

Level of Depression, Level of Anxiety and the Stress Level Among Degree Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are professionals who educate students by providing instruction, guidance, and support across various subjects and educational levels. Their primary goal is to facilitate learning and help students develop the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities needed for personal and academic growth. The art of teaching involves a lot of patience, dedication and commitment, it is also required for the teachers to stay calm and composed. Not only does the teacher require physical health but their mental health is also very important. The mental well-being of degree teachers is very important for their effectiveness and overall satisfaction, and it also impacts their students' learning experiences.

Thus this research is carried out to ascertain the relationship between the level of depression, the level of Anxiety and the level of stress among degree teachers. In this review paper, we will try and understand the importance of mental health and its role in degree teachers.

Keywords: Teachers, Mental well-being, Depression, Anxiety, Students, Learning Experience, Degree teachers

INTRODUCTION

Who is a teacher?

A teacher is a multifaceted professional whose role extends far beyond merely delivering academic content. They serve as mentors, guides, and facilitators of learning, fostering intellectual and personal growth in their students. A teacher meticulously plans and executes lesson plans that adhere to curriculum standards, employing diverse teaching methods to cater to different learning styles and ensure comprehensive understanding. They assess student progress through tests, assignments, and interactive activities, providing constructive feedback to promote continuous improvement. Classroom management is another critical aspect of their job, as they create a structured yet dynamic learning environment that encourages respect, curiosity, and active participation. Teachers also play a significant role in supporting students' emotional well-being, offering guidance and encouragement to help them navigate personal and academic challenges.

Beyond the classroom, teachers are committed to their professional development, staying abreast of the latest educational trends and methodologies to enhance their teaching practice. They collaborate with colleagues to share insights and strategies, work with parents to support student development and engage with administrators to align their efforts with the broader goals of the educational institution. Teachers in various settings—whether in preschools, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, colleges, or

specialized educational institutions—adapt their approaches to meet the developmental and academic needs of their students.

In specialized fields, such as special education or vocational training, teachers tailor their methods to address specific learning needs and career skills, providing personalized instruction that empowers students to succeed. Through their dedication, teachers inspire a love of learning, cultivate critical thinking, and help students realize their potential. They shape future generations by imparting not only knowledge but also values and life skills, making their role indispensable in society. A teacher's impact is profound and lasting, as they influence the minds and hearts of their students, preparing them for the complexities of life and work in an ever-evolving world.

Different types of teachers?

Preschool Teachers

Preschool teachers focus on early childhood education, typically working with children aged 3-5. They introduce basic concepts such as numbers, letters, and social skills through play-based learning. These teachers create a nurturing environment that fosters curiosity, creativity, and foundational academic skills, preparing children for the transition to elementary school.

Elementary School Teachers

Elementary school teachers educate children from kindergarten through fifth or sixth grade. They cover a broad range of subjects, including reading, math, science, and social studies. These teachers develop lesson plans that cater to young learners' developmental stages, aiming to build strong foundational skills in literacy and numeracy while also encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving.

Middle School Teachers

Middle school teachers specialize in educating students in grades 6-8. They often teach specific subjects such as math, science, English, or history. Middle school teachers focus on more advanced content while also addressing the unique emotional and social challenges of early adolescence, helping students transition from elementary to high school.

High School Teachers

High school teachers instruct students in grades 9-12, specializing in particular subjects like biology, literature, or calculus. They prepare students for college, vocational training, or entering the workforce by delivering in-depth knowledge and fostering analytical and critical thinking skills. High school teachers also play a key role in guiding students through the complexities of adolescence and future planning.

Special Education Teachers

Special education teachers work with students who have diverse learning disabilities, physical impairments, or emotional and behavioral disorders. They create individualized education plans (IEPs) tailored to each student's needs, employing specialized instructional strategies to help these students achieve their full potential in a supportive, inclusive environment.

College and University Professors

Professors and lecturers at colleges and universities provide higher education to undergraduate and gradu-

ate students. They specialize in specific academic disciplines, conduct research, and publish their findings. In addition to teaching, professors mentor students, guiding them in their academic and professional development, and often contribute to the advancement of their fields through scholarly work.

Vocational and Technical School Teachers

Vocational and technical school teachers offer practical instruction in trades and technical skills such as automotive repair, culinary arts, healthcare, and information technology. They combine theoretical knowledge with hands-on training, preparing students for specific careers by equipping them with the skills required to succeed in the job market.

