

## The Burnout Blues: Examining the Causes and Solutions for Teacher Burnout in Education

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**Abstract:** In this study, the definition of teacher burnout, its causes, effects on students, and ways to prevent this burnout were highlighted. In the methodology part of the study, a questionnaire was applied via Google Forms with the participation of 20 teachers from private universities and schools. In the second stage of the methodology, 20 teachers were interviewed and 5 of them were included in the study as a sample. According to the results of the questionnaire and interview, 35% of the teachers participating in the study have stated that they have teaching burnout, but this burnout is a beneficial factor for both their academic and professional lives. Another significant result is that the majority of the teachers feel energetic and that they would still want to do the teaching profession if they were born again.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Burnout Blues, Burnout Teacher, Causes, Effects

### 1. Introduction

Burnout is a common and well-known phenomenon in the education system. It is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion brought on by continuous exposure to stressors, which can have a significant impact on the quality of life and education of teachers. According to research (Evers et al., 2004; Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Küçük, 2023a), teacher burnout can have a number of negative consequences, such as decreased job satisfaction, poor performance, and an increased likelihood of leaving the profession.

Burnout is caused by a multitude of factors, including excessive workload, lack of support, inadequate compensation, and high expectations. Teachers are expected to work long hours, manage large class sizes with few resources, and regularly deal with administrative responsibilities that cut into their instructional time (Farber, 1991; Maslach et al., 2001). In addition, many educators report feeling unsupported by school administration and peers, which can lead to feelings of isolation and tiredness (Kyriacou, 2001). Nonetheless, the nature of teaching necessitates that teachers form emotional bonds with their students, which can be emotionally draining, especially when kids are through difficulties (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). This emotional effort, when combined with other pressures, can result in emotional exhaustion and burnout.

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Teacher burnout has impacts that reach beyond the individual educator. Burned-out teachers are less effective at their jobs, resulting in lower student achievement and higher dropout rates (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This is worrisome in light of the fact that teacher burnout rates are on the rise, with one study finding that 46% of instructors reported significant degrees of burnout (Bernotaite & Malinauskiene, 2017).

It is essential to emphasize that burnout is a systemic, not an individual, issue. The educational system, with its emphasis on standardized testing, teacher accountability, and lack of resources, might contribute to teacher burnout by setting unrealistic demands on teachers (Kyriacou, 2001; Küçük, 2023b). Therefore, addressing burnout requires systemic improvements that target the root causes of the issue.

Many methods to prevent or lessen teacher burnout have been proposed. These include giving teachers with more resources and aid, reducing their burden, increasing their pay, and facilitating professional growth (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Farber, 1991; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Establishing a healthy school culture that acknowledges teachers and fosters collaboration can also reduce feelings of isolation and tiredness (Maslach & Jackson, 1986).

In the field of education, teacher burnout is a significant problem with far-reaching consequences for both teachers and students. Complicated and systemic causes of burnout demand remedies that target the problem's root causes. To combat teacher burnout, school administrators, legislators, and teachers themselves must unite to develop a system of education that is more helpful and sustainable.

## **2. Literature Review**

Many studies on teacher burnout have been undertaken for a lengthy period of time and continue to be conducted now. Burnout is a serious problem that negatively affects teachers' job performance, job satisfaction, and the quality of education provided to children. Fackler and Malmberg (2016) reported that 80% of instructors suffer at least one burnout symptom, with emotional tiredness being the most prominent. It has been emphasized that emotionally drained teachers will not be able to give their students their best performance and will face obstacles in their academic and familial lives.

Utilizing the Hock (1988) formula, one of the early historical studies investigated the causes of teacher burnout. In this survey of 939 elementary, junior high, and high school teachers, respondents were asked if teacher burnout can be attributed to factors such as gender, age, stress, and psychological factors. According to the report, the working environment is the leading cause of teacher burnout.

Numerous studies have revealed a range of causes and solutions for teacher burnout. Complicated factors such as an excessive workload, a lack of support from colleagues and administration, and insufficient compensation can contribute to teacher burnout. According to a study by Chen et al., (2022), high levels of job demands and low levels of job resources were significant predictors of burnout among Chinese teachers. Administrators must emphasize and investigate solutions to this problem. According to this study, once teachers are supplied with the necessary conditions, requests will produce more fruitful results.

