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Environmental Support and Music Teacher Burnout

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the interaction of selected environmental factors on the Maslach Burnout Inventory-ES. A non-randomized population of 898 K-12 music teachers from forty-two states in the US received an electronic invitation to participate in this study. Data from (N=514) respondents were included for analysis. Music teachers in this study appeared to be “moderately burned out” in terms of emotional exhaustion. However, subjects felt a strong sense of personal accomplishment and did not claim to suffer from excessive depersonalization issues. The authors included additional findings and recommendations for additional research on this topic.

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining support for school music is a critical issue as educational reform efforts motivate constant evaluation of school curriculums. A lack of support could result in diminished program offerings, lower music achievement, and erode the professional self-esteem of music teachers. This diminished self-esteem may create emotional challenges for music educators and result in professional burnout. Burnout leads to increased teacher attrition and impacts our ability to provide quality music instruction in our nation’s schools.

Freudenberger (1974) initially defined the term “burnout” as the combined effects of overwork, physical exhaustion and professional frustration. Maslach’s (1981) definition of burnout includes three interactive “subscales” including 1) depersonalization, 2) emotional exhaustion, and 3) loss of feelings regarding personal accomplishment.

“Emotional exhaustion refers to energy depletion or the draining of emotional resources. Depersonalization refers to the development of negative, cynical attitudes toward the recipients of one’s services. Lack of personal accomplishment is manifest in the tendency to evaluate one’s work negatively, thereby experiencing diminished self-esteem.” (Bakker et al., 2002, 248)

According to Maslach, Jackson & Schwab (1986), when these three subscales interact in sufficient negative quantities, burnout occurs resulting in reduced effectiveness and often a desire to pursue alternate employment as a means of relief.

SYMPTOMS OF TEACHER STRESS AND BURNOUT

The symptoms of teacher burnout have been classified broadly as physical, psychological, or behavioral (Wiley, 2000, 80). Physical symptoms of burnout include insomnia, fatigue, stomach ailments or ulcers, high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, or headaches (Wiley, 2000; Gordon, 1998; Hamann, 1985; Kalker, 1984). Emotionally, teachers react to burnout by exhibiting anger, nervousness, general depression, cynicism, or panic (Wiley, 2000; Kalker, 1984; Freudenberger, 1974). The emotional and physical symptoms combine to produce changes in behavior including 1) frequent crying; 2) increased drug and alcohol use; 3) increased yelling or screaming; 4) detachment from students and colleagues; 5) low productivity; 6) absenteeism; or 7) stress transmitted to students (Wiley, 2000; Hamann & Daugherty, 1985; Freudenberger, 1974).

As Gordon (1998) related, music teachers reported many combinations of these symptoms including feelings of anxiousness, depression, insecurity, and physical exhaustion. Most of the 166 teachers in her study appeared to respond to stress with emotional rather than physical symptoms, although males reported a higher incidence of cardiovascular problems. She also confirmed earlier research (Barnett et al. 1987; Okebukola & Jegede, 1989) that found females to be more susceptible to stress than males.

CAUSES OF TEACHER BURNOUT

The causes of teacher burnout are complex and interactive. No single source of stress has been identified as a predictor of music teacher burnout. Burnout is caused by excessive inter-relations of stressors, which result in professional dissatisfaction and declining productivity. *The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2000)* reported that of those teachers leaving the profession, over sixty percent did so due to dissatisfaction with several elements of their job. Other research found that teacher dissatisfaction included problems with student behavior, teaching loads, physical exhaustion, stress, low salaries, lack of recognition, poor resources, vague goals, and excessive paperwork (Pembroke & Craig, 2002).

Additional factors affecting music teacher burnout have been identified as: 1) job demands; 2) time management problems; 3) lack of support from administration, parents or community; 4) poor equipment; 5) inadequate facilities; 6) insufficient budget; 7) lack of decision-making power; 8) lack of respect; 9) insufficient salaries; 10) lack of recognition; 11) lack of professional development opportunities; 12) student apathy; and 13) discipline problems (Bechen, 2000 ; Gordon, 1998; Brown, 1987; Hamann, 1985; Madsen & Hancock, 2002).

