout. The combined predictor variables were found to account for 5.9% of the variance in burnout, and the model was found to be significant ($F= 4.613, p < .05$). In this analysis, coping self-efficacy proved significant ($p < .05, \beta = -.239$) in predicting burnout while years of urban teaching experience ($p > .05$) did not. After a moderator term was added as a predictor variable, the model was found to account for 6.1% of the variance in burnout, and the model was once again found to be significant ($F= 3.152, p < .05$). Coping self-efficacy continued to be a significant predictor of burnout ($p < .05, \beta = -.228$) while both years of urban teaching experience and the moderator term remained not significant ($p > .05$). Since the moderator term accounted for significant additional variance (0.2%) in burnout, the above results suggest that coping self-efficacy has a very small moderating effect in the

relationship between years of urban teaching experience and levels of burnout in this population.

Summary of Findings

This study's findings provided mixed support for the primary research hypotheses. In numerous cases, the findings revealed answers to research questions that were not as simple as the proposed research hypotheses. For example, Research Question 1 findings showed descriptively that high-burnout teachers in comparison to low-burnout teachers more frequently made negative interpretations of challenging classroom situations and that these negative interpretations coincided with higher frequencies of negative feelings, maladaptive physiological and behavioral responses. However, the only significant difference in these cognitive and behavioral processes between burnout groups occurred with respect to the adaptiveness of participants' physiological responses. These mixed findings did not support Research Hypothesis 1A and only partially supported Research Hypothesis 1B.

In addition to findings that pertained to the hypotheses, participants from both burnout groups demonstrated high percentages of negative interpretations, emotions and maladaptive physiological responses, which suggests that these cognitive-behavioral patterns may not greatly differ for low-burnout and high-burnout teachers. Furthermore, negative emotions and physiological responses did not necessarily translate into maladaptive behavioral responses for participants in both burnout groups. These above two findings suggest more nuanced accounts of the cognitive and behavioral processes involved in Research Hypotheses 1A and B. Secondary findings also demonstrated that

teachers commonly described general skills and mindsets and social-emotional qualities as ideal characteristics of a teacher and related student-related concerns as their challenging classroom situations.

Research Question 2 findings also provided mixed support for Research Hypothesis 2. For one, high-burnout teachers reported a significantly higher frequency of coping strategies than low-burnout in direct response and during the same week as the challenging classroom situation, which unsubstantiated Research Hypothesis 2A. Secondary findings also include that action-focused strategies decreased over time, and emotion-focused strategies and participants identifying no coping strategy increased over time. Research Question 2B findings reveal a significant negative relationship between burnout and coping self-efficacy and a significant positive relationship between coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes, which supports Research Hypothesis 2B. Thus, teachers who felt more self-efficacious in coping experienced lower levels of burnout and reported higher help-seeking attitudes. On the other hand, the relationship between burnout and help-seeking attitudes was not significant, partially refuting Hypothesis 2B.

Research Question 3 findings additionally provided mixed support for Research Hypothesis 3. Teachers reported slightly positive help-seeking attitudes, which supported Research Hypothesis 3A. However, Research Question 3B findings showed that help-seeking attitudes did not moderate the relationship between years of teaching experience and levels of burnout in this population, thus challenging Research Hypothesis 3B. To test if coping self-efficacy had a role in predicting burnout and moderating the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout, a post-hoc analysis

was performed. The results of this analysis demonstrated that coping self-efficacy was a significant predictor of burnout and plays a very small moderating role in the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout.

Integrative Summary of Findings. Below I will paint an integrative picture of these findings in the context of the cognitive-behavioral model. Teachers in this study reported expectations of an ideal teacher, specifically that teachers should embody certain skills, mindsets and social-emotional qualities. Challenging classroom situations, mostly pertaining to student-related concerns (e.g. student misbehavior, lack of engagement, etc.) and likely causing teachers to fall short of their ideal expectations, triggered negative interpretations of these situations and subsequent negative emotions, and maladaptive physiological and behavioral responses. Teachers both high and low in burnout commonly experienced these negative thoughts, emotions, and maladaptive physiological and behavioral responses, but teachers high in burnout experienced maladaptive physiological responses more frequently. Numerous teachers were able to channel their maladaptive physiological responses into adaptive behavioral responses to the challenging classroom situations they reported.

In response to the distress that resulted from the above chain of events, teachers across groups commonly reported action-focused strategies in the short-term and emotion-focused coping strategies in the long run, while a portion of teachers who experienced high and low levels of burnout reported no coping strategy. High-burnout teachers more frequently reported using coping strategies in the short-term and long-term. The extent to which teachers felt self-efficacious in coping with stress related to how

burned out they felt and their openness to seeking professional psychological help. Furthermore this coping self-efficacy played a role in predicting the experience of burnout and a very small role in explaining why teachers with varying years of urban teaching background experienced varying levels of burnout. Lastly, although teachers were moderately open to seeking professional psychological help to cope with their distress, this openness was not related to how burned out they felt nor did it help explain why teachers with varying years of urban teaching background experienced varying levels of burnout.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The results of the current study lend new insight into several previously unstudied areas of research in the teacher burnout and coping literature. In this chapter, this study's findings will be interpreted within the context of this body of literature. More specifically, findings will be compared to that of pre-existing data, theories, models, and studies pertaining to teacher stress, burnout, and coping. In turn, this chapter will convey the implications of this study's findings on future research and practice. Finally, the strengths and limitations of the present investigation will be explored.

Findings: Personal Background, Teaching Background, and School Context

Variables

In the section below, this study's personal background, teaching background, and school context data will be contextualized in the broader educational landscape by comparing these data to national data pertaining to urban teachers collected by the National Center for Education Statistics during the years of 2011-2012.

