



Experimental Results of Measures to Reduce  
Occupational Burnout Among Preschool  
Teachers in Some Provinces of the Central  
Highlands

---

Thục Trang Lâm

EasyChair preprints are intended for rapid dissemination of research results and are integrated with the rest of EasyChair.

January 26, 2025



**International Conference on Social Work for Positive Human Development:  
Theory and Practice  
(ICSW 2025)  
March 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

**The University of Danang - University of Science and Education, Dang Nang City, Vietnam**

---

**EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS OF MEASURES TO REDUCE OCCUPATIONAL  
BURNOUT AMONG PRESCHOOL TEACHERS IN SOME PROVINCES OF THE  
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS**

M. A Lam Ho Thuc Trang

Dak Lak Pedagogical College, Email Address: thuctrang411@gmail.com

**Abstract:** The article proposes several measures to reduce occupational burnout among preschool teachers in the Central Highlands provinces. In particular, we conducted an experimental study on the impact of two measures “*Raising awareness of preschool teachers about the occupational burnout syndrome*” and “*Applying Mindfulness Therapy to improve physical and mental health to reduce occupational burnout for preschool teachers*” on a group of 31 preschool teachers. The research results demonstrated that increasing preschool teachers' awareness of occupational burnout, combined with Mindfulness Therapy, effectively reduced their occupational burnout levels.

---

**Keywords:** Central Highlands, experimental study, occupational burnout, measure, preschool teachers.

## **1. Introduction**

Occupational burnout is a serious problem of modern society, originating from chronic stress at work. In 2019, this syndrome is recognized by the World Health Organization as an occupational psychological disorder and was included in the International Classification of Diseases, version 11. This shows that occupational burnout not only affects work but also affects the physical and mental health of workers.

Preschool teachers are at risk of mental health problems due to the nature of their work, which requires emotional expression and suppression, heavy workloads and high levels of stress, implementation of rigid rules and workplace bullying (Bates, 2018; Farewell et al., 2021). In addition, the pressure from ensuring children's safety, the increasing demands of parents and managers gradually cause them to lose positive emotions towards the profession and gradually fall

into a spiral of occupational burnout. The Central Highlands provinces in Vietnam are characterized by the coexistence of many ethnic minorities. They have differences in culture, customs, practices, and religion. Therefore, preschool teachers working in the Central Highlands face many difficulties in teaching conditions, facilities, remuneration, and lack of support resources. These factors increase the risk of professional burnout in teachers, making this a matter of concern and need to be studied systematically and in depth.

The results of a study on the current state of occupational burnout among 414 preschool teachers in the Central Highlands provinces showed that the rate of preschool teachers suffering from occupational burnout was high (81.2%). Of these, 133 teachers suffered from mild occupational burnout (32.1%), 137 teachers suffered from moderate occupational burnout (33.1%), 56 teachers suffered from high occupational burnout (13.5%) and 10 teachers suffered from very high occupational burnout (2.4%). This is a warning signal for the Vietnamese education sector in the current context, when the occupational pressure of preschool teachers is increasing and the State's policies on compensation, recruitment and honoring teachers are undergoing many major changes.

Through the survey, we found that the work factor is the factor that has the strongest impact on the occupational burnout of preschool teachers in the Central Highlands provinces, followed by factors related to the teachers themselves. However, with limited capacity, we chose to take measures to impact the teachers themselves to reduce their occupational burnout. Because impacting the work of preschool teachers is a systemic issue, requiring changes from the management level and macro policies of the State. This requires time, resources and coordination from many related departments and agencies. Meanwhile, supporting teachers through enhancing their ability to cope with occupational burnout may be a more feasible measure.

