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Teacher Burnout: Measuring, Contributing Factors, and Prevention

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TEACHER BURNOUT: MEASURMENTS, CONTRIBUTING FACTORS, AND PREVENTION

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Abstract

One of the most stressful careers a person can chose to have is teaching. (Johnson et al., 2005; Travers, 2001). Teaching demands are high, and the emotional labor of teaching can leave teachers feeling emotionally exhausted, withdrawn, and worn down. Teachers who experience chronic levels of stress can be plagued with what is referred to as teacher burnout. While researchers have identified effective ways of measuring current levels and burnout, the research is just developing in identifying contributing factors and prevention strategies. Self-efficacy is a significant predictor of burnout as well as certain teaching environments. Researchers have identified effective prevention strategies using mindfulness-based stress reduction, however, there is a lack of data in regards to the application of these strategies in the school setting. The research conducted within this thesis examines the measures of burnout widely used today, identifies current contributing factors and demographics that may lead to burnout, and finally, examines what researchers say is the best tool for a teacher to combat the slippery slope of burnout.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Stress is a certainty of life and, at some point, everyone will experience it. Stress can be brought on suddenly by an unexpected event, or it can build up little by little over time. Additionally, stress can be influenced by your environment at home, driving, and while at work. Work stress is common in the field of education. In fact, when it comes to high stress in the work place teaching is noted to be one of the worst (Johnson et al., 2006 Travers, 2001). Teaching is a demanding job, and some teachers experience such high and chronic levels of stress that it leads them to a complete burnout of teaching all together.

History of Burnout

Researcher Herbert Freudenberger first explored staff burn-out in his 1974 research that highlighted physical signs and behavior indicators of burnout. The findings outlined in Freudenberger's work also served as a foundation for the scales within the Maslach Burnout Inventory, which is a tool often used today to measure levels of burnout.

When we look at burnout it seems positively correlated with employees in high stress work environments. Thus, we can gather that burnout begins with stress in general. Chronic stress can have catastrophic effects on our bodies and lives. High levels of chronic stress can lead a teacher to experience teacher burnout which is a syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of feeling of accomplishment in one's work (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Lieter, 2001).

According to the most recent data taken by the IES National Center for Education Statistics, as of 2012, there were 3,747,000 teachers in both private and public sectors of

education. Over 30% of the teachers surveyed were 50 years of age and older, which put them closer to retirement and only 15.6% were under the age of 30. Of the teachers who left the field all together, almost 40% reported leaving for personal life factors, which were not related to school environment or salary concerns. Statistics indicate that are more teachers are leaving the field than entering the field, which could be due to a growing knowledge that teaching is a stressful and demanding field.

Teacher burnout has been on the rise since the 1980's. According to the most recent survey conducted by MetLife (Markow, Macia, & Less, 2013), which surveyed 1000 K-12 public school teachers. The MetLife survey found that 59% of teachers reported feelings of great stress. This is a significant increase from the reported 35% in 1985(Blazer, 2010). When feelings of great stress are left untreated and unresolved, they lead to feelings of burnout. With rates of burnouts on the rise, many teachers are beginning to leave the field of education altogether, according to the IES National Center for Education Statistics latest update in 2013, 8% of teachers left the field the following year. This discord between burnout rates and teachers leaving is a widening gap. Within that gap are teachers who are burned out but still teaching, which can have catastrophic effects on not only the teacher but also their students. Additionally, the 2019-2020 school year has brought even more unique burdens onto teachers and pushed them to the brink of exhaustion. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic schools were closed and teachers were asked to quickly move their traditional classroom curriculum into online models of distance learning. Teachers were forced to put in even more hours than in the traditional classroom setting. According to Julia Rion, a South Carolina elementary school librarian, teachers collectively feel like there is a "lack of community support and understanding of

how difficult it can be to serve children's education, emotional, and psychological needs." (Robbins, 2020) Challis Young, a 31-year-old Oregon high school teacher, stated that in recent years she has seen more than 10 teachers her age quit because of long hours and low pay, going on to say teachers are drowning. These teachers' perspectives speak to the emotional tasks of teaching and little recognition teachers feel they get from outside supports. If we continue down the path we are on of teachers leaving and we don not draw quality, passionate teachers into the field, while maintaining a healthy job force, we can expect teachers to keep leaving the field at a continued, steady rate of increase. Fewer teachers in the field will make class sizes larger. Larger class sizes can lead educators to feel even more overwhelmed by classroom demands. Teacher burnout is on the road to developing into an epidemic if we don't put into place effective prevention strategies. If we don't have healthy teachers, who are able and equipped to do the demands placed on them, our children will suffer great educational consequences.