Demographics. This study's data suggests that, in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity, the average participant of this study was in her mid-30s, female, and Caucasian. NCES data estimates that the urban public school teaching force from 2011-2012 was composed of 15.5% teachers aged up to 30 years, 28.2% in the 30-39 age range, 23.7% in

the 40-49 age range, 23.8% in the 50-59 age range, and 8% aged 60 or above.

Additionally, 76.6% of these teachers were female while 23.4% of them for male. With respect to ethnicity, 71.1% of these teachers were white, 12.1% were black, 12.0% were Hispanic, 3.4% were Asian (combining the Asian and Pacific Islander categories), and 1.1% were two or more races (NCES, 2013a). This breakdown suggests that the participants in this study were younger than most teachers who taught in an urban public in 2011-2012, more often identified as female than the national sample, and also more frequently identified as Caucasian as opposed to other ethnicities.

Teaching Background. The average participant that composed this study's sample earned a Master's degree, held some degree in an education-related subject area, taught in a secondary school (middle school or high school), taught one subject, and possessed approximately 10 years of general teaching experience and 8-9 years of urban teaching experience. In the general population of urban public school teachers represented by the NCES data for the years of 2011-2012, 48.7% had earned a Master's degree while 38.6% had earned a Bachelor's degree, and 54.0% were elementary school teachers while 46.0% were secondary school teachers (2013a). With respect to years of full-time teaching experience, 9.0% of all public teachers possessed less than 3 years of experience, 33.3% possessed between 3 and 9 years of experience, 36.4% of teachers possessed between 10 to 20 years of experience, and 21.2% possessed over 20 years of experience (NCES, 2013a). Unfortunately, data to determine that percentage of teachers who received an education-related vs. non education related degree, taught one vs. multiple subjects, and the average years of urban teaching experience, did not exist. That

said, the national sample of public school teachers possessed more general teaching experience than the population of urban school public school teachers this study investigated. Furthermore, this study's population was on the average more educated (as per degree earned) and more frequently taught secondary school than the NCES estimate of all urban public school teachers.

School Context. The average participant that composed this study's sample taught in the Midwest or Southeast region of the United States, had a class size of between 24 and 25 students, and felt that student discipline was a concern in their class and school between more than once a week and every day. Additionally, an average participant of this study felt that technology and other teaching resources were available in their schools between most of the time and all of the time, received some professional support at their schools and between no and some social-emotional support.

According to NCES statistics for the 2011-2012 teaching year, the top five states with the most teachers were Texas, California, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. Additionally, the average class size for a public school teacher, although these averages vary by state, was 21.2 for an elementary school teacher and 26.8 for a secondary school teacher (NCES, 2013a). In urban public schools, the average pupil/teacher ratio for the 2011-2012 year was 16.4 students per elementary school teacher and 17.1 students per secondary school teacher (NCES, 2013d). Additionally, 40.5% of urban public school teachers reported that students come to school unprepared to learn and 66.7% of teachers reported that rules for student behavior were enforced by teachers (NCES, 2013b; 2013c). In 2008, 97% of urban public school teachers reported that they had instructional

computers in classrooms and 74.0% of urban public teachers agreed that materials were available as needed (NCES 2009; 2013c). Lastly, 81.6% of urban school teachers in 2011-2012 agreed that school administration was supportive and encouraging and 60.1% agreed that they were given support to teach students with special needs (NCES, 2013c).

In comparison to national samples, this study's sample was composed of teachers who more frequently taught from the Midwest or Southeast, taught a roughly similar amount of students per class, and reported similar levels of availability of technology and other resources, and professional support. However, NCES statistics did not collect information specifically pertaining to the amount of social-emotional support that teachers receive and thus such data was not available.

Findings: Research Question 1

Research Question 1A. Findings from Research Question 1 showed that while high-burnout teachers appeared to more frequently make negative interpretations than low-burnout teachers, inter-group differences were not significant. Negative interpretations, or thoughts in response to a challenging classroom situation, were found in more than 90% of teachers across burnout groups. Additionally, participants very frequently identified general skills and mindset and social-emotional qualities as characteristics of ideal teachers and student-related concerns in describing a challenging classroom situation.

The higher frequencies of negative interpretations by high-burnout teachers and positive and neutral interpretations by low-burnout teachers, but lack of a significant inter-group difference, complicate Mei-Lin Chang's notion of *habitual patterns*. The

commonly negative process by which participants in this study thought in response to challenging classroom situations did seem to contribute to the repeated negative emotional experience associated with stress and burnout. However, both groups of teachers commonly experienced this negative cognitive and emotional process and thus these *habitual patterns* do not seem to substantially account for why some teacher experience higher burnout than others.

Perhaps the lack of a significant difference between burnout groups in the valence of their cognitions reveals that teachers, both high and low in burnout, make similar interpretations because they internalize similar expectations about what it means to be an ideal teacher and thus experience similar reactions to not being able to reach these expectations. Through a cognitive-behavioral lens, negative interpretations, are triggered by certain critical incidents (i.e. challenging classroom situations) that activate certain cognitive schema (i.e. ideal characteristics of teachers). Teachers across burnout groups internalized idealized teacher qualities of adapting to all classroom situations and student needs and always remaining emotionally in-control. It is possible that the experience of falling short of these expectations when challenging classroom situations are too overwhelming to handle is a common one that affects them equally. In response, negative interpretations about themselves, their students, and their schools predominate.