It has been discovered that overworked teachers exert less influence on their students and perform their duties with reluctance. The class is comparable to a labyrinth since it has become an impenetrable prison

and barrier. A variety of negative effects are related to teacher burnout, including decreased job satisfaction, increased turnover rates, and decreased classroom participation. Schaack (2020) found that teachers who reported high levels of burnout were less likely to engage in proactive instructional practices and more likely to display negative attitudes toward their students. Even positive student behaviors make teachers uneasy, preventing them from maintaining a productive classroom environment and a solid teacher-student relationship.

In a separate study, both instructor and student perspectives on teacher burnout were examined. Students' acceptance of teacher burnout was explored first. The reactions of the students were unaffected by their age, but there were gender differences in emotional tiredness. As a result of the competitive atmosphere they create, teachers cause student burnout (Evers et al., 2004). In addition to severely affecting their classrooms and pupils, studies reveal that fatigued instructors also have health difficulties. There may be a connection between teacher burnout and mental health problems like depression and anxiety. According to a study by Akdemir (2019), teacher burnout is positively associated with feelings of sorrow and anxiety. In addition, it has been shown that educators with anxiety and health concerns have familial issues.

Not only is teacher burnout frequent in developing countries, but it is also prevalent in countries with high economic and social standards. Among countries and cultures, the prevalence of teacher burnout varies. In a study by Akiba (2017), Japanese teachers reported significantly higher degrees of burnout than their American counterparts, with emotional exhaustion being the most prominent symptom.

According to studies, technology impacts teacher burnout as well. Despite the fact that technology makes the work of many teachers easier, we have seen that traditional teachers encounter difficulties and stress in this area. Although the use of technology in education can increase workload and generate additional stress, teacher burnout is a growing concern in the digital age. Wang et al. (2015) discovered that teachers who reported high levels of burnout were more likely to deploy technology in inefficient or unproductive ways.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also increased the probability of teacher burnout, particularly among those who have had to adapt to remote instruction. In their study, Chouksey and Agrawal (2021) found that the pandemic has generated greater work, stress, and emotional exhaustion among Indian teachers. The reasons for this are the teachers' lack of readiness for distant education, their fear of being disgraced in the classroom, and their lack of past technological device use.

According to studies, the symptoms of burnout among teachers differ by country and by the individual. Teachers who experience burnout may be less likely to participate in professional development programs and perform less effectively as instructors. Lee et al. (2019) discovered that among Taiwanese teachers, burnout was adversely associated with engagement in professional development activities. According to the survey, these educators were cautious and unwilling to participate in any program for personal growth.

### **3. Definition and Causes of Teacher Burnout**

For decades, the phenomenon of teacher burnout has been noticed and studied. It is a syndrome that results in physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion and is caused by chronic stress in the workplace. In addition, burnout is characterized by negativity, isolation, and decreasing personal success. Burnout affects not just

the teacher's well-being, but also the quality of education they provide, which can lead to poor student performance (Smetackova et al., 2019).

Workload and job demands are major contributors to teacher burnout. According to studies, teachers' high-stress levels and susceptibility to burnout are worsened by long working hours, administrative responsibilities, and extensive paperwork. According to a study by Lopes and Oliveira (2020), teacher burnout is most strongly influenced by workload and job expectations. Similarly, Jomuad et al. (2021) found in another study that workload was a significant predictor of burnout, especially for elementary school teachers.

A lack of support and acknowledgment from school management and coworkers can also lead to teacher burnout, in addition to excessive workload. Teachers who feel unsupported, alone, and undervalued are more likely to experience burnout. Social support is a powerful predictor of teacher burnout, according to a study conducted by Gungor (2019). Teachers with lower degrees of burnout were those who received emotional and practical support from colleagues and administrators (Kapukaya et al., 2022).

Yet, the changing nature of the teaching profession, such as the introduction of new technologies and educational laws, may also contribute to teacher burnout. According to a study by Zang et al. (2022), the implementation of new educational policies has a significant impact on teacher burnout. Participants who considered the implementation of new laws as burdensome were more likely to experience burnout.

Furthermore, personal characteristics such as perfectionism and coping strategies may influence burnout. Teachers more susceptible to burnout are those who strive for perfection in their work and adopt negative coping techniques, such as avoidance. Camacho-Morles et al. (2021) discovered that teacher burnout was connected with a combination of high perfectionism and low coping resources.

#### **4. Impact of Teacher Burnout on Students and The Education System**

According to a survey, up to fifty percent of teachers may experience burnout at some point in their employment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Teacher burnout can have a substantial influence on both students and the school system as a whole.

