

Teacher Burnout and Stress: A Meta-analytical View

Paper Submission: 15/11/2020, Date of Acceptance: 27/11/2020, Date of Publication: 28/11/2020



Sushant Kumar Nayak

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Education,
Rajiv Gandhi University
Arunachal Pradesh, India



P. K. Acharya

Professor,
Dept. of Education,
Rajiv Gandhi University
Arunachal Pradesh, India

Abstract

Covid-19 ushered unprecedentedly resulting an unnatural symptoms of physical and emotional jerk in terms of burnout for all human beings including the teaching professionals. Burnout is a common phenomenon among teachers during their career and one needs to be aware about its nature and symptoms to recognize and escape from it. During this pandemic, the routine work schedule and learning environment has been significantly hampered, as result of which teacher burnout is in its high. Teacher burnout can be identified by some warning signs like chronic fatigue or exhaustion, chronic insomnia, physical symptoms and restlessness which may indicate that a teacher is undergoing a burnout related issue. The feeling of ill-tempereness, quick annoyance and socially not active also made the teacher more prone to this problem. Due to the monotonous life during covid-19, the natural life pattern is disturbed in terms of sleeping habits resulting in unusual mood swings and low emotional feelings. This leads to a disturbed mental make-up and an overall feeling of irritability. In these pandemic days there is no scope to attend social gatherings for teachers because socio-emotional support is much necessary for teachers to cope up with the stress and burnout. Teachers are now compelled to adopt a new form of virtual/online mode of teaching learning platform for learners which lacks emotional bonding and real time interaction. Long time exposure to digital devices also one of the major source of stress burnout. Socio-emotional support plays a pivotal role to cope the stress and teacher burnout during this covid-19. The flexible approach can end up taking teachers mental health in a proper direction and will prepare him/her to maintain the psychological well being. In this context, the present paper highlights on the Covid-19 pandemic era and its effect on teachers burnout and stress in educational climate.

Keywords: Teacher Burnout, Socio-Emotional Support, Mental Health, Job Satisfaction, Professionalism, Stress.

Introduction

The whole world is stalled with the Covid-19 pandemic affecting the academic life as well as the normal life as a whole. This unnatural development resulted in isolation both for the teachers and learners creating a psychological pressure and anxiety. The regular classroom environment is greatly disturbed and shifted to virtual mode. Learners are adjusting themselves to this new pattern of digital pedagogy and the teachers too adopting with the same. Many of a time this virtual scenario results in burnout syndromes and feeling of low among the teaching professionals.

As a result of over indulgence of teachers in digital platforms' and working for a long time with it no doubt arises to burnout syndrome. It's a high time for the teaching professionals to understand the burnout syndrome and ways to overcome this unprecedented time till the normal school environment restored. Burnout is a work related syndrome that most often occurs in face to face service condition and constant interaction (Farber, 1991). It is a gap between expectations of successful professional performance and an observed far less satisfying reality. Teacher burnout is a continuous reaction to long term emotional and interpersonal stressful factors on the job and primarily described by the dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and inefficiency (Maslach, Leiter, 2001).

Burnout is related with different forms of job withdrawal, malingering, willingness to quit the job, indifferent attitude towards professional work, low professional commitment, genuine output and

contribution. Even, if the person stays with the job; burnout leads to lower productivity and effectiveness in work. Teacher who is undergoing burnout may have an adverse effect on their associates both by triggering personal conflicts and upsetting job tasks. Thus, teacher burnout can produce negative impact on the working conditions and spread itself within the colleagues through informal interaction in the job. On the other hand, burnout has a negative consequence for students as well (Burkee et. al, 1996) and for teacher families (Westman, 2001). The exhaustion component of burnout is more prone to health hazards and negative effects on mental health, anxiety, drops in self-esteem.

