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A LITERATURE REVIEW OF BURNOUT IN THE POST PANDEMIC ERA AMONG TEACHERS (2020 -2023)

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Abstract: *Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational landscape has undergone profound shifts, posing unprecedented challenges for educators. This review delves into post-epidemic teacher burnout between 2020 and 2023. Through comprehensive analysis of varied research sources, it identifies key factors contributing to burnout and tracks its evolution over time. Our findings underscore a heightened workload and stress amongst educators and emphasize the imperative of targeted interventions and strategies for fostering resilience in education post-pandemic tailored to address burnout.*

Key words: *teacher burnout, education, stressors, interventions, job satisfaction, teachers, stress, burnout, anxiety, depression.*

1. Introduction

In the sphere of education, the frequency of teacher burnout has become a serious concern since it affects both the instructors themselves and the calibre of instruction they deliver. This essay aims to investigate the prevalence of teacher burnout by looking at its sources, symptoms, and effects on the educational system. This analysis, which is based on academic research, attempts to advance our understanding of the prevalence of burnout among teachers. This stress is attributed to factors such as heavy workloads, challenges in interpersonal communication, insufficient training, low salaries, and job insecurity [30], [35] Burnout is a complex notion that refers to a condition of long-term physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion caused by extended exposure to high levels of stress, especially in the workplace. The educational sphere has been profoundly and permanently altered by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has also had a lasting effect on the teaching profession. The abrupt transition to online teaching during the pandemic not only intensified these pre-existing challenges but introduced

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new dimensions of stress. For instance, educators had to adapt swiftly to new technologies, address the digital divide among students, and navigate the emotional toll of remote learning [32]. In the midst of sudden closures, the transition to remote learning, and the ensuing unpredictability, educators across the globe encountered unprecedented difficulties as they navigated uncharted territories. The challenges presented by the pandemic not only put educators to the test of their resilience, but also emphasized the vital significance of their health in preserving the integrity of educational systems. In the aftermath of the pandemic, there is a significant concern regarding fatigue, which requires a thorough examination of the current body of literature spanning the years 2020 to 2023. In order for critical digital pedagogy to achieve its intended impact, it is imperative to develop novel educational and pedagogical approaches, while also embracing a novel outlook on the process of teaching and learning [22], [37], [38]. Although technical skill is a crucial aspect of digital literacy, educational plans sometimes overlook the social, cultural, and ethical factors related to learning through technology [11],[13].

This measure would motivate educators to proactively include important digital literacies into the curriculum, rather than treating them as an optional topic to be addressed. It is recommended that educators embrace a change in their approach that emphasizes the development of critical, ethical, and responsible thinking skills.

2. Objectives

To assess the frequency of burnout among teachers during the pandemic: the primary aim of this literature review is to examine research that documents the frequency of burnout among teachers in the period following the epidemic. Through the analysis of survey data, qualitative interviews, and quantitative studies, our objective is to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the degree to which instructors encountered burnout during the pandemic and whether this pattern persisted in the following years. Our goal is to provide a thorough understanding of the factors contributing to burnout in the post-pandemic era, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by educators during this period.

2.1. Understanding Burnout

Our goal is to provide a thorough understanding of the factors contributing to burnout in the post-pandemic era, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by educators during this period [27]. Burnout is a complex phenomenon encompassing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment [46]. Pre-pandemic, research identified factors such as workload, lack of autonomy, and interpersonal conflict as contributors [19]. The enduring nature of burnout makes it imperative to explore how these factors evolved during and after the pandemic, impacting teachers' well-being [4].

The Impact of the Pandemic on Teachers

The sudden shift to online teaching, increased workload, and uncertainties surrounding the educational landscape became pivotal stressors during the pandemic [17]. For instance, the need for

rapid adaptation to virtual platforms and the blurring lines between personal and professional life intensified the pressures on teachers [9]. Unique stressors require nuanced exploration to comprehend their lasting effects on teacher burnout [42], [49].

2.2. Empirical Studies (2020-2023)

Recent studies conducted between 2020 and 2023 illuminate the evolving landscape of teacher burnout. Research by (Johnson et al. 2024) highlighted a significant increase in reported burnout cases during the post-pandemic period, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Additionally, [6], [47] longitudinal study identified a correlation between burnout and the duration of online teaching, revealing valuable insights into the persistent impact of remote education.

Coping Mechanisms and Interventions

Amid the challenges, understanding effective coping mechanisms is crucial. Professional development, mentorship programs, and peer support have proven instrumental in alleviating burnout. For example, a study by [8], demonstrated that teachers engaged in regular professional development reported lower levels of burnout, emphasizing the role of continuous learning in fostering resilience.