The academic decline is one of the most severe effects of teacher burnout on students. Burned-out teachers may have lower passion and enthusiasm, resulting in diminished classroom engagement and motivation (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Additionally, research has shown that teacher burnout is related to increasing rates of absence and turnover, which can contribute to interruptions in learning and impaired instructional continuity (Spooren et al., 2013).

In addition to academic implications, teacher burnout can have social and emotional effects on students. Burned-out teachers may have less patience and empathy for their students, leading to a more negative classroom atmosphere and fewer opportunities for constructive interactions and social support (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). In addition, research has linked teacher burnout to higher rates of student anxiety and depression, highlighting the importance of controlling teacher burnout to ensure good student outcomes (Hong et al., 2021).

The effects of teacher burnout extend beyond the classroom to the school system as a whole. Burnout can contribute to teacher shortages and turnover, which can have significant financial and operational consequences for schools and districts (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In addition, teacher burnout can impede collaboration and innovation among educators, resulting in a less effective and dynamic educational system (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016).

Hence, managing teacher burnout is essential for promoting excellent student results and a thriving education system. Strategies for preventing and minimizing teacher burnout include providing tools for self-care, creating healthy school climates and support systems, and establishing policies that promote teacher well-being.

Ultimately, teacher burnout can have a significant impact on both students and the educational system. Consequences of teacher burnout include poor academic achievement, negative socioemotional consequences for students, and financial and logistical difficulties for schools and districts. Thus, resolving this issue is essential for ensuring exceptional student results and a thriving education system.

## **5. Strategies for Preventing Teacher Burnout**

Burnout is a significant issue that can have negative impacts on both teachers and students. There are, thankfully, techniques that may be employed to avoid and lessen educator burnout.

Empowering teachers with resources for self-care is a good method for preventing teacher burnout. Self-care is responding to one's physical and emotional needs in order to maintain health. This can include physical activity, meditation, and spending time with loved ones. Providing educators with wellness programs, gym memberships, and mental health services can aid in stress management and prevent burnout (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Creating healthy school climates and support networks is an additional method for reducing teacher burnout. A positive school climate is characterized by a sense of community, collaboration, and support among educators and students (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Contributing to a pleasant school climate include initiatives such as professional development workshops, peer mentorship programs, and regular check-ins with colleagues (Madigan & Kim, 2021). According to studies, instructors who feel respected and supported are less likely to experience burnout (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Establishing rules that prioritize teachers' well-being is an additional effective method for reducing teacher burnout. These laws can include flexible work hours, reduced class sizes, and increased classroom autonomy (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Research shows that teachers with greater control over their educational practices and work environment are less likely to develop burnout (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Moreover, policies that promote teacher well-being can help attract and retain quality teachers, which can have positive effects on the school system as a whole (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

The use of contemplative exercises is an emerging method for preventing teacher burnout. Mindfulness refers to the discipline of paying nonjudgmental attention to the present moment (Conversano et al., 2021). According to studies, meditation practices can lower teachers' stress and improve their well-being

(Hagermoser Sanetti et al., 2021). Meditation techniques may be integrated into professional development programs or offered as separate courses.

In addition to these initiatives, education leaders and policymakers must prioritize the well-being of teachers in their decision-making. This can involve allocating resources to assist teacher well-being, creating policies that promote work-life balance, and respecting teacher input and feedback. According to research, when teachers feel valued and encouraged, they are more likely to be motivated and dedicated to their careers, which can lead to better student outcomes (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

In conclusion, reducing teacher burnout is essential for fostering positive educational results. Offering resources for teacher self-care, developing positive school climates and support systems, implementing policies that highlight teacher well-being, and introducing mindfulness practices are approaches for preventing teacher burnout. It is also necessary for a healthy education system to place a premium on the wellbeing of educators during decision-making. By implementing these methods, education officials can ensure that teachers provide students with the best possible education.

## 6. Methodology

In this study, a mixed methodology was employed to assess the teachers' perspectives and the gathered data. Google Forms was used to create a seven-question survey to collect instructors' thoughts on teacher burnout. In the second phase, face-to-face interviews with the teachers were done, and their opinions were analyzed.

### 6.1 Aim of the Research

This study's primary objective is to determine the causes of teacher burnout, examine the relevant literature, identify appropriate solutions, and obtain instructors' perspectives on the subject.

