

Balancing Pulpit and Blackboard: An Explanatory Sequential Study of Pastor-Teachers' Lived Experiences, Coping Strategies, and Ministry/Teaching Outcomes in Cavite

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the lived experiences, coping strategies, time allocation, and performance outcomes of pastor-teachers serving in public schools and churches in Cavite, Philippines. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, the research explored how individuals navigate the dual demands of ministry and teaching. Quantitative data measured time investment and performance ratings, while qualitative data captured lived experiences and coping mechanisms. Findings revealed that pastor-teachers face significant time constraints and role conflict due to overlapping responsibilities, often leading to physical fatigue and emotional strain. However, adaptive coping strategies—such as spiritual disciplines, time management, boundary setting, and reliance on social and institutional support—enabled them to sustain effectiveness in both roles. The study also highlighted the importance of purpose and calling as motivational anchors that reinforce resilience. The findings support the Pastor-Teacher Resilience Quadrant, which emphasizes faith anchoring, personal sustainability, relational support, and role integration as key domains of balance. The study concludes that bivocational ministry is not merely a pragmatic necessity but a meaningful vocational integration requiring both personal adaptation and institutional support.

Keywords: Bivocational ministry, pastor-teachers, coping strategies, role conflict, resilience, teacher performance

INTRODUCTION

The increasing demands within both educational and ministerial contexts have intensified concerns regarding the well-being, effectiveness, and coping strategies of professionals serving in these fields. Teachers are expected to manage extensive instructional, administrative, and emotional responsibilities, while pastors are tasked with providing spiritual leadership, pastoral care, and community engagement—often with limited institutional support. As these demands continue to grow, stress, fatigue, and role strain have become common experiences.

A distinct yet underexplored group within these professions is the pastor-teacher—individuals who simultaneously serve as public school educators and church ministers. These individuals carry dual responsibilities, including lesson planning, classroom instruction, and administrative duties, alongside sermon preparation, pastoral care, counseling, and church leadership. While existing literature has examined stress, job satisfaction, and coping strategies within education and ministry separately, there remains a lack of comprehensive research addressing the unique challenges faced by pastor-teachers operating in both domains.

This gap is particularly evident in the Philippine context, where public school systems impose heavy workloads, and many churches lack structured support for bivocational ministers. As a result, pastor-teachers often navigate complex role expectations without sufficient institutional recognition of their dual responsibilities.

Although bivocational ministry is increasingly recognized, limited research has explored how pastor-teachers manage competing demands, allocate time across roles, and sustain performance in both

teaching and ministry. Moreover, there is insufficient understanding of the coping strategies that enable them to maintain resilience and effectiveness.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the lived experiences, coping strategies, time allocation, and performance outcomes of pastor-teachers in Cavite. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of how pastor-teachers balance their dual roles. Furthermore, the study proposes a contextualized framework—the Pastor-Teacher Resilience Quadrant—to explain how spiritual, personal, relational, and institutional factors contribute to their resilience and role integration.

Statement of the Problem

This research aims to examine how pastor-teachers balance their dual roles in ministry and education, and how these roles influence their coping strategies and performance outcomes. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How much time do pastor-teachers spend weekly on: Ministry tasks and Teaching tasks
2. How are pastor-teachers evaluated in terms of: Ministry performance and Teaching performance
3. What are the lived experiences and coping strategies of pastor-teachers in balancing their dual roles?
4. What action plan can be proposed based on the findings?

Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses on pastor-teachers employed in public schools in Cavite who simultaneously serve in church ministry. The research includes participants from various evangelical denominations and utilizes both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative component involves eight participants selected through purposive and snowball sampling, while the quantitative component includes survey-based performance assessments. The study is limited to the experiences, time allocation, coping strategies, and perceived performance of participants within the specified geographic and institutional context.

Review of Related Literature

Existing literature highlights the significant challenges faced by individuals managing dual roles in education and ministry. Studies indicate that both teaching and pastoral work demand substantial time, emotional investment, and cognitive effort, often leading to stress and burnout when combined.

In educational contexts, teachers experience high workloads due to lesson preparation, administrative responsibilities, and extracurricular demands, which frequently extend beyond regular working hours (Alvarez et al., 2025; Sanlao et al., 2024). These demands are strongly associated with job dissatisfaction, fatigue, and reduced instructional effectiveness (Santiago et al., 2022; Jomuad et al., 2021). Similarly, in ministry, responsibilities such as sermon preparation, pastoral care, and leadership contribute to emotional exhaustion and role overload (Fulmer & Sinclair, 2023; Frederick et al., 2024).

Research further demonstrates that time constraints negatively affect performance in both domains. Excessive workload reduces teachers' capacity for innovation and responsiveness (Andres, 2021), while limited ministry time weakens pastoral engagement and relational depth (Terry & Cunningham, 2021). These findings suggest that effective performance in dual roles requires intentional time management and boundary-setting strategies.