The modest percentage of neutral interpretations overall also suggest a certain prevalence of neutral cognitions among urban teachers in response to a challenging classroom situation. Neutral cognitions may serve as a way to objectively make sense of challenging classroom situations and weigh out appropriate behavioral responses in a

manner distanced from the emotion which may cloud this process. While Chang's theory and cognitive-behavioral theory would suggest that a more neutral way of thinking about events would lead to neutral emotion, this study's data does not support such a connection. On the contrary, participants in both burnout groups less frequently reported negative thoughts than feelings, which suggests that a certain amount of neutral thoughts still led to negative emotions.

Research Question 1B. Findings from Research Question 1B demonstrated that high-burnout teachers reported a significantly higher frequency of maladaptive physiological responses than low-burnout teachers while inter-group differences in emotions and behavioral responses lacked significance. Overall, participants across burnout groups reported high percentages of negative emotions and physiological responses. However, comparatively participants of both groups related higher percentages of adaptive behaviors and lower percentages of maladaptive behaviors than their high percentages of negative emotions and physiological responses would suggest according to cognitive-behavioral theory.

The significantly higher frequency of maladaptive physiological responses among high-burnout teachers, coupled with inter-group differences in emotions and behavioral responses that were not significant, also complicate Chang's antecedent appraisal model. Chang's model purports that unpleasant emotions chronically experienced in response to student behavior lead to teacher burnout. This study's findings suggest the likelihood that the emotional processes Chang describes do occur in urban teachers, but invalidates this model as a means to explain why some teachers experience higher levels of burnout than

others. Negative emotions and maladaptive physiological and behavioral responses were prevalent across both burnout groups and thus the experience of unpleasant emotions did little to differentiate between which teachers experienced burnout.

A more realistic interpretation of the prevalence of and non-significant inter-group difference in negative emotions, would be that challenging classroom situations are inherently associated with negative emotions. The study's findings do suggest though that high-burnout teachers more frequently reported maladaptive physiological responses, i.e. physiological activation that produces strain, to challenging classroom situations. This finding may further explain why some teachers experience burnout while others do not. Furthermore, the fact that physiological responses significantly differed between burnout groups while cognitions, emotions, and behavioral responses did not, suggests that challenging classroom situations take a physiological toll on teachers that is implicated in burnout. Likewise, when teachers lack the resources and efficacy to cope with the physiological and psychological demands of their job, they are in turn at risk for stress and eventual burnout (Lambert et al., 2009). These findings, i.e. the pervasiveness of distressing negative thoughts, emotions, and significant differences in physiological responses, lend insight into why mindfulness-based interventions are effective and essential. Mindfulness-based interventions entail nonjudgmentally observing and developing a tolerance for one's thoughts and feelings, and thus decreasing the physiological activation associated with these thoughts and feelings. In targeting multiple features of a teacher's stress response as depicted in the cognitive-behavioral model,

these interventions have been successful in reduce stress for teachers (Napoli, 2004; Gold et al., 2010; Jennings et al., 2013).

Interestingly, although participants across burnout groups related high percentages of negative emotions and maladaptive physiological responses, they comparatively related less maladaptive and more adaptive behavioral responses. This suggests that experiencing negative emotions and physiological arousal did not translate into teachers behaving in a manner that was ineffective in resolving the challenging classroom situation. Teachers had to suppress or at least effectively manage their emotions in order to behave in an adaptive fashion. Likewise, the ability of teachers to perform emotional labor, which involves the purposeful expression or suppression of emotions in order to meet organizational goals, i.e. the academic education of all students and positive teacher-student relationships, is essential for urban teachers to be effective (Grandey, Diefendorff, & Rupp, 2013). Given the reality that educators oftentimes lack the preparation to perform the emotional labor of their roles, teachers' lack of training in emotional management puts them at risk for stress and potentially burnout.

Findings: Research Question 2

Research Question 2A. Findings from Research Question 2A demonstrated that teachers cope in a variety of ways, particularly by employing action-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. Findings also demonstrated that high-burnout teachers more frequently reported coping strategies than low-burnout teachers in the short-term and long-term. Furthermore, the use of action-focused strategies after a challenging classroom situation declined over time while the use of emotion-focused strategies

increased for both teacher groups. Lastly, as time passed after the challenging classroom situation, a greater percentage of teachers from both groups reported not employing coping strategies to treat their emotional distress.

The findings above supported as well as complicated aspects of the teacher coping literature. Firstly, the categories of “action-focused” and “emotion-focused” coping strategies that emerged from the participant responses resemble the direct action vs. palliative techniques that past researchers found prevalent among teachers (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Kyriacou, 2001). Strategies that teachers commonly mentioned in their responses—relaxation techniques, seeking social support from others, and using various techniques to re-establish classroom control—also parallel those related by other teacher coping studies (Kyriacou, 2001; Borg & Falzon, 1990; Cockburn, 1996; Benmansour, 1998).

However, the finding that high-burnout teachers more frequently report coping strategies than low-burnout teachers at two different points in time complicates a sensible logic that teachers experience higher degrees of burnout because they lack strategies, or *resources*, to cope with emotional distress (McCarthy, Lambert, & Brack, 1997). An alternative explanation for this finding may be that high-burnout teachers experience a heightened emotional response to challenging classroom situations that this study did not measure and thus recording the extent of coping strategy use did little to explain why teachers from both groups experienced varying levels of burnout. In this case, it may be more helpful to assess how effective teachers feel in utilizing their strategies to manage

their distress, i.e. how confident they are that the coping strategies they employ will relieve their distress.