Objectives of the Study

In the tune of the nature of the problem, the researcher has formulated the following objectives for the present study. They were;

1. To find out Potential sources of burnout among teachers.
2. To explore Potential symptoms of teachers experiencing burnout.
3. To suggest the measures that compensates the teacher burnout during these covid-19 times with the help of socio emotional support.
4. To study various ways and methods to cope with the stress and teacher burnout

Background of the Study

In contemporary times, Maslach's has done a significant work on burnout and defined it on a strong psychological framework for understanding the details of burnout with the help of psychological constructs she developed. Predominantly, all researchers have adopted the MBI (Maslach Burnout Inventory) scale developed and standardised by Maslach and Jackson (1981) which assesses the psychological pattern of burnout in three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy.

Emotional exhaustion

It is the primary component of burnout and the main reason in resulting a series of complex symptoms within an individual professional. Maslach et al. (2001) illustrated that when individuals explain themselves or others as undergoing burnout, many of a times have an experience of emotional exhaustion. Evers et al. (2004) indicated it as a draining source of emotion and enthusiasm for professional work. According to Schwarzer et al. (2000) tiredness, debilitation, lack of interest & lethargic attitude and wearing out are the important components of emotional exhaustion. Moreover, emotional exhaustion is an individual psychological situation which results in expressing different other behaviours symptoms that relate to professional burnout.

Cynicism/depersonalization

According to Maslach (1976), besides feeling of emotional exhaustion, professional individuals or teachers who are undergoing teacher burnout prone to become more apathetic to the persons they serve or to their fellow mates. Maslach narrate this type of disorder as cynicism or depersonalization. This is a form of strong pessimistic attitude and low feeling within the working periphery, posing a threat to the cohesiveness of staff and

professional motivation of the group. Depersonalization is a psychological condition to actively overlook the service beneficiaries in an attempt to put distance between them and oneself (Maslach et al., 2001). Evers, et al. (2004) defines depersonalization as "a negative callous and detached attitude towards the people who one works with, i.e. patients, students" (p. 132).

Exhaustion or depersonalization many of times influences and inhibit with effectiveness of the service condition. When a professional or teacher feels exhausted or uninterested toward performing its duty or serving people, it is challenging to achieve a sense of achievement in the work. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy redirects an individual's beliefs in his or her own competences to follow a course of action to fulfil the given situational needs and challenges. It's clear that, a teaching professional who is inefficacious may have lesser competence in his or her own abilities in teaching learning activities.

Stressor

A stressor is any event, experience or environment stimulus that causes stress in an individual. These events or experiences are perceived as threats or challenges to the individual psychologically leading to negative outcomes in performance. Stress is defined by Seyle is "a non-specific response of the body reacts to a physiological level to any type of demand". These demands are called stressors. We have the ability to perceive an event as pleasant or unpleasant and this perception plays an integral part in stressors development. The presence of stressor over an extended period of time can eventually deplete the person's physical, emotional and professional efficiency. The following warning signs of negative stress (Jerry, McBeath, 1990) are:

Emotional Sign:	Behavioural signs:	Physical signs:
-General Irritability	-Tendency to overwork	-Fatigues
-Boredom & Stagnation	-Difficulty with routine daily work	-Headache
-Mind going blank	-Decrease in job performance	-Weakness
-Desire to quit job	-Less time for recreation	-Weight gain or loss
-Unable to enjoy or compliment colleagues success	-Forgetting deadlines, appointments	-Insomnia
-Free floating anxiety	-Blaming others for poor performance	-Stuttering or other speech difficulties
-Unknown fear	-Making a foolish mistakes	-Vomiting
-Always feeling under pressure	-Automatic expression of negative feelings	-Trembling and nervous tics
-Disappointment with self and others	-Restlessness	-Missed menstrual cycle
-Feeling life is not much fun		

Several researches in this area revealed that once a teacher is under burnout syndrome it is very difficult to overcome from it. If one teacher recognizes the burnout warning signs of it will be easy for him/her to get rid from it. It is very important to the individual teacher as well as the organisation as a whole to early detect the symptoms and take necessary steps to prevent this burnout. Tims, Bakker and Derks (2013) revealed that the personnel's who are proficient their own job requirements and resources improves their levels of job commitment and minimize the chance of burnout. Latest, researches indicate that professionals with having low symptoms of burnout use a range of strategies e.g. selection, optimization, compensation (Bakker, Demerouti, and Leiter, 2014) to uphold their job commitment at acceptable levels.