### 6.2 Participants

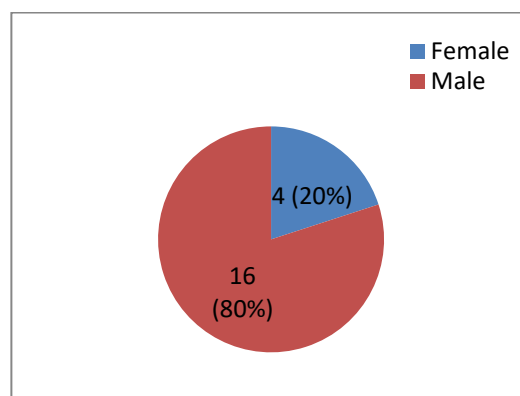


Figure 1: Gender percentage of participants

A total of 20 teachers, 4 female 20%, and 16 male 80% from 2 private universities and 6 different schools participated in this study.

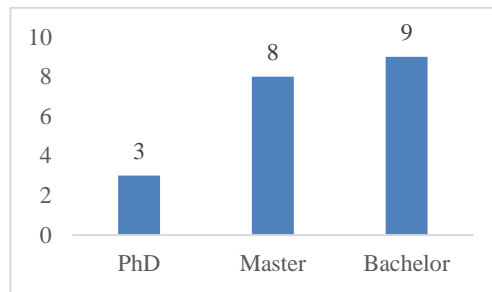


Figure 2: Education level of the participants

20 teachers from different education levels participated in the study. Out of 20 teachers, there were 3 teachers with Ph.D., 8 teachers with master's degrees and 9 teachers were bachelor's degrees.

### 6.3 Data Collection

In this study, qualitative and quantitative data were utilized to examine and analyze teachers' perspectives. Via Google Forms, seven statements were provided to solicit teachers' perspectives on burnout. In the second phase, face-to-face interviews with teachers were conducted to collect and assess their perspectives on teacher burnout.

## 7. Findings

A questionnaire and an in-person interview were employed to obtain the information for this part. Hence, each component has been reviewed separately, as detailed below.

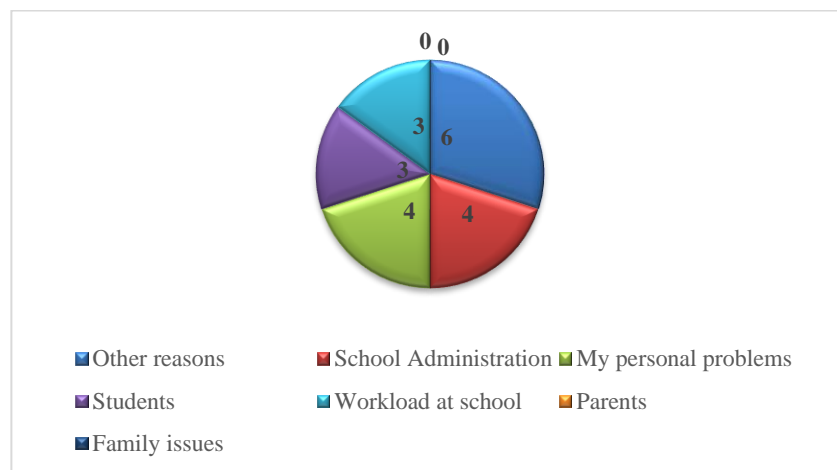


Figure 3: What is the main reason for your Burnout?

Participants were asked, "What is the main reason for your Burnout?" As is evident from the figure, 6 of the participants provided additional explanations. The second and most essential piece of information is that 4 participants reported personal problems and 4 teachers selected school administration. It provides evidence that school administration and personal issues may contribute to teacher burnout. Three teachers



claimed students as the cause of their burnout, while three teachers stated excessive workload as the cause. None of the individuals selected family and parents as the cause of their burnout.

ITEMS	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. I feel Burnout.	3	15	4	20	5	25	6	30	2	10
2. I feel older than my real age.	1	5	5	25	2	10	8	40	4	20
3. I can continue teaching till my retirement.	5	25	6	30	2	10	4	20	3	15
4. If I was born again, I would be a teacher again.	6	30	6	30	3	15	5	25	0	0
5. I feel very energetic.	5	25	7	35	6	30	2	10	0	0
6. I can not spend time with my family because of my hard work.	1	5	4	20	7	35	6	30	2	10

In Item 1, the statement "I feel burnout" was presented to the teachers and their views on this subject were tried to be taken. 15% of the participants strongly agree and 20% of them chose the agree options. This result shows us that 35% of the total participants felt teacher burnout. 25% of the participants were neutral to this statement. The other 30% disagree and 10% strongly disagree. The promising aspect of these data for the future is that 40% of the participants do not have a feeling of burnout.