For the above reasons, we chose to experiment with the measures “*Raising awareness of preschool teachers about the occupational burnout syndrome*” and “*Applying Mindfulness Therapy to improve physical and mental health to reduce occupational burnout for preschool teachers*”

## **2. Theoretical Framework and Methods**

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

Based on the reference of many different research models on occupational burnout, we believe that occupational burnout is a complex and multidimensional psychological phenomenon caused by the combination of 4 components: Emotional exhaustion, Physical energy depletion, Depersonalization and Feelings of reduced work efficiency. From there, we designed a scale of occupational burnout for preschool teachers consisting of 29 indicators, expressed through 4 components. The results of reliability testing of the occupational burnout subscales all have Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.8 or higher. The results of EFA factor analysis show that  $KMO = 0.964$  satisfies the condition  $0 < KMO < 1$ . The KMO coefficient is close to 1, showing that the

exploratory factor analysis is very suitable for the data on the sample. Bartlett's test is statistically significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), showing that the observed variables are correlated with each other in the whole. Varimax rotation matrix shows that the observed variables in the scale are extracted into 4 factors with loading factors all greater than 0.4. Thus, the scale ensures reliability and validity for conducting research.

The scale is designed to assess the level and manifestation of professional burnout in preschool teachers with 5 levels according to the Likert scale, conventionally defined according to the frequency of occurrence of the following manifestations: Never (1 point); Rarely (2 points); Occasionally (3 points); Often (4 points); Always (5 points). Quantitative scores for each level of professional burnout of preschool teachers are determined based on the normal distribution. From there, we determined 5 levels of professional burnout of preschool teachers as "Not affected", "Mild", "Medium", "High" and "Very high".

The survey process is based on the voluntary participation of the research subjects. Information about the research subjects is completely confidential.

The data in the study were processed using SPSS software version 22.0.

## **2.2. Methods**

### 2.2.1. Research purpose

Experimentally test the effectiveness of measures to reduce occupational burnout among preschool teachers in the Central Highlands provinces.

### 2.2.2. Research hypothesis

Occupational burnout among preschool teachers in the Central Highlands provinces can be reduced by raising teachers' awareness of occupational burnout syndrome and using Mindfulness Therapy.

### 2.2.3. Experimental measures

Organize training to raise awareness of occupational burnout combined with organizing mindfulness practice for preschool teachers.

### 2.2.4. Experimental subjects

Including 63 preschool teachers from 2 preschools in the Central Highlands. Including 31 teachers in the experimental group, 32 teachers in the control group. These teachers were assessed as having no initial difference in the level of occupational burnout.

### 2.2.5. Time and location of the experiment

- Time: from November 2024 to January 2025
- Location: at M. N Kindergarten, Dak Lak province.

### 2.2.6. Experimental content

Organize training to raise awareness of occupational burnout syndrome for preschool teachers on the following topics: concepts, manifestations, consequences and factors affecting teachers' occupational burnout.

Organize mindfulness practice according to 6 topics: mindful breathing, body scan meditation, mindful eating, emotional mindfulness, mindful communication, and mindful compassion.

#### 2.2.7. How to conduct the experiment

- Step 1: Contact the school's Board of Directors and the teachers of M. N Kindergarten and H. P Kindergarten, clearly stating the purpose, content, time and method of conducting the experiment. After receiving the consent of the Board of Directors and the teachers, we agreed to conduct the experiment on 31 teachers at M. N Kindergarten and compare it with 32 teachers of H. P Kindergarten.

- Step 2: Plan to prepare for the experiment

+ Develop a plan and notify teachers of the time and location of the experiment

+ Design training content for teachers, prepare conditions and facilities for conducting the experiment.

+ Teachers participating in the experiment will study directly on a single Sunday, and at the same time study and practice online every day.

- Step 3: Pre-experimental survey and assessment

We conducted a survey on the occupational burnout status of 63 preschool teachers in both the experimental and control groups according to the occupational burnout scale that has been tested for reliability and validity.

- Step 4: Experimental implementation

+ Organize training on occupational burnout for preschool teachers according to the above topics. Distribute paper and digital documents for teachers to study further

+ Organize mindfulness practice according to the plan every morning, noon and evening via the Google Meet application. Send messages reminding teachers to practice regularly via the Zalo platform.