Hamann, Daugherty & Mills (1987) utilized the *Maslach Burnout Inventory-ES* (*MBI-ES*) in a study of Iowa music teachers to establish burnout levels on three subscales: 1) emotional exhaustion; 2) depersonalization; and 3) personal accomplishment. They found that concern for workload, time necessary to complete responsibilities, and overall job satisfaction levels contributed significantly to a subject's emotional exhaustion level. Subject's in their study who indicated they wished to leave the profession exhibited the highest emotional exhaustion burnout. Their study also found that a high need for recognition from students, concern for workload, a lack of career goals, or a desire to leave the profession, were significant predictors of greater feelings of depersonalization. They found no significant predictors of music teachers' personal accomplishment levels on the MBI.

Too little research has been conducted concerning music teacher burnout. If burnout contributes to a dwindling teaching force, it is important that we regularly assess music teacher burnout in order to proactively remediate the problem. The present study seeks to add to the knowledge base initiated by Hamman, etal (1987), concerning the viability of using the *Maslach Burnout Inventory* to assess music teacher burnout in today's environment.

STUDY DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to examine the interaction of selected environmental factors on music teacher responses on the *Maslach Burnout Inventory-ES*. The non-random population consisted of 896, K-12 music teachers from forty-two states within the U.S., who were sent an electronic mail invitation to participate in the online survey during a three-week period in the Spring of 2004. The non-random sample was provided by a panel of thirteen music educators enrolled in graduate study at a major Western university from professional email databases and state music association email rosters available on the internet. Two follow-up mailings at ten days and twenty days after initial mailing, provided a final response rate of fifty-seven percent (N = 514) which was deemed adequate for data analysis and comparison.

Burnout levels were established utilizing the Maslach (1986) *Burnout Inventory for Educators Survey* (*MBI-ES*). The *MBI-ES* consists of twenty-two statements describing feelings and perceptions associated with burnout on three subscales: 1) depersonalization, 2) emotional exhaustion, and 3) personal accomplishment. The *MBI-ES* asks subjects to indicate the frequency with which they experience specific feelings using a Likert scale as follows: 0 = Never; 1 = A few times a year or less; 2 = Once a month or less; 3 = A few times a month; 4 = Once a week; 5 = A few times a week; and 6 = Everyday (see Table 1). Responses are then totaled within each subscale to establish three separate burnout level indicators (see Table 2).

Several studies have validated the three-factor subscales of the *MBI-ES* for internal consistency. Validations for the MBI Emotional Exhaustion Subscale yielded a

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of .90 (Mearns & Cain, 2003; Croom, 2002; Gold, 1984; Iwanicki & Schwab,1981). Previous internal consistency validations of the MBI Depersonalization Subscale yielded Cronbach's Coefficient Alphas ranging from .74 -.77 (Mearns & Cain, 2003; Croom, 2002; Gold, 1984; Iwanicki & Schwab,1981). MBI Personal Accomplishment Subscale validations have been established with Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha's ranging from .72 - .84 (Mearns & Cain, 2003; Croom,

Table 1
Maslach Burnout Inventory ES Statements by Subscale

Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel emotionally drained from my work. • I feel used up at the end of the workday. • I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job. • Working with people all day is really a strain for me. • I feel burned out from my work. • I feel frustrated by my job. • I feel I'm working too hard on my job. • Working with people directly puts too much stress on me. • I feel like I'm at the end of my rope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects. • I've become more callous toward people since I took this job. • I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally. • I don't really care what happens to some students. • I feel students blame me for some of their problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can easily understand how my students feel about things. • I deal very effectively with the problems of my students. • I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work. • I feel very energetic. • I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students. • I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students • I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job. • In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

Table 2
Burnout Levels for Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey Subscale Scores