Definition of Terms

Burnout is a psychological term that refers to a person who is experiencing chronic levels of emotional and physical exhaustion. Burnout often encompasses emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of person accomplishment (Maslach, 2001).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a psychological tool consisting of twenty-two items relating to occupational burnout. The inventory measures an individuals' level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) is also a psychological tool used to measure burnout. This inventory categorizes burnout into personal burnout, work-related burnout, and client-related burnout.

Emotional exhaustion refers to a person who is feeling emotionally worn-out as a result of chronic, accumulated stress. Emotional exhaustion can be brought on through personal or work-related stress.

The term “depersonalization” refers to an individual who is losing a sense of themselves. Depersonalization can also refer to someone with a negative attitude in relationship to their view of work.

Personal accomplishment refers to how a person feels about their career accomplishments. A person who has low feelings of personal accomplishment may not view themselves as important.

Inclusion is a term used to describe classrooms where students of all abilities work together towards learning goals. Inclusive classrooms may include low functioning students who are on an individualized education plan (IEP) with students who are not.

Teacher temperament can be described as a teacher’s nature. Further, teacher temperament includes all the personality and characteristics makeup of that individual teacher, and is unique to each individual.

Emotional labor refers to the task of managing personal feelings while teaching. It also refers to the demand of regulating personal feelings while maintaining professionalism.

The term “coping strategies” describes any healthy strategy a person has identified as a way for them to reduce levels of stress. Coping strategies could include

exercise, yoga, deep breathing, reading, watching television, or cooking among many others not listed.

The term "psychological need" is any psychological based need or want. Psychological needs can refer to relationship needs, dominance needs, and even the need to feel successful.

Mindfulness is a term used to describe a mental state in which a person is focused on the present moment, while calming acknowledging thoughts and not allowing them to overtake. When used as a specific stress reduction technique, mindfulness can be referred to as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

Rationale

Knowing that 59% of teachers had feelings of great stress (Markow et al., 2013) led to the author's growing interest in developing a deep understanding of teacher burnout, including what contributes to burnout and what teachers can do to prevent it. It is a hard hitting truth that this profession causes over half of the people working in the field to get to a state of physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. In order to be prepared to enter into a field where stress is prevalent, further understanding may be the best armor.

Research Questions

In this high stress career what can a teacher do to take care of themselves? What can a teachers do to be emotionally healthy and manage the stress? Further research led me to question, what factors contribute to teacher burnout in the first place. Is there specific environments or personalities that are more predisposed to burnout in this profession? How can teachers be proactive in managing or reducing the things that

contribute to burn-out? Subtopics will include findings on how we effectively measure burnout, influences that impact burnout in regards to our environment and demographics, and research-based ways that teachers can reduce symptoms of burnout once they have begun.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Search Procedures

To locate the literature for this thesis, searched of Education Journals, ERIC, and EBSCO MegaFILE were conducted for publications from 2000 – 2019 and included research conducted in all countries. This initial list of research was further narrowed by only reviewing peer reviewed articles that focused on addressing the guiding question outlined in Chapter 1. The key words that were used in these searches were "teacher burnout," "measuring teacher burnout," and "reducing teacher burnout". The structure of this chapter is to review the literature on teacher burnout in three sections in this order: measuring teacher burnout; factors that lead to teacher burnout; and current methods used to reduce burnout and the affects they have on teachers.

Measuring Teacher Burnout

Measuring teacher burnout has proven to be a challenge to researchers due to the highly self-reflective nature of reporting burnout. Throughout the research there are three primary scales researchers have used to measure burnout within the profession of teaching; Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Jackson, 1982), The Burnout Measure (BM) (Pines & Aroson, 1988), and Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) (Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen,2005). Analyzing the adequacy of these tools will help to better identify burnout earlier in teachers, which can then provide earlier interventions or solutions to reduce the effects of burnout.