- Step 5: Conduct post-implementation assessment

We used the occupational burnout scale that was used initially to examine the change in the level of occupational burnout of preschool teachers after the experiment.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results of the occupational burnout survey of the experimental group and the control group before the experiment

**Table 1. Level of occupational burnout of the experimental group and the control group before the experiment**

Components of occupational burnout in preschool teachers	Control group		Experimental group		t	p
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
Emotional Exhaustion	2.71	1.09	2.53	1.09	0.650	0.518
Physical Energy Depletion	3.48	0.93	3.40	1.00	0.291	0.772

Depersonalization	1.85	0.95	1.80	1.05	0.211	0.833
Feelings of Decreased Work Efficiency	1.91	1.00	1.82	0.80	0.364	0.717
Occupational Burnout	2.49	0.84	2.39	0.84	0.457	0.649

*Source: Author's research*

The results of the pre-experimental survey showed that the mean of the components of occupational burnout (Emotional exhaustion, Physical energy depletion, Depersonalization, Feeling of decreased work efficiency) as well as the mean of occupational burnout of preschool teachers in the experimental and control groups had differences but were not too significant. In general, the control group had slightly lower mean in all aspects and overall, however, the results of the Independent Sample T-test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups (with p value > 0.05). Thus, it can be affirmed that before conducting the impact experiment, the level of occupational burnout in general and each components of occupational burnout were similar.

### ***3.2. Results of the occupational burnout survey of the experimental group and the control group after the experiment***

#### **3.2.1 Comparison of the occupational burnout level of the control group in the two surveys**

In the control group, we did not use any impact on the professional activities of the teachers. Comparing the occupational burnout level of the control group before and after the experiment allowed us to exclude the presence of some confounding factors in the pedagogical work process of preschool teachers, ensuring the objectivity and scientific nature of the experiment.

**Table 2. The occupational burnout level of the control group in the two surveys**

Components of occupational burnout in preschool teachers	Before experiment		After experiment		t	p
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
Emotional Exhaustion	2.53	1.09	2.65	0.76	-1.148	0.260
Physical Energy Depletion	3.40	1.00	3.48	0.85	-1.109	0.276
Depersonalization	1.80	1.05	1.95	0.84	-1.565	0.128
Feelings of Decreased Work Efficiency	1.82	0.80	1.98	0.64	-1.486	0.147
Occupational Burnout	2.39	0.84	2.51	0.61	-2.036	0.053

*Source: Author's research*

The survey results in Table 2 showed that after the experiment, there was a slight increase in the mean in all components of occupational burnout and general occupational burnout of preschool teachers. Looking at the standard deviation, it can be seen that in the first measurement, teachers' answers had a higher dispersion, especially in the components of Emotional exhaustion, Physical energy depletion and Depersonalization. In the second measurement, the standard deviation decreased significantly, indicating that teachers' answers had a higher similarity. We hypothesized that the second measurement was close to the Lunar New Year holiday, which was the time when teachers faced great work pressure due to having just completed the records and

books to evaluate children at the end of the first semester, plus organizing festival activities, making crafts, decorating the classroom with spring themes... making teachers feel more exhausted. However, the results of the Paired Sample T-test showed that there was no significant difference between the results of the survey on general occupational burnout and components of occupational burnout in the two measurements ( $p > 0.05$  in all comparison pairs). Accordingly, it can be concluded that without the impact of the experiment, the level of occupational burnout of the subjects in the control group did not change.

3.2.2. Comparison of the level of occupational burnout of the experimental group in the two surveys

**Table 3. Level of occupational burnout of the experimental group in the two surveys**

Components of occupational burnout in preschool teachers	Before experiment		After experiment		t	p
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
Emotional Exhaustion	2.71	1.09	2.39	0.65	2.693	0.011
Physical Energy Depletion	3.48	0.93	2.78	0.45	6.037	0.000
Depersonalization	1.85	0.95	1.53	0.49	3.032	0.005
Feelings of Decreased Work Efficiency	1.91	1.00	1.63	0.54	2.227	0.034
Occupational Burnout	2.49	0.84	2.08	0.43	4.217	0.000