Burnout Level	Subscale Scores		
	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment*
High	27 or higher	13 or higher	0 - 31
Moderate	17 - 26	7 - 12	32 - 38
Low	0 - 16	0 - 6	39 or higher

*Note: The response scale values are reversed for the Personal Accomplishment Subscale; Higher score = stronger feelings of accomplishment and lower burnout

2002; Gold, 1984; Iwanicki & Schwab,1981). Based on the review of literature, background information was requested in additional survey questions concerning respondent gender and environmental factors including: 1) support from administration; 2) support from other teachers; 3) community support; 4) support from parents; 5) feeling part of a team; 6) opportunities for professional development; 7) classroom management; 8) stress management; 9) participation in a mentor program; 10) attendances at professional conferences; 11) number of students taught weekly; 12) receipt of a negative teaching evaluation; and 13) the likelihood that they would continue teaching music until retirement.

RESULTS

A total of twenty-eight subjects from the sample failed to complete the entire survey and were excluded from data analysis. Data from the remaining respondents (N=514) reflected the non-random sampling technique and were distributed unevenly across the country with the highest response rate from states in the Southern and Western U.S. (see Table 3).

Respondent gender was balanced between males (48%, N=248) and females (52%, N=267). As reflected in the review of literature, the largest group of respondents in this study (24%, N=124) had taught five years or less. The remainder of the respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the ranges of six to thirty years of teaching experience (see Table 4).

Table 3
Location of Respondents by Geographical Area of U.S.¹

Area	N	(%)
Eastern	44	(8.5)
North Central	20	(3.9)
Northwest	47	(9.1)
Southern	232	(45.1)
Southwestern	16	(3.1)
Western	155	(30.2)
Total	514	(100.0)

Table 4
Respondent Teaching Experience in Years

No. Years	N	(%)
1-5	124	(24.1)
6-10	92	(17.9)
11-15	74	(14.4)
16-20	78	(15.2)
21-25	71	(13.8)
26-30	54	(10.5)
31-35	18	(3.5)
36-40	3	(0.6)
Over 41	0	(0.0)
Total	514	(100.0)

BURNOUT LEVELS

Burnout levels were established utilizing the Maslach (1986) *Burnout Inventory for Educators Survey* (MBI-ES) which utilizes twenty-two questions to establish three, distinct burnout dimensions including “Emotional Exhaustion”, “Depersonalization” and “Personal Accomplishment.” Subscale mean scores and standard deviations for all variables are reported in Table 5 below:

Table 5

Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators Subscale Mean Scores and Standard Deviations by Environmental Factors and Perceptions

Group	N	(%)	Emotional Exhaustion		Depersonalization		Personal Accomplishment	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
All Subjects	514	(100)	22.69	11.27	7.15	6.06	38.67	6.59
Male	248	(48)	22.69	11.55	8.14	6.69	38.23	6.45
Female	266	(52)	22.69	11.04	6.22	5.25	39.08	6.71
<i>I have adequate support from administration</i>								
Strongly agree	176	(34)	17.57	9.78	4.55	4.74	41.15	5.58
Agree	194	(37)	23.11	10.86	7.79	5.96	37.98	6.36
Not sure	50	(10)	24.86	10.80	8.30	6.86	35.78	8.21
Disagree	69	(13)	29.00	9.94	9.70	5.88	37.22	6.01
Strongly disagree	25	(5)	33.84	10.28	11.08	8.34	36.36	7.72
<i>I have adequate support from other teachers</i>								
Strongly agree	95	(18)	17.41	9.86	4.34	4.68	42.09	5.06
Agree	273	(53)	21.55	10.50	6.60	5.58	38.50	6.29
Not sure	77	(15)	26.17	11.89	9.48	6.10	36.01	7.31
Disagree	58	(11)	30.07	10.44	10.72	6.93	35.78	6.82
Strongly disagree	11	(2)	33.64	8.37	9.64	8.38	38.45	5.07
<i>I have adequate support from community</i>								
Strongly agree	139	(27)	17.79	10.08	4.64	4.77	41.58	5.27
Agree	235	(46)	22.07	10.07	6.75	5.43	38.41	6.02
Not sure	91	(17)	26.79	11.76	9.04	6.24	37.08	7.85
Disagree	43	(8)	31.28	10.74	12.23	7.09	34.70	6.56
Strongly disagree	6	(1)	37.00	12.88	15.33	9.56	33.83	8.88
<i>I have adequate support from parents</i>								
Strongly agree	163	(32)	18.69	9.88	4.75	4.78	41.55	5.22
Agree	245	(48)	22.31	10.63	7.08	5.41	38.00	6.34
Not sure	58	(11)	28.19	11.71	9.98	6.80	37.12	6.77
Disagree	39	(8)	30.59	10.36	11.31	7.07	34.54	7.78
Strongly disagree	7	(1)	42.00	7.44	18.71	8.36	29.29	5.31