A 2007 study conducted by Milfont, Denny, Ameratunga, Robinson, and Merry sought to solidify and validate The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) as a reliable source for measuring levels of burnout. The CBI takes a unique lens into burnout. The

nineteen item questionnaire measures three sub-dimensions of burnout. The firs sub-dimension is personal burnout which focuses on physical and psychological fatigue as well as emotional exhaustion. The second sub-dimension is the work-related burnout scale which focuses in on physical and psychological fatigue related to work. Finally, the client-related burnout scale measures physical and psychological fatigue experience by people who work with clients. Milfont et al. (2007) wanted to determine if the CBI was a reliable and valid tool to examine burnout within the teaching field. Milfont et al. (2007) surveyed 129 teachers from three secondary schools. The median age of participants was forty-one, with seventy-three percent female. Participants had been working in their school for an average of three years. Statistical analyses were performed to determine both the reliability and the validity of the CBI. According to the results, the CBI was found to be reliable due to the high intercorrelations between the three burnout scales. Additionally, the CBI was found to be valid based on an analysis of both construct validity and criterion-related validity. Milfont et al. (2007) research highlights that the CBI is an applicable measure within the teaching profession.

One of the most commonly used burnout scales is the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Byrne (1991) conducted a research study that looked at the validity of the MBI among teachers. The primary purpose of the study was to test the factorial validity of the MBI within the teaching profession and to cross-validate the factorial structure of the MBI across an independent sample outside the teaching profession. 2,931 participants were used to cross-validate the best-fitting factorial model. Bryne (1991) used confirmatory factor analyses to validate the three-factor structure used on the MBI. According to Bryne (1991) the MBI measured elementary and secondary teacher burnout

the best, but was not as strong of a tool at measuring teachers burnout within the middle school environment. Bryne also found that when questions two, eleven, twelve and sixteen were taken out of the MBI, the tool itself improved in validity and reliability. Overall, Bryne's 1991 study solidifies the MBI as an accurate tool for measuring burnout within the teaching population.

Platsidou and Daniilidou's (2016) research takes a psychological view to three instruments, the MBI, the Burnout Measure, and the CBI. Platsidou and Daniilidou's (2016) research provides insights into the best instrument for assessing teachers' burnout. Within the MBI model there are three factors that work together to predict burnout. Emotional exhaustion is typically the first symptom observed which then leads to the other two dimensions of burnout, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Within the BM of burnout there are also three defined areas taken into the measure emotional exhaustion, physical exhaustion and mental exhaustion.. Finally, the Copenhagen Bunout Inventory also includes three subscales used to measure burnout which include personal burnout, work-related burnout and, finally, client-based burnout. All of the subscales within this measure take into account the emotional aspect of each subcategory of burnout. All three scales have one common subscale which looks at the emotional exhaustion piece of burnout. According to Platsidou and Daniilidou, the subscales of emotional exhaustion are highly intercorreltead between the three measures.

All three scales accurately measure a persons' feelings of burnout as they related to feelings of emotional, physical or mental overtiredness related to the person, or work. (Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2016). In contrast, the subscales measured by the MBI assess different aspects of burnout than the BM and CBI subscales. The subscales within the

BM and CBI measures were correlated more closely than those within the MBI measure. The MBI measure is the most widely and commonly used measure of burnout, 90% of the interational studies on burnout use the MBI (Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2016). According to research conducted by Platsidou and Daniilidou the MBI is currenlty the most accurate and reliable measure of burnout because it measures specific asepcts of burnout related to the profession of teaching while the BM and CBI subscales would be good for more general use of workplace burnout.