The decrease in action-focused and increase in emotion-focused strategies found over time reveals the need for the use of both types of strategies to manage the emotional demands of teaching. Furthermore, the increase of teachers reporting no coping strategies may be interpreted in many ways. Perhaps teachers perceive the strategies they are using on a daily basis as same-week and same-month strategies. It is also possible that a sizeable percentage of teachers do not have longer-term coping strategies. Whatever the more reasonable explanation, what remains clear is the importance of studying the performance of coping strategies at multiple points in time.

Research Question 2B. Findings for Research Question 2B revealed a small to moderate negative relationship between coping self-efficacy and burnout and a small to moderate positive relationship between coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes. However, no significant relationship between burnout and help-seeking attitudes was found. The findings above signify that urban teachers who felt more self-efficacious in coping experienced less burnout and were more open to seeking professional psychological help.

Coping self-efficacy may serve as a *coping resource* vital to helping teachers deal with their unique life and professional demands in a preventive capacity (Matheny et al., 1993; McCarthy et al., 2002). Additionally, given the role that teacher's general self-efficacy plays in preventing teacher stress, it may likewise follow that teacher's self-efficacy in deploying their coping knowledge and skills to cope with the stressful aspects

of their job helps prevent their stress (McCarthy et al., 2014). Furthermore, within the context of the other study's findings, i.e. Research Question 1A's findings that demonstrate the pervasiveness of negative cognitions and emotions in both burnout groups, perhaps coping self-efficacy tells us more about which teachers do and do not develop burnout symptoms than the nature of their cognitions or emotions. Lastly, in interpreting the connection between coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes, perhaps teachers feel more effective in managing their stress because they see professional help as a potential coping strategy if they are no longer able to manage their distress via the strategies they are already using.

Findings: Research Question 3

Research Question 3A. With respect to Research Question 3A, the current study found that teachers reported slightly positive help-seeking attitudes. More specifically, on items that required them to state their level of agreement with statements pertaining to their openness to seek professional psychological services, on average they moderately agreed. This finding is similar to Ang et al.'s (2004) investigation, in which a sample of younger Singaporean teacher trainees on average rated each item a 2.64, signifying they also moderately agreed with such statements, on a 29-item ATSPPH scale.

Given that the Ang et al. (2004) study mentioned above and this current study are the only two studies that have administered the ATSPPH to a teacher population, it is clear that research pertaining to teachers' help-seeking attitudes is still in its infancy. Both studies provide some support to the assertion that if given access to professional psychological services, whether through in-school counseling, professional development

initiatives, or mental health referrals, teachers would take advantage of these resources. Research using the ATSPPH does suggest a connection between help-seeking attitudes and actual help-seeking behaviors, meaning that the slightly positive help-seeking attitudes of the teachers in this study should also make them more likely to actually seek out professional psychological help (Cepeda-Benito & Short, 1998; Cramer, 1999; Deane & Todd, 1996; Kelly & Achter, 1995). However, given the diverse range of schools of teachers in this study's population and the multiple potential school-specific factors that might impede or facilitate them in receiving psychological services in their schools or elsewhere, it is difficult to tell if help-seeking attitudes would predict behaviors in this study's population.

Research Question 3B. Findings pertaining to Research Question 3B suggest that help-seeking attitudes do not provide a moderating role in the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout. In the hierarchical regression model performed in this study, neither help-seeking attitudes nor years of urban teaching experience significantly predicted burnout. Furthermore, years of urban teaching experience was neither significantly related to help-seeking attitudes or burnout. Given that certain studies have found positive relationships between age and burnout while others have found a negative relationship, the finding that years of urban teaching experience and burnout are not related contradicts the findings of the prevailing literature (Anderson & Iwanicki, 1984; Byrne, 1991; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986). However, it is also important to note in these studies that years of urban teaching experience was not measured purposefully in relation to burnout.

The findings to Research Question 3B complicate a sensible logic that more experienced urban teachers are able to last longer in the classroom because they have accrued the coping resources or possess adaptive mindsets (i.e. positive help-seeking attitudes) that prevent burnout. On one hand, since the detection of interaction effects may have required a larger sample of participants and likewise a study with a higher degree of power, it is possible that this study was underpowered to detect the interaction effect between number of years of urban teaching experience and help-seeking attitudes on burnout. If this study maintained sufficient power to detect such an effect and still found none, perhaps an alternate expectation is possible—that experienced teachers who are burned out continue to stay within the profession while still lacking the resources or mindsets that would enable them to effectively cope with the stressful realities of being an urban teacher.

Findings: Post-Hoc Analysis

The findings of the post-hoc analyses showed that coping self-efficacy by itself significantly predicted burnout and also played a very small moderating role in the relationship between years of urban teaching experience and burnout. These findings further support the importance of coping self-efficacy in predicting and even preventing higher levels of burnout, especially since as teachers' coping self-efficacy increased, their levels of burnout decreased.

Within the context of the findings of Research Question 2A, i.e. that teachers are using numerous coping strategies to manage emotional distress, the importance of self-efficacy may play a role in changing the frame of the teacher coping literature. Instead of

focusing on *what* teachers do to cope, their levels of burnout may be more related to *how efficacious* they feel in utilizing these strategies. Coping self-efficacy may be one of the more important individual-level factors that impacts burnout. In combination with the findings of Research Question 1A + B, i.e. which showed the pervasiveness of negative thoughts and emotions, these results suggest that urban teaching is inherently a profession in which teachers experience negative cognitions and emotions and that one factor that enables them to remain emotionally healthy is the extent to which they feel like they can manage these emotional demands.