Continued on next page

Table 5
Continued

Group	N	(%)	<u>Emotional</u>		<u>Depersonalization</u>		<u>Personal</u>	
			<u>Exhaustion</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
<i>I feel that I am part of a team</i>								
Strongly agree	119	(23)	17.13	9.25	4.28	4.08	42.19	5.10
Agree	215	(42)	22.44	10.86	7.05	5.54	38.39	6.27
Not sure	73	(14)	25.15	11.69	8.07	6.71	38.11	6.42
Disagree	75	(15)	25.32	10.51	9.21	6.60	36.48	7.10
Strongly disagree	32	(6)	33.31	10.75	11.50	7.80	33.84	6.93
<i>I manage stress easily</i>								
Strongly agree	69	(13)	15.55	11.10	4.12	5.05	42.71	6.75
Agree	312	(61)	21.26	10.16	6.55	5.53	39.23	5.77
Not sure	73	(14)	27.96	9.70	10.44	5.91	34.67	6.59
Disagree	55	(11)	32.55	9.27	9.64	6.83	36.00	6.76
Strongly disagree	5	(<1)	25.80	20.91	10.60	12.58	35.80	10.03
<i>My classroom management skills are...</i>								
Highly effective	246	(48)	20.87	10.88	5.09	5.02	41.15	5.64
Somewhat effective	251	(49)	23.78	11.07	8.70	6.08	36.70	6.34
Not sure	7	(1)	27.00	15.32	11.71	7.83	34.57	10.03
Somewhat ineffective	10	(2)	37.40	8.82	15.50	7.78	30.00	7.35
Extremely ineffective	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>My district provides adequate professional development</i>								
Strongly agree	69	(13)	18.25	10.24	5.58	5.17	39.68	6.78
Agree	205	(40)	21.75	10.72	6.61	5.44	39.15	5.89
Not sure	51	(10)	23.55	12.04	8.06	6.48	38.69	5.40
Disagree	141	(27)	24.92	11.14	7.82	6.15	38.12	6.75
Strongly disagree	47	(9)	25.70	12.58	8.83	8.24	36.62	9.15
<i>Feelings about teaching until retirement</i>								
Definitely will	282	(55)	18.89	9.80	5.62	5.01	40.20	5.72
Might	175	(34)	26.17	11.08	8.52	6.23	37.15	7.12
Probably won't	46	(9)	29.76	10.61	10.50	7.60	35.70	6.51
Definitely won't	11	(2)	35.36	12.39	10.36	9.17	36.09	9.06
<i>Received negative evaluation</i>								
Yes	14	(3)	31.93	10.30	13.14	6.97	35.71	7.34
No	419	(82)	22.43	11.21	6.98	5.96	38.74	6.56
<i>Participated in mentor program</i>								
Yes	186	(36)	22.69	10.93	6.92	5.77	38.85	6.94
No	328	(64)	22.70	11.48	7.27	6.22	38.56	6.40
<i>Attends conferences</i>								
Every year	284	(55)	22.19	10.84	7.15	5.97	38.65	6.56
Some years	173	(34)	23.05	11.79	6.88	6.16	38.98	6.62
Never Attended	53	(10)	24.30	11.37	8.04	6.36	37.70	6.56