Coping strategies play a critical role in sustaining well-being and performance. Studies emphasize the importance of spiritual practices, social support, and institutional assistance in mitigating stress (Cadampog & Licaros, 2024; Viloria, 2023). Adaptive strategies such as prioritization, reflective

practice, and reliance on family and community support enhance resilience among professionals managing multiple roles.

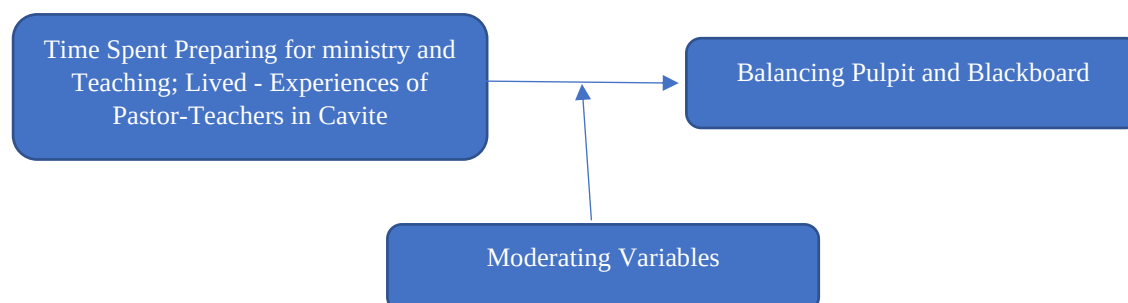
Theologically, bivocational ministry is supported by the example of the Apostle Paul, who integrated manual labor with gospel ministry as a strategic and missional practice. Contemporary theological perspectives further affirm the integration of faith and work, rejecting the sacred-secular divide and recognizing all forms of labor as meaningful expressions of vocation. (Veith, 2011; Kuyper, 2024; Volf, 2001, Keller, 2012)

Overall, the literature suggests that while dual-role contexts present significant challenges, resilience can be sustained through a combination of personal adaptation, spiritual grounding, and institutional support.

Theoretical Framework

Fernandez's four life quadrant model provides a holistic lens for understanding life balance across four domains: **Work, Family, Self, and Friends/Community**. In this study, these quadrants help map how pastor-teachers distribute time, energy, and emotional investment across their dual vocations and personal life. Imbalance in one quadrant often produces strain in others, particularly in self-care and family life.

Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

The research employs an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach to examine the time allocation, performance, lived experiences and coping strategies of pastor-teachers.

Research Design

The study utilized an **explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design** to examine the experiences of pastor-teachers who serve as both public school teachers and church pastors in Cavite. This design begins with a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase, where qualitative data are used to explain and elaborate on the initial statistical results. The quantitative component measured time allocation and performance in both teaching and ministry roles, while the qualitative component explored the lived experiences and coping strategies of the participants to provide deeper contextual understanding.

Research Steps

The study followed a five-step sequential process. First, participants were identified through purposive and snowball sampling among pastor-teachers in public schools who were actively engaged in both teaching and ministry. Second, quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire

measuring weekly time allocation and perceived performance in both roles through a 4-point Likert scale completed by students and congregation members. Third, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Fourth, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. Finally, both quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and support the proposed action plan.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling from identified pastor-teachers in public schools in Cavite who referred others engaged in both teaching and ministry. Data were gathered in two phases: a quantitative phase using a structured questionnaire on time allocation and performance rated on a 4-point Likert scale by students and congregation members, and a qualitative phase involving in-depth interviews to explore participants' lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies in managing dual roles.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mean were used to describe the time allocation of pastor-teachers in ministry and teaching tasks, as well as their perceived performance in both roles.

For the qualitative data, interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis following the Modified Stevick–Colaizzi–Keen method. This involved bracketing the researcher's assumptions, extracting significant statements, horizontalizing the data, clustering meanings into themes, and synthesizing textural and structural descriptions of the lived experiences of pastor-teachers.

Finally, both quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated through triangulation to provide a comprehensive interpretation of how pastor-teachers manage their dual roles and to support the development of the study's conclusions and action plan.

Study Limitations and Ethical Consideration

The study is limited to pastor-teachers employed in public schools in Cavite and is not intended for generalization beyond this context. The small sample size, due to the limited population of bi-vocational pastor-teachers, and the use of purposive and snowball sampling may introduce selection bias. In addition, the study relies on self-reported data and external ratings from students and congregation members, which may be influenced by subjective perceptions.

Ethically, the study ensured voluntary participation and obtained informed consent from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by using codes instead of names, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. All data were used strictly for academic purposes and were securely stored to protect privacy and uphold research integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SOP 1: Time Allocation of Pastor-Teachers in Ministry and Teaching Tasks

The findings show that pastor-teachers divide their time between ministry and teaching responsibilities, with a slightly higher focus on ministry tasks ($M = 3.17$) than teaching tasks ($M = 2.86$), indicating active engagement in both roles.