The Utility of the Cognitive-Behavioral Model in Conceptualizing Teacher Burnout and Coping

In revisiting the primary purpose of this study, the findings suggest that using a cognitive-behavioral framework has mixed utility in conceptualizing teacher burnout and coping. For one, this framework helped illuminate the cognitive and behavioral processes implicated in burnout. More specifically, the cognitive-behavioral model helped explain how distress arises in response to challenging classroom situations and captured the content of such phenomenology (i.e. what teachers are thinking, feeling, and how their bodies respond) in a manner unprecedented in the research literature. Additionally, certain aspects of the model like the adaptiveness of teachers' physiological responses helped explain differences in burnout. The model also provided a sensible explanation for burnout as the result of the chronic inability to effectively cope with emotional distress.

However, in a number of ways the cognitive-behavioral model played a limited role in helping explain which teachers get burned out and which did not. Both low and

high burnout groups repeated high levels of negative cognitions and emotions, levels which did not significantly differ from each other. Furthermore, the model does not permit a more nuanced consideration of the strength of emotional and physiological reactions which likely help explain variance in burnout. According to cognitive behavioral theory, levels of negative emotions and maladaptive physiological responses should coincide with similar levels of maladaptive behavioral responses. The fact that this study found a mismatch (i.e. higher frequencies of adaptive behavioral responses reported given frequencies of maladaptive physiological responses) between the above processes demonstrated the importance of teachers' emotional management, which the cognitive-behavioral model fails to encompass in explaining burnout. Lastly, while the cognitive-behavioral model conceptualizes burnout as a chronic inability to cope, this study's findings revealed that the relationship between coping and burnout is more complicated—teachers' self-efficacy in using their coping strategies to manage their emotional distress helps explain for differences in burnout. Likewise, changes to the cognitive-behavioral model to account for the strength of emotional and physiological activation, emotional management, and coping self-efficacy would help improve this framework as a more comprehensive means of explaining burnout.

Limitations of Study

The limitations posed by the current study pertain to the recruitment of participants, the way data was collected, and the measures used to obtain the data. Firstly, ability to generalize the findings of this study to a broader sample of urban teachers would be complicated by selection bias. Participants were recruited for this study via

listservs, directors of Graduate School of Education programs at which teachers are enrolled in classes, Facebook groups, and some personal contacts. Teachers self-selected to participate in a study that examined the “experiences of teachers working in urban schools, including stressful experiences associated with the daily realities of the teaching profession” for the purpose of learning “more about how best to support teachers who work in urban schools.” Likewise, urban teachers who wanted to share their experiences and sought to provide such information for the betterment of other teachers took the survey. These desires may not be reflective of other members of the teaching profession, whose experiences with stress, burnout, and coping are still important to understand. In turn, it is possible that this study oversampled unhappy teachers, who may have had more of an intrinsic motivation to participate, while failing to capture the experiences of master teachers who are content with their experiences or teachers who are so burned out that they left the teaching profession. Of course a more randomized sampling method would have reduced such a threat to external validity, but given the challenging nature of achieving such participant randomization, a more convenient sampling method was chosen.

Additionally, the study’s population was not reflective of certain characteristics of the general population of urban teachers, especially along lines of age, gender, ethnicity, and general teaching experience. And while the fact that teachers in this study hailed from a diversity of locales and teaching assignments demonstrated a common underlying mechanism of burnout across school location or grade level taught, to truly make culturally-relevant interventions from data similar to that of this study necessitates

intimate knowledge of the contextual factors of specific schools. Likewise, to effectively translate the findings of this research into practice would also entail knowledge of the contextual climates of the individual schools at which our participants worked.

Certain aspects of measurement, data collection, and analysis also posed limitations to this study's findings. The Coping Self-Efficacy Scale, a promising new construct and scale within the coping literature, was employed for the first time in a population of teachers and thus reliability and validity evidence does not yet exist for this scale in such a population. Data was collected mostly during the month of November, a span of time which the investigator intentionally planned as a respite from the most intensive grading demands associated with pre-winter vacation. That said, their responses on the CSES, the MBI, and ATSPPH represent their psychological and emotional state at one snapshot in time and likely vary according to a myriad of temporal factors. Accordingly, in interpreting these findings it is important to understand that data collected that reflect the attitudes, thoughts, and feelings do not reflect a static essence but in reality are fluid.

Additionally, because responses to open-ended questions pertaining to teachers' behavioral responses to challenging classroom situations require self-report, these responses may have been influenced by participants' desire to present themselves as competent when faced with challenges. Likewise, the analysis of the adaptive or maladaptive nature of teachers' behavioral responses to classroom situations, although performed by multiple coders to achieve consistency, is subjective in nature without third-party eyewitness accounts. More nuanced ways of evaluating teachers' emotions

and behaviors, like measuring the intensity of teachers' emotional responses to challenging situations and observation data, would surely complement that data collection and analysis processes. Lastly, the exclusion of data in the qualitative analysis of surveys that were not complete limited the amount of experiences studied in that section of the study.

Strengths of Study

Among the strengths of this study are the methodologically innovative manner in which it investigates its research questions and the major gaps within the teacher stress, burnout, and coping literature it targets. The use of qualitative data to assess the cognitive and behavioral processes of the most and least burned out teachers allows teacher stress to be investigated in novel ways. While past research has addressed *what* stresses teachers and the pathways via which a situation or trigger leads to stress (i.e. stressors, habitual patterns of thinking), the current study has gleaned new insight into the actual *nature* of teachers' thoughts and feelings as well as the specific ideas about teaching (i.e. ideal characteristics of a teacher) and classroom situations that are implicated in producing these thoughts and feelings. Thus, this study has produced data concerning the *context* and *culture* of the urban teaching profession that will enable practitioners and researchers to further comprehend *why* teachers think and feel the way they do. This has allowed its data to paint a more integrative picture of teachers' experience and potentially alter the conversation pertaining to the cognitive bases of teacher stress. Understanding the actual nature of the negative cognitions and emotions and their pervasiveness within the teacher population (in both high and low burnout groups) in response to challenging

classroom situations re-frames the conversation concerning teachers' negative cognitions and emotions from reflecting pathology to reflecting an inherent aspect of the urban teaching experience. Additionally, having a realistic understanding of the prevalence of the above expectations of teachers, the challenging incidents they experience, and their resulting thoughts and feelings will lend practical interventions that flow from such findings more cultural relevance.