A majority of respondents indicated positive feelings (“strongly agree” and “agree”) concerning all environmental factors (see Table 5). Table 5 also illustrates that overall these respondents were exhibiting moderate burnout in each of the three subscales. Responses indicate a possible connection between several environmental factors and more intense feelings of burnout in the Emotional Exhaustion subscale (see Table 5). As respondents indicated more negative environmental factors, corresponding *MBI-ES* Emotional Exhaustion Subscale levels increased. Only questions concerning adequate professional development, participation in mentor programs, and conference attendance exhibited no high burnout mean scores on any subscale. Depersonalization levels were higher only for respondents who lacked community and parental support, indicated ineffective classroom management skills, or received a negative evaluation. Subjects who were more positive about environmental factors exhibited the lowest levels of Depersonalization burnout. Standard deviations suggest that responses concerning environmental factors exhibited greater variability concerning Emotional Exhaustion than did responses associated with Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment (see Table 5).

MUSIC TEACHER EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Music teachers in this study exhibited “moderate” MBI emotional exhaustion levels ($M = 22.69$; $SD = 11.27$). ANOVA tests revealed significant interactions ($p < .05$) between the MBI Emotional Exhaustion subscale scores and eleven of the environmental variables. No significant interactions ($p > .05$) were found between emotional exhaustion and the number of students assigned per week, participating in a mentor program or attending professional conferences (see Table 6).

Mean scores for respondents who felt negatively about administrative, colleague, parent, or community support fell into the high burnout designation. Respondents who were unsure or negative about their abilities to manage stress and classroom discipline also exhibited mean scores indicating high burnout. Emotional exhaustion scores compared to professional development opportunities provided by school districts were inconclusive, although as negativity increased, emotional burnout levels were raised slightly within the moderate burnout designation. Emotional exhaustion mean scores also mirrored a teacher’s weekly preparation time. An increase in preparation time corresponded to an increase in moderate emotional exhaustion. Only three percent of the respondents had received a negative evaluation, but this significantly impacted their high emotional burnout. Subjects who indicated they probably or definitely, would not teach until retirement exhibited higher levels of emotional burnout than other respondents. Only those subjects who indicated that they strongly disagreed that they felt part of a team, exhibited mean scores in the high burnout designation.

Table 6

ANOVA Between MBI Emotional Exhaustion Subscale Mean Scores and Respondent Environmental Variables

Emotional Exhaustion vs	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> <
Administrative Support	10741.76	4,509	2685.44	25.10	.0001
Support from other Teachers	2060.21	4,510	515.05	15.62	.0001
Parent Support	9535.61	5,509	1907.12	17.40	.0001
Community Support	9356.64	4,510	2339.16	21.32	.0001
Ability to Manage Stress	11575.17	4,509	2893.79	27.47	.0001
Classroom Management	3411.12	3,510	1137.04	9.38	.0001
District Professional Development	2711.32	5,509	542.26	4.41	.0006
Hours of Preparation	1536.06	5,509	307.21	2.45	.0328
Received a negative evaluation	993.85	1,513	993.85	7.92	.0051
Attends Conferences	232.39	3,511	77.46	0.61	ns
Teach Until Retirement	10259.68	3,511	34.19	31.74	.0001
Feeling part of a team	8257.64	4,509	2064.41	18.45	.0001
Participating in mentor program	0.00	1,513	0.00	0.00	ns
Number of students seen each week	1601.85	10,504	160.18	1.27	ns

MUSIC TEACHER DEPERSONALIZATION

This subscale indicated an overall low burnout level ($M=7.15$; $SD = 6.06$) for all subjects. Based on the ANOVA, all environmental factors significantly affected ($p < .05$) the depersonalization of music teachers with the exception of hours of weekly preparation, attending conferences and participating in a mentor program (see Table 7). Subjects who felt positively about their levels of support fell into the low depersonalization category while those with negative feelings of support were moderately or highly depersonalized. Music teachers responsible for large numbers of students also exhibited greater depersonalization. Once again, a pattern was seen in the subscale mean scores as increasing negativity mirrored increasing feelings of depersonalization across many factors. Music teachers who managed stress easily, felt part of a team, and believed they were highly effective in their classroom management skills, had the lowest levels of depersonalization.