In Item 2, teachers were given the statement "I feel older than my actual age" and asked to determine whether participants felt older than they actually were. One participant highly agrees and five individuals agree out of a total of 20. 30% of the participants felt older than their actual age, according to these results. 2 individuals were agnostic in response to this question and did not choose to agree or disagree. Positively, 8 individuals selected disagree and four selected strongly disagree. According to the findings, 60% of the participants did not feel old and they felt like they should be.

In Item 3, teachers were given the statement "I can continue teaching till my retirement" to determine if they are satisfied with their work and if they can continue teaching until their retirement. Eleven



individuals selected the strongly agree and agree options and reported that they could continue teaching at a rate of 55% till retirement. Two instructors did not answer and stayed neutral on this statement. Four people selected disagree, while three selected strongly disagree. This developing research indicates that 35% of teachers are exhausted by their jobs and cannot continue teaching until retirement.

In Item 4, instructors were provided with the remark, "If I were reborn, I would be a teacher again." This statement had the capacity to indicate who is committed to the teaching profession, and the outcomes are as follows. 12 of the 20 participants responded affirmatively, indicating that 60% of them would return to the world and pursue a career in education if they could. 3 participants did not express an opinion on this statement. The sad point is that if 5 participants had a chance, they would not do the teaching profession.

In Item 5, teachers were given the sentence "I feel very energetic" and were asked to indicate whether or not they were energetic. 60% percent of individuals reported being really energetic. 6 individuals did not respond to this question and stayed impartial. Only 2 respondents indicated that they lacked energy and were exhausted, and no one selected the strongly disagree option. As a result, the majority of them feel refreshed and energized.

In Item 6, teachers were given the phrase "I can't spend time with my family due to my hard work" to see if they neglected their families due to their workload. 1 person selected the strongly agree option, while 4 selected the agree option. This research indicates that 25% of them are unable to spend time with their families due to their professional obligations. Seven participants remained neutral on this remark, while six opted to disagree. Two people ultimately selected the strongly disagree option. This data indicates that 40% of them have no issues with their families owing to their teaching and workplace responsibilities.

### **7.1 The Analysis of the Interview**

I believe teacher burnout is a severe problem, but also a possibility for professional development. When I am fatigued, I realize it is time to review my priorities. This has allowed me to explore new teaching strategies, renew my enthusiasm for education, and become a better educator overall. (Teacher 4)

I have experienced teacher burnout before, but I now understand how to prevent it. It's all about self-care for me. When I take care of myself, I have more enthusiasm and energy for my profession. Thus, I prioritize things like fitness, meditation, and quality time with loved ones. I can become a more successful instructor if I take care of myself. (Teacher 7)

I believe teacher burnout can be advantageous if regarded as an innovation opportunity. I know it's time for a change when I'm exhausted. Perhaps it's a new teaching strategy, curriculum, or method of working with colleagues. By embracing change, I am able to invigorate my classroom instruction and introduce new topics. (Teacher 11)

I attempt to remain hopeful by focusing on the impact I have on my students' lives despite the seriousness of the issue of teacher burnout. When I witness my students' development, I am reminded of why I chose to become a teacher. By retaining a positive mindset, I am able to overcome difficulties and proceed. (Teacher 14)

I feel that teacher burnout is both a challenge and an opportunity for instructors to interact with their peers. As we share our experiences and provide one another with support, we are able to create new teaching strategies and procedures. By establishing a solid support system, we may overcome educator burnout and thrive. (Teacher 17)

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, we tried to examine teacher burnout in all its details. The factors that cause teacher burnout, how this burnout affects students, and solutions are tried to be presented. In the methodology part of the research, a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews were applied to the teachers working at private universities and private schools via Google Forms.

As a result of the studies, it was revealed that 35% of the teachers participating in the study felt teacher burnout. The pleasing results are that the majority of them stated that they felt energetic and would work as a teacher if they came to the world again. In the interview section, which is the second phase of the research, the opinions of 20 teachers were taken and 5 of them were included in the study as an example. According to the results of the Interview, most of the teachers stated that they had burnout, but this burnout was a beneficial factor for their academic and professional development.

Some recommendations can be made for future studies. The environment of the teachers in the workplace where they work and the help of their administration will be beneficial for them to overcome their sense of burnout. For educators experiencing teacher burnout, applying to experienced people or psychologists will be an effective factor in overcoming teacher burnout more quickly.

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