The use of quantitative measures, such as the ATSPPH and CSE scales, helped to gain complementary information about attitudes and resources that have a potentially preventive role against burnout. The promising findings related to coping self-efficacy have opened numerous future lines of inquiry into research and practical interventions that have the power to better support the social and emotional health of teachers. Additionally, the use of coping self-efficacy scales as opposed to simply measuring the *amount* of coping strategies teachers have at their disposal (e.g. scales to measure coping resources) represents a potential shift in the conversation about teacher coping and the manner in which this research is conducted. All in all, this study's findings contribute a better understanding about what the social and emotional needs of urban teachers are, why these needs exist, and how to better meet these needs.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study's findings bear numerous implications for future research pertaining to burnout, coping, and their related cognitive and behavioral processes. Given that negative interpretations are implicated in the development of burnout in ways educational researchers do not completely comprehend, more research to pinpoint the ways through

which these interpretations help produce burnout are warranted. Further understanding of the impact of neutral cognitions on emotions, stress, and burnout, would provide a novel research inquiry. The prevalence of negative interpretations of challenging classroom situations suggest that they represent a *common*, as opposed to atypical or pathological, cognitive experience for urban teachers. More realistically, negative thoughts and interpretations are an inherent part of the phenomenological experience of urban teaching and the climate of the teaching profession and schools as opposed to an intra-psycho problem with the way certain teachers think. To treat such inherently stressful aspects of the urban teaching experience, overall more research emphasis is needed to studying teachers' self-care and how to promote self-care as a topic of investigation and vital aspect of teachers' preparation.

Additionally, more research investigating the cognitive, emotional, physiological and behavioral pathways that contribute to burnout will be necessary to promote understanding of how to make these pathways healthy. Research studies examining how emotionally healthy urban teachers who are effective in their roles interpret challenging situations, their feelings, and physiological and behavioral responses would further understanding pertaining to how this pathway can be optimized. Conversely, understanding the cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral pathways of teachers who have exited the profession due to burnout would elucidate how these pathways look at more severe states. Because teachers' effectiveness in resolving challenging classroom situations necessitated an ability to effectively manage negative thoughts, emotions, and physiological strain, more attention should be paid to the nature

of emotional management and how it is implicated in the adaptiveness of teachers' behaviors. Successful emotional management may entail suppressing certain negative emotions that would have damaging consequences if projected onto students. Research devoted to identifying the processes involved in effective emotional management would beneficially impact interventions that flow from this investigation.

In examining how teachers cope with emotional distress, more emphasis should be placed on the *effectiveness* of coping strategies and how *confident* teachers feel that these strategies will relieve their distress instead of simply investigating *what* or *how many* coping strategies teachers utilize. Lastly, further research is necessary to illuminate *which teachers*, i.e. their professional, social, and emotional characteristics, last in urban teaching, and *what* resources or mindsets are adaptive in enabling their emotional and professional longevity.

Further investigation into the coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes of teachers is also needed. The fact that this study was the first time coping self-efficacy, help-seeking attitudes, and burnout were investigated together serve as a testament to this need. Perhaps, teachers who report more coping resources report higher coping self-efficacy. Understanding this possible link would inform research and intervention efforts. Furthermore, if research lends further evidence of coping self-efficacy as a preventive antidote to teacher stress and burnout, then further studies should seek to understand which interventions serve to bolster this coping resource. Given coping self-efficacy's role in enabling teachers to maintain emotional stability, investigating the relation of this construct to other aspects of well-being, is warranted. It is possible that teachers who feel

more self-efficacious in coping with stress also feel more self-efficacious in their teaching roles, so research that studies the relationships between teachers' coping self-efficacy and various academic and/or social-emotional student outcomes would further this line of inquiry. With respect to help-seeking attitudes, administering the ATSPPH to other sample of teacher populations and investigating if these attitudes predicted teachers' receipt of psychological services would enrich the teaching coping literature. Additionally, more investigation into the barriers or factors that facilitate teachers seeking out professional psychological services is necessary.

Implications for Practice

The current study's findings can inform practical efforts to better support teachers by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and conditions to meet the social and emotional demands of their job through training, professional development, or policies. Firstly, low-burnout teachers reported receiving significantly higher levels of professional and social-emotional support than high burnout teachers, which suggests the importance of schools providing high levels of support to meet teachers' needs. In ensuring that schools intervene to foster these supports, educational policies such as team-teaching may prove to be helpful. Additionally, given the likelihood that teachers internalize unrealistic expectations of themselves that their professional context makes near impossible to fulfill, practical interventions should include psychoeducation about teachers' idealized expectations, how realistic these expectations are, and how to cope when one cannot reach such expectations. A key component to such an intervention should be the normalization of the nature of challenging classroom situations, teachers' self-

expectations, and resulting negative cognitions and emotions. Additionally, psychoeducation for urban teachers should entail how negative thoughts and emotions impact their physiological and behavioral responses in the classroom.