College and university professors (DEGREE TEACHERS):

College and university professors play a multifaceted role in higher education, encompassing teaching, research, and service. Their primary responsibility is to deliver high-quality instruction in their area of expertise, developing and updating course materials to reflect current knowledge and advancements. They mentor and advise students, guiding them through their academic journeys and career planning. Professors also engage in research, conducting studies to contribute new knowledge to their field, and publishing their findings in academic journals. This research often involves securing funding through grants and collaborating with colleagues both within and outside their institution. Additionally, professors are expected to participate in service activities, such as serving on departmental committees, contributing to curriculum development, and engaging in community outreach. They may also be involved in professional organizations, attending and presenting at conferences to stay current with developments in their discipline. Balancing these diverse responsibilities requires strong organizational skills, a commitment to lifelong learning, and a passion for both teaching and research. Professors play a critical role in shaping the educational experience of their students, advancing knowledge within their field, and contributing to the academic and broader community through their varied efforts.

DISCUSSION

This review article examines the relationship between teachers and their mental health, utilizing secondary data from various research papers. There is a pressing need to address the teacher crisis in the U.S., as teaching has become one of the most stressful professions, leading to high levels of job dissatisfaction and turnover. This crisis negatively impacts students' educational outcomes, and teachers' health, and costs U.S. schools billions annually.

Several key factors contribute to teacher stress: school organization, job demands, work resources, and social and emotional competence. Effective principal leadership and supportive school environments are crucial for teacher engagement, yet many teachers lack autonomy and decision-making power. Professional development often fails to prepare teachers for the job's demands or to nurture their social and emotional skills.

A significant number of teachers report high-stress levels, with 46% experiencing daily stress, the highest among occupational groups. This psychological stress adversely affects teachers' physical health, leading to issues like poor sleep quality and abnormal stress reactivity. The chronic stress experienced by teachers not only impacts their well-being but also the quality of education students receive. Therefore, it is essential to recognize teachers as professionals with personal lives, not just as expert machines.

Secondary school teachers are experiencing moderate burnout in terms of Emotional Exhaustion and lack of Personal Accomplishment, but they exhibit low burnout in the Depersonalization dimension. This pattern of burnout is consistent across various demographics, with both male and female teachers, as well as those teaching in Hindi and English mediums, showing similar levels of burnout.

However, differences emerge when comparing teachers of different subject streams. Teachers in the science stream are more likely to experience higher levels of depersonalization compared to their counterparts in the arts stream. Despite this, both groups display comparable levels of burnout in the Emotional Exhaustion and lack of Personal Accomplishment dimensions.

This suggests that while the overall burnout profile is similar across gender and language mediums, subject-specific factors might influence the extent of depersonalization experienced by teachers. Understanding these nuances is crucial for developing targeted interventions to address teacher burnout effectively.

Secondary school teachers exhibit moderate burnout in Emotional Exhaustion and lack of Personal Accomplishment, but low burnout in Depersonalization. This pattern is consistent among male and female teachers, as well as those in Hindi and English mediums. However, science teachers experience higher depersonalization compared to arts teachers, despite similar levels of Emotional Exhaustion and lack of Personal Accomplishment. These findings indicate that while burnout profiles are consistent across gender and language, subject-specific factors may influence depersonalization. Recognizing these differences is essential for creating targeted interventions to effectively address teacher burnout.

Burnout is usually defined as a syndrome of exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). Exhaustion refers to feelings of strain, particularly chronic fatigue resulting from overtaxing work. Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). Vigour is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence also in the face of difficulties. A sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge characterizes dedication. The third defining characteristic of engagement is called absorption, which is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

Good mental health can help teachers achieve a better work-life balance. When they experience stress, anxiety, or depression, it can have a negative impact on their personal life and work. By prioritizing mental health, teachers can learn coping mechanisms and relaxation techniques to manage stress and improve their overall well-being.

Mental health plays a key role in the effectiveness of a teacher. A stressed or burnt-out teacher may struggle to create a positive and supportive learning environment, which can negatively impact student performance and engagement. On the other hand, teachers who prioritize their mental health and well-being are more likely to have better relationships with their students, be more engaged in their work, and provide a more supportive learning environment.

Ananda (1989) conducted a study on the mental health of school teachers using a mental health scale and observed that fifty-nine percent of teachers were mentally healthy. The development of our country is in the hands of the teachers. Good mental health is highly essential for all in general, particularly teachers. The poor mental health of teachers has an adverse effect indirectly as well as sometimes directly on the

development of a learner's personality. All school administrators and higher authorities should take a keen interest in developing and maintaining the positive mental health of teachers and students.