Factors that Contribute to Burnout

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has proven to be an accurate measure of current levels of burnout; however, in order to better understand how to prevent burnout, we need to fully understand factors that contribute to increased levels of burnout. A 2005 study done by Talmor, Reiter, and Feigin looked at environmental factors (psychological, social, structural, and organizational) that relate to the work of regular school teachers who have students with special needs in their classroom. Talmor et al. (2005) sought to identify the correlation between these factors and teacher burnout levels (emotional exhaustion, lack of self-fulfillment and depersonalization) as measured by the MBI. Researchers predicted the following, prior to completing their study; the more positive the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities, the less they will be in danger of burnout. Additonally Talmor et al. (2005) hypothesized that, high rates of burnout will be found among teachers who exhibit high involvement, taking upon themselves responsibility for tasks in the school and higher grades. The more the teachers get support in the education and treatment of students with special needs from different experts in the school and from outside, the less burnout will be experienced. The larger the number of

students with special education needs in the classroom, the higher will be the rate of teachers who experience burnout. Finally, the more positive the working environment is towards inclusion on the four dimensions; psychological, structural, social, and organizational, the less will there be burnout among teachers. Talmor et al. (2005) then surveyed 330 primary school teachers from urban and agriculture communities both in large and small cities. Findings in this study suggest that teachers who had a positive attitude towards inclusion, and who had high expectations, but who felt that they could not realize their expectations to the extent that the wished, were those who experienced a greater deal of burnout than colleagues who did not have a positive attitude. Background variables that correlated to de-personalization were teachers who had an additional role within the school or who taught high grade levels, such as high school. The study found that when a gap exists between what demands are placed on the teacher and the means to preform that successfully, the result is a sense of burnout. In other words, if a teacher feels they are not given the means to perform their role according to the manner they see fit, it results in feelings of helplessness and incompetence. This is a predicted factor that could contribute to burnout.

In 2015, Williams and Dikes created a study that looked at ten demographic variables and their impact on teacher burnout. The purpose of their study was to determine the relationship between the three burnout subscales, (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment) as the related to 10 demographic variables. The ten demographic variables they looked into were; gender, age, marital status, degree attainment, teaching experience, caseload number, grade level taught, number of students taught daily, number of additional hours completing paperwork, and

finally, teaching assignment. The study population consisted of 215 special education teachers within an Alabama public school system where approximately 30,000 students are served. The study mailed self-report surveys to 215 teachers and packets were collected three weeks later. Williams and Dikes (2015) received 65 surveys back. Although their sample size was relatively small, with only 30.2% respond to the survey, they were able to find common themes among the reports.

According to Williams and Dikes (2015), females were more prone to high level of emotional exhaustion than males, while males indicated a higher depersonalization when compared to females. Age was another demographic that provided insight into burnout, the age group 21-31 experienced the lowest perceived burnout and the age group 42-51 experienced the most significant work-related stress. When looking into individuals who were married compared to unmarried, research did not find any statistical difference among participants. Emotional exhaustion was reported elevated in the group with a specialist degree; however, those with a master's degree reported a high sense of personal accomplishment. When looking into years of experience, Williams and Dikes (2015) did note that this was an indicator of burn-out. Middle school teachers were noted to mark the highest levels of emotional exhaustion and lowest levels of personal accomplishment, while those teaching in a high school setting reported the greatest percentage of depersonalization. Teaching up to ten students a day seemed to be the key number in preventing teacher burnout, with this group having the lowest reported emotional exhaustion. When factoring in paperwork, Williams and Dikes (2015) found that more paperwork meant more stress, which influenced all factors of burnout. Finally, researchers noted that self-contained, multi-disabled settings were the least stressful work

environment. While this research provides a great starting point to look further into demographics, the sample size is extremely small and focused only on special education teachers.

Williams and Dike (2015) noted that self-contained, multi disabled settings were the least stressful work environment in their study; a 2002 study done by Nicholas and Sosnowsky looked specifically at that environment and teacher burnout. The purpose of Nicholas and Sosnowsky's (2002) study was to examine special education teacher burnout and the impact that three separate classroom environments had on their levels of burnout. Researchers looked at the number of heterogeneous student disability categories, caseload size, and the proportion of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities to the total class composition in self-contained classrooms in the middle school setting. Nicholas and Sosnowsky's (2002) researched was guided by questions aimed at identifying things that may affect teacher burn out. Research questions looked into self-contained classroom settings, caseload numbers, and the number of emotionally impaired students within the classroom. The subjects of the study included 77 teachers who teach learning disabilities in a self-contained middle school setting. 14% of the population was male and 86% was female. Participants were given Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) as well as the Student Diversity and Organizational satisfaction survey. Although the sample population was given the entire MBI, researchers focused primarily on the level of emotional exhaustion reported by participants. Nichols and Sosnowsky (2002) found that organizational satisfaction had a relatively large impact on emotional exhaustion. In other words, burnout increased in terms of professional development. Teachers who lack feeling supported through professional development, training, or specializing see an