With respect to skills, training teachers to have more forgiving cognitions about themselves, their students, and schools may help decrease the occurrence of counter-productive cognitions. Given the prevalence of distressing thoughts and emotions, efforts to further train and support teachers should involve strategies for developing tolerance of negative emotions and effective emotional management while in the classroom. Interventions related to coping skills should include training about both action-focused and emotion-focused strategies and how to use these strategies at multiple points of time. Although these efforts would have a strong preventive role in emotional distress if integrated into teacher preparation curricula, they could also come in the form of professional development workshops or trainings after teachers are already in the classroom.

The above practical interventions should be guided by an acknowledgment of the importance of coping self-efficacy and help-seeking attitudes. Firstly, if future research confirms coping self-efficacy's role in preventing burnout, practical interventions to bolster coping self-efficacy will be necessary. Coping self-efficacy may also prove to be a valid way of assessing the effectiveness of coping-related interventions, especially given its importance in promoting emotional stability and enabling teachers to stay in the profession longer. Lastly, after using the ATSPHH to assess help-seeking attitudes of

teachers in individual schools, schools may consider it helpful in supporting teachers to offer in-house services or external mental health referrals to help cope with their stress.

Conclusions

This study, as performed, yielded several important findings that have implications for the pre-existing and future body of research. Firstly, the finding that high burnout teachers experience more maladaptive physiological responses but not significantly higher levels of negative thoughts, emotions, and behavioral responses, than low burnout teachers, complicates prevailing models concerning teachers' cognitive processes (i.e. Chang's model). Furthermore, the study's findings demonstrated the ubiquity of negative thoughts, emotions, and physiological responses to challenging classroom situations. The fact that teachers were able to suppress a certain extent of their negative emotions and physiological responses to react in adaptive ways classroom situations illustrates the importance of emotional management.

The emergence of action-focused and emotion-focused strategies in the data suggest that it is a helpful framework through which to conceptualize the coping strategies urban teachers employ. The finding that high-burnout teachers actually more frequently reported coping strategies than low-burnout teachers at two points in time suggests that teachers' success in coping may be less dependent on the number of strategies they utilize than on the effectiveness of these strategies. Coping self-efficacy's association and role in predicting burnout indicates that this construct plays a part in explaining which teachers do and do not get burned out. Lastly, while help-seeking attitudes did not play a part of explaining the relationship between urban teaching

experience and burnout, teachers' slightly positive attitudes towards seeking professional help may bode well for institutions who support teachers in this manner. Overall, the cognitive-behavioral model provided mixed utility in conceptualizing teacher burnout and coping. While it helped to descriptively capture the different facets of the cognitive and behavioral processes that lead to burnout, it served a limited role in explaining which teachers suffered from burnout.

This study's results also support a need within the burnout literature to further investigate the cognitive and behavioral pathways that produce burnout. Particularly, examining these pathways in successful and emotionally healthy teachers would further understanding about how to optimize them. It would further be helpful to understand how action-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies and coping self-efficacy are involved in successful and unsuccessful stress management. Also, more research performed concerning teachers' help-seeking attitudes at specific schools would further clarify if urban teachers' social and emotional needs could optimally be met via professional psychological services. Overall, future research should seek to re-frame the conversation pertaining to teacher stress, coping, and burnout to better elucidate what contextually makes urban teaching a profession that evokes negative cognitions and emotions for so many teachers, as opposed to solely trying to understand how teachers' thinking goes wrong.

To better intervene to meet the needs this study's findings have identified, efforts should entail psychoeducation to normalize the prevalence of distressing thoughts and emotions for urban teachers, distress-inducing events, teachers' expectations, and how

teachers' cognitions and emotions may impact their bodily and behavioral responses. Furthermore, knowledge about action and emotion-focused strategies and the importance of employing both types of strategies should prove useful. Future practical interventions should attempt to bolster teachers' coping self-efficacy, empower them with skills (e.g. mindfulness) to tolerate and manage distressing thoughts and emotions, and provide information about where they can access professional psychological services.

While the study's findings presented promising new lines of research and inquiry, its strengths were balanced by certain limitations. First, the study's sample was not representative of the broader urban teaching sample in a number of ways, importantly along lines of age, gender, ethnicity, and teaching experience. This study's sample also selected to participate in this study to contribute to knowledge that would further support urban teachers, thus leaving the experiences of teachers who selected out unrepresented. Also, employing a more widely-established instrument to measure coping self-efficacy and nuanced ways of evaluating emotions, behaviors, and physiological responses, would have strengthened the design of the study. Nonetheless, the study's mixed methods design and integrative nature allowed the results to paint a more holistic and contextual picture of teacher's reactions to challenging classroom situations, and how they coped. The study investigated numerous aspects of teachers' cognitive and behavioral processes, i.e. the content of their cognitions, the use of coping self-efficacy in a sample for teachers, for the first time. In doing so, the study was able to produce novel and insightful findings that will hopefully serve teachers well in the future.

APPENDIX A
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Direction: For each item, please enter the information that best describes you.

1) Age: _____

2) Gender: Male _____ Female _____ Other (please specify) _____

3) Ethnicity: African American _____ Caucasian _____

Latino(a) _____ Asian _____

Other: (please specify) _____

4) Highest Degree Obtained: Bachelor's _____ Master's _____

Doctorate _____ Other (please specify) _____

5) In which subject(s) did you obtain your highest degree? _____

6) Please provide the following information for the location of your school: City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

7) What grade level(s) do you currently teach? _____

8) What subject(s) do you currently teach? _____

9) What type of teaching certification do you currently hold? _____

10) For how many years have you been a teacher? _____

11) For how many years have you taught in an urban school? _____

12) On average, how many students do you teach per class? _____

13) How frequently is student discipline typically a concern in your class?