MUSIC TEACHER PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Subjects in this study exhibited generally "low burnout" ($M=38.67$, $SD=6.59$) in the area of personal accomplishment. The ANOVA found eight of the thirteen factors to be significantly related to a music teacher's feelings of personal accomplishment (See Table 8).

Table 7

ANOVA Between MBI Depersonalization Subscale Mean Scores and Respondent Environmental Variables

Depersonalization vs	SS	df	MS	F	p<
Administrative Support	2173.72	4,509	543.43	16.59	.0001
Support from other Teachers	2060.21	4,510	515.05	15.62	.0001
Parent Support	3014.79	5,509	602.96	19.35	.0001
Community Support	2751.52	4,510	687.88	21.75	.0001
Ability to Manage Stress	1935.90	4, 509	483.98	14.57	.0001
Classroom Management	2498.74	3, 510	832.91	25.98	.0001
District Professional Development	471.79	5, 509	94.36	2.61	.0242
Hours of Preparation	291.79	5, 509	58.36	1.60	ns
Received a negative evaluation	362.62	1, 513	362.62	10.04	.0016
Attends Conferences	57.75	3, 511	19.25	0.52	ns
Teach Until Retirement	1617.93	3, 511	539.31	15.96	.0001
Feeling part of a team	1970.53	4, 509	492.63	14.86	.0001
Participating in mentor program	14.96	1, 513	14.96	0.41	ns
Number of students seen each week	904.43	10,504	90.44	2.54	.0055

Table 8

ANOVA Between MBI Personal Accomplishment Subscale Mean Scores and Environmental Variables

Personal Accomplishment vs	SS	df	MS	F	p<
Administrative Support	1869.62	4,509	467.40	11.65	.0001
Support from other Teachers	2152.98	4,510	538.25	13.61	.0001
Parent Support	2961.10	5,509	592.22	15.57	.0001
Community Support	2244.65	4,510	561.16	14.25	.0001
Ability to Manage Stress	2823.82	4, 509	705.95	18.46	.0001
Classroom Management	3350.74	3, 510	1116.91	30.08	.0001
District Professional Development	377.43	5, 509	75.49	1.75	ns
Hours of Preparation	115.66	5, 509	23.13	0.53	ns
Received a negative evaluation	61.13	1, 513	61.13	1.41	ns
Attends Conferences	68.42	3, 511	22.81	0.52	ns
Teach Until Retirement	1544.11	3, 511	514.70	12.66	.0001
Feeling part of a team	2621.98	4, 509	655.49	16.97	.0001
Participating in mentor program	10.04	1, 513	10.04	0.23	ns
Number of students seen each week	465.14	10,504	46.51	1.07	ns

The personal accomplishment subscale scores are reversed from the other two subscales. A high score indicates low burnout. A comparison of mean scores revealed that music teachers who strongly disagreed that they had support from parents and those with somewhat ineffective classroom discipline skills, exhibited the highest levels of personal accomplishment burnout. Although levels of support were significantly related to subject's feelings of personal accomplishment, it did not appear that this negatively affected scores on this subscale. Most teachers in this study exhibited strong feelings of personal accomplishment and low burnout in this area.

DISCUSSION

Although the MBI does not provide a composite picture of a subject's burnout level, music teachers in this study appeared to be "moderately burned out" in terms of their emotional exhaustion. In support of Hamann, Daugherty & Mills (1987), subjects in this study felt a strong sense of personal accomplishment and did not suffer from excessive depersonalization issues. This is in contrast to national norms (Maslach et al, 1996, p. 8) which found that in general, teachers are at least "moderately burned out" on all three subscales (see Table 9).