*Source: Author's research*

Looking at Table 3, we can see that the Mean in the components of occupational burnout decreased significantly after the experiment, especially the components of Physical energy depletion ( $t = 6.037$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), followed by Depersonalization ( $t = 3.032$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ), Emotional exhaustion ( $t = 2.693$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ) and Feeling of decreased work efficiency ( $t = 2.227$ ;  $p = 0.034$ ). The results of The Paired Sample T-test proved that this difference was statistically significant. Accordingly, the level of Emotional exhaustion decreased from Medium to Mild, the level of Physical energy depletion decreased from High to Medium, and the level of Depersonalization decreased from Mild to Not affected. Although the level of Feeling of decreased work efficiency did not change (still at a Mild level), the Mean after the experiment also decreased significantly. Similarly, the Mean of occupational burnout of preschool teachers after the experiment also decreased quite sharply from 2.49 to 2.08 ( $p = 0.000$ ), also indicating a statistically significant difference. The level of occupational burnout also decreased by one level from Medium to mild. In addition, the Standard deviation of the answers after the experiment was low, showing the consistency of teachers in answering the questions.

Thus, after a period of 2 months of experimental impact, the level of occupational burnout in general and components of occupational burnout in particular of the experimental group subjects had a clear decrease.

3.2.3. Comparison of the level of occupational burnout of the experimental group and the control group after the survey

**Table 4. Level of occupational burnout of the experimental group and the control group after the survey**

Components of occupational burnout in preschool teachers	Control group		Experimental group		t	p
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
Emotional Exhaustion	2.65	0.76	2.39	0.65	-1.447	0.043
Physical Energy Depletion	3.48	0.85	2.78	0.45	-4.116	0.000
Depersonalization	1.95	0.84	1.53	0.49	-2.397	0.020
Feelings of Decreased Work Efficiency	1.98	0.64	1.63	0.54	-2.344	0.022
Occupational Burnout	2.51	0.61	2.08	0.43	-3.246	0.002

*Source: Author's research*

When comparing the level of occupational burnout of the experimental group and the control group after the survey, we can see that the Mean of occupational burnout in general as well as all components of occupational burnout in the experimental group decreased significantly compared to the control group, especially the component of Physical energy depletion (Mean was 2.78 compared to 3.48, corresponding to Medium versus High levels), Emotional exhaustion (Mean was 2.39 compared to 2.65, corresponding to Mild versus Medium levels), Depersonalization (Mean was 1.53 compared to 1.95, corresponding to Not affected versus Mild levels), Feeling of decreased work efficiency (Mean was 1.63 compared to 1.98, both at Mild levels but with a significant decrease) and the overall occupational burnout score (Mean was 2.08 compared to 2.51, corresponding to Mild versus Medium levels). The T-test results for all contents also showed statistical differences between the two groups when the p value was less than 0.05.

The above research results demonstrated that: raising awareness of preschool teachers about the occupational burnout syndrome and applying Mindfulness Therapy to improve physical and mental health to reduce occupational burnout for preschool teachers is effective.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Through the process of organizing experimental research on a number of measures to reduce occupational burnout for preschool teachers, we found that there was a change in the overall level of occupational burnout and components of burnout in teachers in the experimental group after the impact. Accordingly, the overall level of occupational burnout and components of occupational burnout in the experimental group after the experiment all decreased by one level compared to before the experiment (except for the aspect of Feeling a decrease in work efficiency). Compared with the control group, the overall level of occupational burnout and burnout components in the experimental group after the impact were reduced by one level (except for the aspect of Feeling of decreased work efficiency). This shows that the experiment of the two measures “*Raising awareness of preschool teachers about the occupational burnout syndrome*” and “*Applying Mindfulness Therapy to improve physical and mental health to reduce occupational burnout for preschool teachers*” is effective.



## 5. References

1. Bates, S. (2018). Early Childhood Teacher Health and Wellbeing: Rights, Risks, and Implications. *Early Childhood Folio*, 22(2), 31–35. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1244254>
2. Farewell, C. V., Quinlan, J., Melnick, E., Powers, J. & Puma, J. (2021). Job demands and resources experienced by the early childhood education workforce serving high-need populations. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 50, 197-206. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01143-4>
3. Hanh, T. N., & Katherine, W. (2021). Happy teachers will change the world – Ep 1. Publisher.
4. Hanh, T. N., & Katherine, W. (2021). Happy Teachers Will Change the World – Ep 2. Hanoi Publisher.
5. Tho, H. V. (2021). Happiness is the Way. The World Publisher