Never _____ Once a Week _____
 More than once a week _____ Every Day _____

14) How frequently is student discipline typically a concern in your school?

Never _____ Once a Week _____
 More than once a week _____ Every Day _____

15) In your experience, how readily available is technology (e.g. computers, computer labs, copy machine, presentation equipment) to staff?

Not available at all _____ Somewhat Available _____
 Available most of the time _____ Available whenever needed _____

16) In your experience, how readily available are other resources necessary for teaching (e.g. paper, markers, textbooks, supplies) to staff?

Not available at all _____ Somewhat Available _____
 Available most of the time _____ Available whenever needed _____

17) (a) How would you evaluate the amount of professional support you receive inside or outside of your school?

No support _____ Some support _____ A lot of support _____

(b) From whom do you receive professional support? _____

18) (a) How would you evaluate the amount of social-emotional support you receive inside or outside of your school?

No support _____ Some support _____ A lot of support _____

(b) From whom do you receive social/emotional support? _____

APPENDIX B
MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY

Directions: Please indicate how often the following statements describe the way you feel as a teacher.

Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.						_____
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday.						_____
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.						_____
4. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.						_____
5. I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal "objects."						_____
6. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.						_____
7. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.						_____
8. I feel burned out from my work.						_____
9. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.						_____
10. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.						_____
11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.						_____
12. I feel very energetic.						_____
13. I feel frustrated by my job.						_____
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.						_____
15. I don't really care what happens to some students.						_____
16. Working directly with students puts too much stress on me.						_____
17. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.						_____

18. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students. _____
19. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job. _____
20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope. _____
21. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly. _____
22. I feel students blame me for some of their problems. _____

APPENDIX C

SURVEY TO ASSESS COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL PROCESSES

Instructions: Please provide responses to the open-ended questions below.

1) Please list the characteristics of an ideal teacher. (*Example Responses: An ideal teacher should always have control over his/her class, should make sure all students do well in class, should always be organized, etc.*)

2) Please describe below a challenging classroom situation you encountered in the last week.

3) Please list below the thoughts did you experience in immediate response to this situation. (*Example Responses: I thought "this is my fault," I thought "this student must be having a bad day," I thought "I can handle this situation," etc.*)

4) Please list the feelings or emotions you experienced in response to this challenging situation. (*Example Responses: I felt sad and frustrated, I felt ambivalent, I felt confident and excited, etc.*)

5) Please describe how your body reacted in response to experiencing this challenging situation. (*Example Responses: My heart started pounding, I did not experience a notable physical reaction, My body felt calm, etc.*)

6) Please describe how you behaviorally responded (i.e. What action did you take?) to this challenging classroom situation. (*Example Responses: I shouted at the student, I did not respond at all, I asked the student to stop talking, etc.*)

7) If you experienced emotional distress in response to this challenging classroom situation, please list what actions you took to cope with it in...(*Example Responses: I chose not to tell anyone about the event, I made sure I got the student in trouble, I exercised at the end of the day etc.*)

a) In direct response to this situation

b) The same day

c) During the span of this week

d) Over the month

APPENDIX D
COPING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

When things aren't going well for you, or when you're having problems, how confident or certain are you that you can do the following:

Cannot do at all									Moderately certain can do	Certain can do
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Directions: For each of the following items, write a number from 0 – 10, using the scale above. When things aren't going well for you, how confident are you that you can:

When things aren't going well for you, how confident are you that you can:

1. Keep from getting down in the dumps. _____
2. Talk positively to yourself. _____
3. Sort out what can be changed, and what cannot be changed. _____
4. Get emotional support from friends and family. _____
5. Find solutions to your most difficult problems. _____
6. Break an upsetting problem down into smaller parts. _____
7. Leave options open when things get stressful. _____
8. Make a plan of action and follow it when confronted with a problem. _____
9. Develop new hobbies or recreations. _____
10. Take your mind off unpleasant thoughts. _____
11. Look for something good in a negative situation. _____
12. Keep from feeling sad. _____
13. See things from the other person's point of view during a heated argument. _____

14. Try other solutions to your problems if your first solutions don't work. _____
15. Stop yourself from being upset by unpleasant thoughts. _____
16. Make new friends. _____
17. Get friends to help you with the things you need. _____
18. Do something positive for yourself when you are feeling discouraged. _____
19. Make unpleasant thoughts go away. _____
20. Think about one part of the problem at a time. _____
21. Visualize a pleasant activity or place. _____
22. Keep yourself from feeling lonely. _____
23. Pray or meditate. _____
24. Get emotional support from community organizations or resources. _____
25. Stand your ground and fight for what you want. _____
26. Resist the impulse to act hastily when under pressure. _____

APPENDIX E

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SEEKING PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP

SCALE: SHORT FORM

Instructions: Please read the following statements and rate them using the scale provided. Place your ratings to the left of each statement by recording the number that most accurately reflects your agreement or disagreement for the following items. There are no “wrong” answers, just rate the statements as you honestly feel or believe. It is important that you answer every item.

Disagree			Agree
1	2	3	4

- ___ 1. If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional help.
- ___ 2. The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts.
- ___ 3. If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.
- ___ 4. There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his or her conflicts and fears without resorting to help.
- ___ 5. I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time.
- ___ 6. I might want to have psychological counseling in the future.
- ___ 7. A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he or she is likely to solve it with professional help.
- ___ 8. Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me.
- ___ 9. A person should work out his or her own problems; getting psychological counseling would be a last resort.
- ___ 10. Personal and emotional troubles, like many things, tend to work out by themselves.

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VITA

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