Implications for Education Policy and Practice

The literature underscores the need for systemic changes in education policy and practice. School leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the work environment. A study by [51]. emphasized the positive impact of supportive leadership in reducing teacher burnout. Teaching was regarded as a challenging occupation before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to recent studies conducted by [15] and [40], there has been a significant increase in the number of teachers leaving their profession. In fact, over half of all teachers leave within the first five years of their career. Amids the COVID-19 pandemic, [48], discovered that almost 25% of educators contemplated resigning from their positions at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 academic year. Furthermore, a significant proportion of NEA educators (55%) formulated leave strategies as a result of heightened stress connected to the pandemic. This represents a substantial rise compared to the reported figure of 31% in August 2021 [25]. The 2021 RAND company analysis revealed that 44% of instructors chose to leave their teaching profession earlier than intended owing to concerns associated to COVID-19 [5].

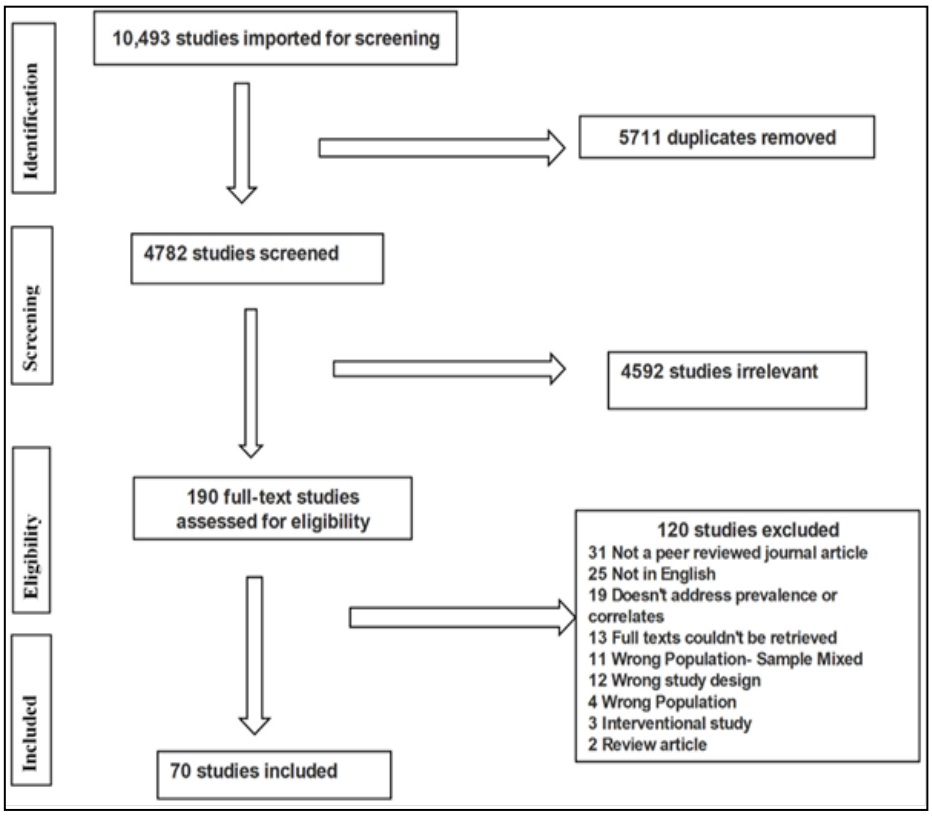

Fig. 1. *A diagram following the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines showing the selection of studies*

Previous studies have found a correlation between the daily demands of teaching, hectic schedules, and elevated levels of burnout among teachers even before the COVID-19 pandemic [7]. The results indicate that when teachers are faced with new challenges, their self-efficacy decreases while their levels of stress and anxiety increase. In addition, a study conducted by [44], that feelings of weariness and depersonalisation were inversely connected to teacher self-efficacy. Similarly, another study by [41,] revealed that lower levels of teacher self-efficacy were predictive of teacher burnout. Nevertheless, [39], discovered that not all administrative support is beneficial, as it was associated with heightened pressure among teachers and elevated rates of teacher attrition. Moreover [24], determined that the connections between teachers and administrators have a role in mitigating teacher stress. Only in recent times have academics begun to examine the mental health and well-being of teachers. This is because they have found a connection between the decline in teacher mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in teachers leaving their profession [23], [26]. During the autumn of 2020, teachers experienced a significant decline in their mental health and well-being. This was primarily caused

by various work-related challenges, such as an increased workload, the need to cover colleagues' classes, a lack of resources at work (such as social support), limited work autonomy, and inadequate coping skills [18], difficulties that they encountered while delivering online teaching during the COVID-19.