Methods

Meta analysis type study and qualitative description method has been adopted in this study.

Expected Outcomes

Hendrickson (1979) suggested how to identify teacher burnout and how to deal with it. He proposed seventeen suggestions for dealing with teacher burnout. Reed (1979) gave ideas for overcoming teacher burnout that include altering the levels of taught, building up self-esteem through positive reinforcement, involving teachers in decision making, promoting professional growth, releasing the academic pressure etc. A similar kind of study was done by Zabel and Zabel (1982) illustrating the teacher burnout syndrome among special education teachers. They discussed teacher burnout reducing techniques comprising of reduction of student-teacher ratio, shorter working hours, shared student load and training in stress management. Some techniques which can be used to prevent burnout problem are mentioned below:

1. Maintaining a steady positive relationship with contemporaries and administrative staffs.
2. Taking support from professional counsellors in case of job or individual stressful conditions.
3. Practicing and following a healthier lifestyle through involving in exercise, meditation, relaxation & appropriate balance diet.
4. Cultivating right time management skills.
5. Accomplishing the personal and situational short comings/limitations and giving the best of it.
6. Upholding an equilibrium between professional time and personal time.
7. Setting up realistic goals and planning subsequently.

Apart from the above, some other methods have been suggested to cope with teachers burnout with the help of Socio Emotional Support are:

1. Take care of individual health
2. Turning things around
3. Trusting students more
4. Looking for the positive and believing in yourself
5. Helping another teacher
6. Learning something new and sharing it with students
7. Performing meditations or Yoga or reading some inspiring books

8. Developing healthy habits may provide energy to deal with real life situations
9. Maintaining proper management will help in eliminating stress
10. Taking break from digital gadgets to relax our body and give time to family

Conclusion

In a nutshell, it can be said that; the present study not only explained about teacher burnout but also elaborated how the entire teaching fraternity is suffering with burnout during this covid-19 times. The teaching professionals should know the signs/symptoms of burnout and how they can actively overcome the situations to committee themselves in working conditions. There are a number of ways to prevent and deal teacher burnout. The socio emotional support techniques and methods may minimize the issues of burnout relating to mental of health and pedagogical success during this Covid-19 crises. Teachers should make an effort to attend stress-management interventions programmes for a better understanding with their mental health and also adjusting the burnout situations by contributing to the productivity of the organisation. There is a high need of Intervention programs for teachers that can be organised in collaboration with institutional administrators and counsellors to overcome teacher's burnout. Teachers with high levels of burnout require assist in structurally shifting their operational circumstances and mental health status, this article highlights the issues related to teacher burnout and the ways to mitigate it

References

1. Azeem, S.M., and Nazir, N.A.,(2008), "A study of job burnout among university teachers", *Psychology & Developing Societies*, 20 (1), pp. 51-64
2. Bakker, A. B., et al. (2014),. *Burnout and job performance: The moderating role of selection, optimization, and compensation strategies*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 19, 96–107. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0035062>
3. Bartlett, L. (2004). *Expanding teacher work roles: A resource for retention or a recipe for overwork?* *Journal of Education Policy*, 19, 565-582.
4. Brock, B. L. and Grady, M. L. (2002). *Avoiding burnout: A principal's guide to keeping the fire alive*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
5. Cooper, C.L., and Cartwright, S.,(1994), "Healthy mind, healthy organisation: A proactive approach to occupational stress", *Human Relations*, 47, pp. 455-470.
6. Daniels, K., and Guppy, A.,(1992), "Control, information-seeking preferences, occupational stressors and psychological well-being", *Work and Stress*, 6, pp.347–353.
7. Freudenberger, H. J. (1974). *Staff burnout*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 30, 159-165.
8. Hendrickson, B. (1979). *Teacher burnout: How to recognize it; what to do about it*. *Learning*, 7(5) 36-39.
9. Gmelch, W. H., Wilke, et al., (1986), "Dimensions of stress among university faculty: Factor-analytic