increase in their chronic levels of emotional exhaustion. Although the study provides great insights into the importance of professional development, as it correlates to emotional exhaustion, the study is a relatively small sample size and only focused on the emotional exhaustion level of the MBI.

A larger study done more recently, in 2017, by O'Brennan, Pas, and Bradshaw, sought to identify the important staff perceptions and school contextual factors that relate to staff reports of professional burnout. According to O'Brennan et al. (2017), "One aim was to identify staff-level variables that are significantly related to feelings of professional burnout, including high school demographics (gender, ethnicity, role within the school and years at the current school) and staff perceptions of efficacy, school connectedness and personal safety" (p. 167). Additionally O'Brennan et al. (2017) aimed to identify school based variables (school environment, and school contextual factors) that influence levels of burnout. O'Brennan et al.(2017) collected data from 3,225 high school staff including teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff. The sample included staff in 58 high schools, across 12 districts, in the state of Maryland. Staff were asked to complete the Maryland Safe and Supportive Schools Climate Survey (MDS3); this survey was developed to measure school climate among staff. Staff provided basic demographics such as age, gender, race, position, and years of employment. The MDS3 surveyed six areas; staff burnout; staff efficacy; staff-school connectedness; personal safety; school environment; and school contextual factors. It is important to note that the section on staff burnout primarily measured emotional exhaustion. O'Brennan et al.'s (2017) research sought to identify two tiers of variables that influence burnout, tier one included staff variables tier two included school variables. Through their research, they

found that at tier 1, staff who were female, white, or teaching (instead of being in a supporting role) reported greater burnout than male, minority, and paraprofessionals. Staff who reported working in their school four or more years had higher levels of burnout than those working three or less years. Connectedness was all negatively associated with burnout. In other words, teachers who reported feelings of connectedness with their school, students, and administration had lower levels of burnout. Finally, at tier 1, staff who reported more efficacy in handling difficult behaviors reported lower levels of burnout. Within tier 2, O'Brennan et al. (2017) found that schools where suspension rates were higher slightly higher levels of burnout were reported. O'Brennan et al.'s (2017) research sheds light onto the importance of support within the teaching profession. When staff feel connected and supported, burnout levels are lower.

While demographics seem to be an important focus throughout most of the research found on teacher burnout, McCarthy, Lambert, O'Donnel and Melendres (2009) wanted to look specifically at Elementary Education Teachers who were in similar environments, note their experience, their stress, their coping resources and their symptoms of burnout. This 2009 study sought to investigate why some elementary teachers seem to prosper in their role as educators, and others, in the same situation, seems to experience high stress, emotional exhaustion, and ultimately burnout. To focus their research, McCarthy et al. (2009) identified two primary questions they wanted to answer; first, is there difference in burnout levels reported by teachers between the elementary schools? Second, are specific individual teacher factors (teaching experience, perceived classroom demands, and the sufficiency of classroom resources for meeting those demands, and teachers' personal resources for preventing stress) associated with

burnout symptoms? In other words, McCarthy et al. (2009) wanted to look first, at the differences between the schools, and next, at teachers on an individual level. McCarthy et al. (2009) surveyed 451 teachers, in 14 different elementary schools within the southeastern United States. All the schools served a demographically diverse community of students and all schools, included a high population of students considered to be living in poverty. Teachers had an average of 12 years teaching experience with a range of 1 – 37 years in the field of education. 3.9% were male, while 96.1% were female. McCarthy et al. (2009) used three primary resources to gather data about the teachers. First, they used the Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD), which analyzed the specific demands and resources hypothesized to contribute to teacher burnout symptoms. Second, the Preventive Resources Inventory (PRI) was given to participants, which is used to measure teachers' psychological coping resources. Finally, McCarthy et al., (2009) administered the MBI, which measures the three contributing factors to burnout. What McCarthy et al. (2009) found was that burnout is almost entirely connected to the individual teacher's perceptions of the stressor and their perceptions of their ability to deal with it; all other factors were less predictive of burnout. What McCarthy et al.'s (2009) research tell us is that we need to dig deeper into the psychological well-being of our teachers on a more personally focused level.