3. Methodology

The search was conducted by using appropriate keywords related to stress, burnout, depression, and anxiety. The search was comprehensive. The database search was conducted from February 2020 to 2023. A comprehensive study and meta-analysis [1], were performed to investigate the worldwide prevalence and contributing factors of anxiety, depression, and burnout among teachers. The review adhered to the requirements set forth by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (PRISMA).

The quality of the research was evaluated using the Joanna Briggs Institute's (JBI) critical evaluation checklist for prevalence studies. The JBI checklist encompasses several criteria for inclusion: studies with a sufficient sample size, studies that employed an appropriate sample frame to address the target population, studies with a satisfactory response rate, studies that utilised a systematic approach for data capture to ensure representativeness of the study sample, and studies with a sound statistical analysis. Diverse regions, including North America, Europe, South America, Africa, Oceania and Asia, were included. This methodological approach enhances the reliability and validity of the findings, providing a nuanced understanding of teacher burnout in the post-pandemic era [2], [10].

4. Results

4.1. Characteristics of the study

Out of the total number of papers, 7 were classified as quantitative cross-sectional studies. One study applied a blend of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, whereas two investigations employed randomized controlled trials. The seventy papers had a total of 143,288 participants, all of whom were educators. The article's sample size ranged from 50 to 51,782 participants, including persons between the ages of 18 and 75. The minimum observed response rate was 13%, while the greatest response rate reached 97.4%. The median response rate, representing the middle value, was 77%. From 2007 to 2023, the majority of studies (79%) were published, while the remaining 21% were published between 1974 and 2006. Europe accounted for the largest proportion of the research (40%), followed by Asia (30%) and North America (19%).

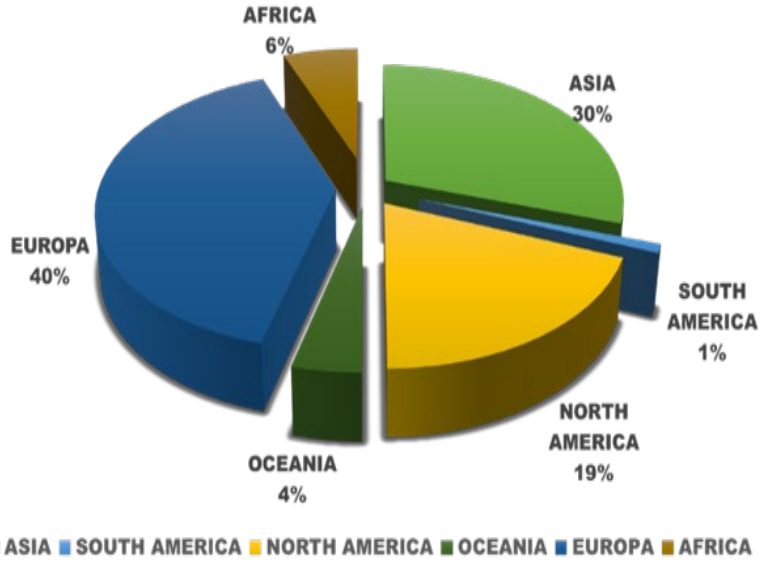

Fig 2. *Geographical distribution of research on Burnout among teachers across Continents*

The majority of research studies examined multiple outcomes, suggesting that stress, exhaustion, anxiety, and depression are interconnected. Certain articles focused on a specific outcome, such as depression (N = 6), exhaustion (N = 9), or stress (N = 9). Commonly paired outcomes included burnout and depression (N = 15), stress and depression (N = 5), burnout and anxiety (N = 2), anxiety and depression (N = 4), and stress and anxiety (N = 4). A single study (N = 1) examined the paired effects of stress and exhaustion. Furthermore, a number of studies investigated the consequences of the interaction among three to four of the aforementioned psychological issues: burnout, anxiety, and depression (N = 1); anxiety, depression, and burnout (N = 10); stress, burnout, and anxiety (N = 1); and burnout, burnout, and depression (N = 2). In conclusion, the interplay among stress, disengagement, anxiety, and depression was examined in two articles.

The bulk of publications (27 out of 32; 84%) utilised Maslach's Burnout Inventory to analyse the three interrelated components of burnout. Five out of thirty-two (16%) investigations employed the Teacher Burnout Scale, the Shirom–Melamed Burnout Inventory, or the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory. The scales most commonly employed to assess symptoms of depression or anxiety in 55 studies were the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), with a sample size of 10 participants (18%), the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), with a sample size of 9 participants (16%), the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), with a sample size of 6 participants (11%), and the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), with a sample size of 14 participants (25%). Less commonly utilised tests included the Goldberg Anxiety and Depression Questionnaire, COVID-19 Anxiety Scale, Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale (SDS),

and Manifest Anxiety Scale. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (N = 3; 10%), the Teacher Stress Inventory (N = 5; 17%), and the DASS (N = 9; 31%) were the most frequently utilised scales in the 29 research that assessed stress. Several measures were utilised in the study, including the Bruno's Teacher Stress, Job Stress Inventory, Ongoing Stressor Scale (OSS), Episodic Stressor Scale, and Occupational Stress Inventory.