- results from a national study", *Research in Higher Education*, 24, pp. 266–286.
10. Gupta Madhu & Rani Surekha (2014) *Burnout: a serious problem prevalent among teachers In the present times*, *Bhartiyam international journal of education & research*, Volume 4, Issue 1, December 2014, pp.1-9
 11. Hogan, J. M., et al., (2002), "Stressors and stress reactions among university personnel", *International Journal of Stress Management*, 9, pp. 289 - 310.
 12. Kahn, R. (1986). *Job burnout: Prevention and remedies*. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 11(1), 33.
 13. Kaur, S.,(2008), "Occupational stress in relation to teacher effectiveness among secondary school teachers", *EduTracks.*, 7 (10), June, pp. 27-29.
 14. Kumar, N.,(2007), "Influence of certain psychosociological factors on the occupational stress among the public and private school teachers of Orissa", *Ph.D. Thesis submitted to Utkal University*.
 15. Lieberman, A., and Miller, L. (1999). *Teachers transforming their world and their work*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Pp. 104, New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
 16. Lowenstein, L.F., (1991), "Teacher stress leading to burnout: Its prevention and cure", *Education Today*, 41 (2), pp. 12-16.
 17. Maslach, C. (1982). *Understanding Burnout: Definitional issues in analyzing a complex phenomenon*. In W.S. Paine (Eds), *Job stress and burnout* (pp. 29-40). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
 18. Matheny, et al., (2000). *Work stress, burnout, and coping at the turn of the century: An Adlerian perspective*. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 56(1), 74-87.
 19. Pareek, U. (1982). *Role stress scale manual*. Ahmedabad, India: Navin Publication.
 20. Pettersson, T., et al., (2004). *The classroom as a stage and the teacher's role*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 589-605.
 21. Raines, E.C. (2011). *A relational study of elementary principals' leadership traits, teacher morale, and school performance*. ProQuest LLC.
 22. Reddy, G.L., and Poornima, R.,(2012), "Occupational Stress and Professional Burnout of University Teachers in South India", *International Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*.(2) pp. 109-124.
 23. Reed, S. (1979). *What you can do to prevent teacher burnout*. *National Elementary Principal*, 58(3), 67-70.
 24. Richard, G. V., and Krieshok, T. S.,(1989), "Occupational stress, strain and coping strategies in university faculty", *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 34, pp.117-132.
 25. Roloff, M.E., and Brown, L.A. (2011). *Extra-role time, burnout and commitment: the power of promises kept*. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 74 (4), 450-474.
 26. Tims, et al., (2013). *The impact of job crafting on job demands, job resources, and well-being*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 18, 230–240.
 27. Trevers, C.J. and Copper, C.L. (1996). *Teachers under stress: Stress in teaching profession*. London: Routledge.
 28. Tytherleigh, M. Y., et al., (2005), "Occupational Stress in UK Higher Education Institutions: A Comparative Study of All Staff Categories", *Higher Education Research and Development*, 24 (1), February, pp. 41-61.
 29. Valli, L., and Buese, D. (2007). *The changing roles of teachers in an era of high-stakes accountability*. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44, 519-558.
 30. Zabel, R.H. and Zabel, M.K. (1982). *Factors in burnout among teachers of exceptional children*. *Exceptional Children*, 49, 261-263.