The highest time allocation is given to sermon preparation ($M = 4.00$) and classroom teaching ($M = 3.88$), reflecting their core responsibilities in both ministry and education.

Moderate engagement is observed in worship leadership, pastoral care, and age-level ministries, while the least time is devoted to teaching administrative work ($M = 1.75$) and Bible study facilitation ($M = 2.50$). Overall, the results highlight the demanding yet balanced nature of their dual roles.

These findings suggest that pastor-teachers prioritize core functional responsibilities over administrative tasks in both roles. This reflects a focus on high-impact activities such as teaching and preaching, which are central to their dual vocation.

SOP 2: Performance Ratings of Pastor-Teachers

The study found that pastor-teachers were consistently rated as highly effective in both roles. Students rated their teaching performance at $M = 3.59$, while congregation members rated their ministry performance at $M = 3.60$. These results indicate strong and consistent effectiveness across both educational and ministerial responsibilities despite their dual roles. Despite limited preparation time, pastor-teachers are perceived as highly effective in both teaching and ministry roles. This indicates that effectiveness is influenced not only by time investment but also by competence, experience, and vocational commitment.

SOP 3: Lived Experiences and Coping Strategies

Textural Themes (Lived Experiences)

1. Navigating time and task management
2. Physical, emotional, and mental fatigue
3. Setting boundaries between roles
4. Role integration and mutual enrichment
5. Purpose, calling, and motivation

Structural Themes (Coping Strategies)

1. Spiritual anchoring and devotional life
2. Support systems and relationships
3. Strategic self-care and stress recovery
4. Scheduling and efficiency strategies

SOP 4: Proposed Action Plan

The proposed action plan focuses on strengthening the sustainability of bivocational ministry through six key areas. These include recognition and institutional support, promotion of physical, emotional, and mental well-being, strengthening of spiritual anchoring and devotional life, development of support systems and relationships, implementation of strategic self-care and stress recovery practices, and enhancement of scheduling and efficiency strategies. Collectively, these components aim to provide a holistic framework that supports pastor-teachers in effectively managing their dual roles while maintaining well-being and performance.

The action plan emphasizes a holistic support system combining institutional policy, spiritual formation, and practical workload management to sustain pastor-teachers effectively.

SUMMARY

The study found that pastor-teachers in Cavite allocate significant time to both ministry and teaching, with sermon preparation and classroom teaching receiving the highest attention. Despite limited preparation time, they are consistently rated as highly effective by both students

and congregation members. However, they experience challenges such as fatigue, time conflict, and role strain, though these are balanced by strong motivation rooted in purpose and calling. To manage these demands, they employ coping strategies such as spiritual practices, time management, boundary setting, and reliance on social support systems. Overall, the findings highlight the need for strong institutional and relational support systems to sustain their long-term effectiveness in dual roles.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that dual-role effectiveness among pastor-teachers is sustained despite limited preparation time, indicating that vocational calling and competence play a more significant role than time allocation alone. Their ability to manage responsibilities is supported by intentional and structured coping strategies, including scheduling, prioritization, boundary setting, and seeking social support, which help maintain both performance and well-being. A strong sense of spiritual calling also emerges as a central motivational factor, enabling them to view challenges as meaningful service rather than burdens. Furthermore, institutional and relational support from schools, churches, and peer networks is essential in strengthening resilience, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability in their dual roles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that educational authorities and school administrators strengthen support for pastor-teachers by recognizing their dual roles and providing professional development in pedagogy, technology integration, and workload management without adding to their burden. Likewise, church leadership and ministerial bodies are encouraged to establish structured support systems such as shared preaching responsibilities, ministry teams, and spiritual renewal programs to reduce burnout and enhance sustainability.

At the institutional level, the proposed Cavite Bivocational Ministers Fellowship (CBMF) is recommended to promote mentoring and peer support, conduct training and spiritual retreats, advocate for the welfare of bivocational ministers, and coordinate collaboration between churches and educational institutions. In addition, a Church Policy Framework for Bivocational Ministry is proposed, emphasizing formal recognition, flexible scheduling, shared responsibilities, sabbatical provisions, wellness and family support programs, and dedicated support units for ministers.

For pastor-teachers, the study recommends maintaining strong spiritual disciplines, establishing clear role boundaries, and practicing intentional self-care to sustain effectiveness in dual roles. Policymakers and training institutions are also urged to develop dual-role leadership training programs and flexible workload policies that recognize the integration of ministry and teaching responsibilities. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to explore additional variables such as intrinsic motivation, spiritual authority, and community trust, and to extend the study beyond Cavite to other regions and professions.

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And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Colossians 3:17).

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT:

AI-supported tools (chatgpt, OpenAi) helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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