The frequency of burnout

Research has revealed three distinct burnout profiles among teachers, with a prevalence ranging from 25.12% to 48.37% [32]. These groups consist of teachers with varying levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment as outlined by Martínez (2020).

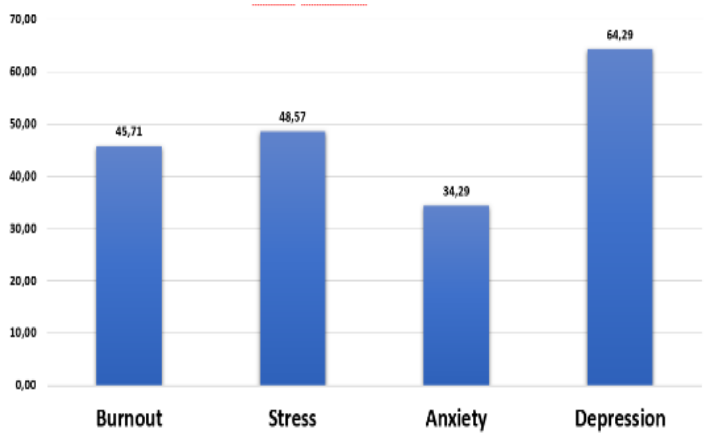

Fig 3. *The prevalence of burnout, depression, anxiety and stress in studies*

This study illustrates the integration of the three interconnected elements of burnout as identified by [28], [29], [43].

Teachers have varying levels of burnout and psychological distress, with documented prevalence ranging from 2.81% to 70.9%, with a median of 28.8%. In the years 2020 to 2023, following the pandemic and lockdown, the burnout prevalences were 3.1% (Pohl, M. 2022), 70.9% [33], and 27.6%, representing the lowest, highest, and median rates, respectively. The burnout prevalences before the epidemic and lockdown in 2019 were 2.81% (lowest), 63.43% (highest), and 25.09% (median) according to (Shukla, A. 2008). Research by (Ptáček 2019) found that 59.38% of males exhibited low burnout compared to 53% of females [36]. Studies have reported several levels of burnout, including low/no burnout (58.12%), moderate burnout (ranging from 2.81% to 70.9%), and severe burnout (ranging from 3.1% to 33.3%) [30], [31], [43].

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review embarks on a comprehensive journey through the evolving landscape of teacher burnout in the post-pandemic era. By synthesizing research spanning from 2020 to 2023, we aim to unravel the intricate dynamics that contribute to burnout and explore avenues for intervention.

Prevalence and Manifestations of Burnout Post-2020

The exigencies of the pandemic have cast a shadow over the mental health of teachers, with emerging research highlighting the prevalence and nuanced manifestations of burnout in the post-2020 era. Studies indicate elevated levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization among educators [50]. The intricacies of these manifestations, shaped by the unique stressors of the pandemic, warrant a meticulous examination to inform targeted interventions.

Factors Contributing to Burnout in the Post-Pandemic Context

The post-pandemic era introduces a confluence of factors that significantly contribute to teacher burnout. Beyond the perennial stressors of heavy workloads and challenging student behaviours, educators now grapple with the complexities of navigating remote and hybrid teaching, digital literacy demands, and heightened anxieties about health and safety [14]. is worth noting that these individuals may have held diverse viewpoints on education in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. These perspectives have the capacity to significantly contribute to the development of teaching frameworks in meaningful manners [3], [21]. Notwithstanding these reservations, we contend that these chapters give subtle and profound perspectives on the intricacy of teaching and the role of a teacher, which contribute significantly to discussions on the nature and ideal form of teaching in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consequences of Teacher Burnout in the Post-Pandemic Era

Teacher burnout reverberates beyond the individual, permeating the entire educational ecosystem. Diminished teaching efficacy, compromised student outcomes, and organizational strain are among the consequences identified in the post-pandemic context [45]. A comprehensive examination of these repercussions is imperative for devising strategies that foster sustainable teaching practices.

Interventions and Strategies for Mitigating Burnout

The urgency to address teacher burnout necessitates evidence-based interventions and strategies. Resilience-building initiatives, professional development programs, and organizational support structures have demonstrated efficacy in ameliorating burnout [12]. A critical synthesis of these interventions is vital for informing policy decisions and educational practices.

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