Table 9

Comparison of 1996 MBI Subscale National Norms and Selected Previous Research with Music Teachers in this Study

Group	N	Emotional Exhaustion		Depersonalization		Personal Accomplishment	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
National Norms	4,163	21.25	11.01	11.00	6.19	33.54	6.89
Music Teachers	514	22.69	11.27	7.15	6.06	38.67	6.59
Agriculture Teachers	164	18.20	10.47	5.96	5.21	8.04	5.98
Elementary Teachers	75	21.91	9.55	4.25	3.99	41.43	4.62
Hong Kong Teachers	263	22.37	10.78	6.36	5.80	29.79	8.72
German Teachers	264	19.54	9.74	5.71	4.76	34.93	7.10

A comparison of selected prior research utilizing the MBI to determine the burnout levels of agriculture teachers (Croom, 2002), first year elementary teachers (Ayres et al, 2002), Hong Kong and German teachers (Schwarzer et al, 2000), with music teachers in this study also supported that music teachers may suffer from higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Only elementary teachers (Ayres et al, 2002) exhibited a higher sense of personal accomplishment than did music teachers in this study. Music's nature as a performance medium may contribute to this increased

sense of satisfaction and better “personalization” of the music teacher’s role not felt by teachers of other subjects.

Support for music teaching from administrators, parents, communities and other teachers appeared to be important factors in the burnout levels of teachers in this study. When support was felt to be sufficient, burnout levels diminished. Classroom and stress management also appeared to be factors in the severity of music teacher burnout.

Personal accomplishment subscale mean scores remained fairly steady for teachers of all experience levels. The decreasing levels of burnout based on teaching experience may reflect the loss of those teachers who “burned out” and already left the profession. Longitudinal tracking of burnout levels in music teachers might provide a better picture of all three MBI subscales.

Contrary to national data (NCES, 2002), which estimated that thirty-two percent of new teachers will leave the profession, only eleven percent of the music teachers in this study indicated that they “probably” or “definitely” would not teach music until retirement. An additional thirty-four percent of the music teachers in this study stated that they “might” teach until retirement, indicating some indecision on their part. This comparison needs to be verified with a more longitudinal study since subjects who have already left the music teaching profession were not included in the data.

This study investigated only a few selected environmental factors suggested from a review of literature. The stressful nature of the performance experience, coupled with program demands and the need for constant justification for music’s inclusion in the curriculum may provide emotional stressors not encountered by the general teaching population. These variables were not examined in the present study. Further research is needed to compare music teachers with other professionals to determine the extent that these unique stressors impact burnout.

The nature of burnout creates a challenge for researchers. Music teachers who have “burned out” and left the profession are not easily accessible. Federal and state education agencies or national music associations would be wise to establish a means of tracking music educators throughout their careers in order to better determine motivations for attrition.

Previous descriptive research concerning music teacher burnout has been limited by the lack of reliable and valid assessment tools. Survey efforts have varied greatly and provided mixed results that inhibit comparison and longitudinal data. More research is needed to further validate the use of the *Maslach Burnout Inventory-ES* with music educators.

The implications of this study suggest that environmental factors may make a difference in the burnout levels of music teachers. Schools desiring to reduce music teacher burnout should provide an effective environment that includes training in stress management, assistance with the development of strong classroom management skills, and provide strong administrative support. Music teachers who wish to reduce

burnout also must build support for their music programs among other teachers and within their community. In order to decrease music teacher burnout, it will therefore be necessary to increase music advocacy efforts.

This study was limited by its non-random sampling technique and the possibility of Type I errors, however the large sample size and variety of geographic locations provided an interesting picture of music teacher burnout in the U.S. Since burnout affected all subjects in this study to some degree, symptoms of burnout may be constantly impacting music teaching and learning. It is important that research continue to monitor music teacher stress, burnout and the levels of support for music in our schools. Music education's future depends on a dedicated and motivated workforce, which is able to manage and reduce the stressors impacting music teaching and learning.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Corresponds to organizational divisions of MENC: The National Association for Music Education.