The COVID-19 pandemic and school disruptions have heightened concerns about teachers' mental health. This study, conducted in February 2021 just before the third wave in British Columbia, Canada, surveyed 1,276 teachers to examine how perceived challenges and systemic support during the pandemic affected their mental health and workplace well-being. Four multivariable linear regression models were used to analyze associations between pandemic-related challenges (personal stressors, workload, safety measures, meeting students' needs) and systemic supports (mental health and well-being support from the education system) on outcomes like psychological distress, quality of life, job-related positive affect, and turnover intentions.

The results showed that workplace well-being was strongly linked to perceptions of systemic mental health support (46% for positive affect, and 41% for turnover intentions). General mental health was most influenced by personal stressors related to COVID-19 (64% for psychological distress, 43% for quality of life). Qualitative analysis confirmed these findings, emphasizing the need for policy decisions to support teachers amid ongoing and future disruptions.

Teacher mental health continues to be of concern in elementary and secondary schools; however, supporting teacher wellbeing is understudied (Parker et al., 2012; Roffey, 2012), particularly from a gender perspective (Bourgeault et al., 2021). Among professionals, teachers exhibit one of the highest levels of job stress and burnout on the job. (Hakanen et al., 2006; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). This scoping review investigates and consolidates the existing research on teacher mental health, leaves of absence, and return to work. Work context and personal factors/family context contribute to teacher stress and attrition and by extension may impact temporary leaves of absence (Pressley, 2021). Several articles report on interventions with moderate success to reduce teacher stress, but no studies evaluated return-to-work interventions (Ebert, 2014; Kwak et al., 2019). The amount of stress teachers are experiencing and the pressure that is causing them to burn out is the most common narrative present in the literature. The review highlights gaps in the literature surrounding teacher mental health, leaves of absence, and return to work and a notable gap regarding the role of gender.

Teaching is one of the most stressful careers, with high demands and emotional labor causing exhaustion and withdrawal (Johnson et al., 2005; Travers, 2001). Chronic stress can lead to teacher burnout. While there are effective methods to measure burnout, research on its causes and prevention is still emerging. Self-efficacy and teaching environments significantly predict burnout. Mindfulness-based stress reduction is an effective prevention strategy, but data on its use in schools is limited. This thesis explores current burnout measurement methods, identifies contributing factors and demographics, and reviews the most effective tools to help teachers combat burnout.

Researchers have increasingly focused on identifying different profiles and the development process of teacher burnout, though longitudinal studies are scarce. This study, using a person-centred approach, analyzed data from 3,743 primary school teachers over three years. It revealed six stable burnout profiles and identified transition probabilities between these profiles. Psychological capital and professional identity were key factors in reducing burnout and aiding the transition towards symptom alleviation, while positive coping reduced teacher ineffectiveness. These findings suggest stable overall burnout profiles, highlighting the potential for group interventions, with individual profiles showing latent transitions that can be targeted through specific resource-based interventions.

This study examines the interrelations between teacher stress, burnout, coping, and self-efficacy and their impact on student outcomes such as disruptive behaviours and academic achievement. The research involved 121 teachers and 1,817 students from nine elementary schools in an urban Midwestern district. Latent profile analysis identified four teacher adjustment profiles: (a) high coping/low burnout (60%), (b) moderate coping/burnout (30%), (c) low coping/high burnout (3%), and (d) well-adjusted with low stress, high coping, and low burnout (7%). Teachers in the high-stress, high-burnout, and low-coping groups were linked to the poorest student outcomes. The study discusses strategies to support teachers for better student outcomes.

Teacher burnout is strongly linked to physical health issues such as headaches, illnesses like gastroenteritis, voice disorders, and physiological indicators of stress and inflammation, based on a systematic review of 21 studies involving 5,267 teachers. Future research should focus on theoretical integration and testing, underscoring burnout's role in teachers' physical well-being.

CONCLUSION

Teachers from school to degree level are all professionals who spread knowledge, teachers are not just professionals but they are individuals with personal life, teachers are individuals who have their own personal life that include their family, their friends, their interests/ hobbies and many other domains of life. We need to value their emotions too, as the teachers also need to have their own time with their mental health. The mental health of an individual is equally important as their physical health.

We need to see the teachers, be it school level or degree level, as human being first and then for their profession.

Teachers are the ones who spread knowledge to the students based on their knowledge and their experiences, they need to have peace of mind so that they are efficient in their teaching. Teaching is a profession where the students are mostly observing the teachers as role models. Most of the time students tend to blindly follow teachers hence its important for the teachers to be very mindful of what they say and do. Every step of the teacher, every single word that the teacher says has a huge impact on the students.

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