While demographics do play a role into predicting teacher burnout, emotional health is also a factor many researchers seek to understand. A 2015 study done by Kadi, Beyteken, and Arslan is an example of how research aimed to bridge the gap between demographics and the emotional part of teaching. Kadi et al. (2015) created a study aimed at understanding how different demographics can influence a teacher's attitude and

thus influence their levels of burnout. The guiding questions of their research were, " Do burnout and teaching profession attitudes of teacher candidates differ according to gender? Do burnout and teaching profession attitudes of teacher candidates differ according to their graduation status? Do burnout and teaching profession attitudes of teacher candidates differ according to what they teach? Finally, does burnout of teacher candidates predict their reaching profession attitudes?" (Kadi et al., 2015, p.108). Kadi et al. (2015) surveyed 287 teacher candidates. 82.9% were at the undergraduate level and 17.1% were graduate students. It is important to note that special education teachers were not included in the sample. Kadi et al. (2015) found that burnout and professional attitudes did not differ in regards to gender. Graduation did not play a role in the attitudes of teachers but did have an impact on feelings of emotional burnout. The study noted that students who were in graduate school had a higher level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, while undergraduate students had feelings that showed a lack of personal accomplishment.

Research done by Teven in 2007 sought to understand how teacher temperament influenced rates of burnout. Teven (2007) was intended to provide a more comprehensive examination of the relationship among teacher temperament, caring, burnout, and organizational outcomes. This research aimed to answer the following questions; what is the relationship between teachers' self-reports of caring and openness to experience? To what extent is teacher temperament related to teachers' self-reports of caring? Lastly, to what extend is teacher temperament related to teachers self-reports of burnout? Teven (2007) hypothesized that teachers' self-reports of caring are negatively related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and loss of personal accomplishment. Teachers'

self-reports of caring are positively related to extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, teacher job satisfaction, and state of motivation. The only characteristic that was negatively related teacher job satisfaction was neuroticism.

Teven (2007) selected 48 college faculty. Of those selected, 27 were men, 20 were women, and one unidentified who were teaching in a variety of classes at a University in the southwestern United States. Four areas were measured: caring, burnout, temperament, and organizational outcomes. Within those four categories, twelve variables were measured through surveys given to participants. In the area of caring, variables measured were teachers' self-reports; and perception of supervisors. The burnout variables that were measured included emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and loss of personal accomplishment. Temperament measures included extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Organizational outcome variables included teacher motivation, and teacher job satisfaction. According to Teven's (2007) findings, teacher caring is substantially and negatively associated with all dimensions of burnout. Additionally, caring is positively correlated with agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion. From Teven's (2007) research, it can be concluded that the more caring and compassionate a teacher grows to be or is, the higher burnout levels may be. Teven (2007) did note that personality is an antecedent for caring and should be researched as the best predictor to caring and burnout orientations.

Teacher burnout is universal; throughout the United States of America and throughout the world, researchers seek to understand influences of burnout in order to better predict it and prevent it. A 2017 study done in Turkey aimed to examine the

burnout levels of teachers working in special education and rehabilitation centers affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. Capri and Guler's (2017) research questioned 452 special education teachers who were participating in a special education specialist training in various cities in Turkey. Capri and Guler (2017) proposed the following two questions, "Do the occupational burnout scores of teachers in special education and rehabilitation centers differ according to their gender, age, marital status, branch, duration of duty, their perceived fitness for the job, whether they receive support from their colleagues, where they are appreciated by their superiors, or their loyalty to the job? Are job satisfaction and general competence belief scores predictors of burnout scores of teacher in special education and rehabilitation centers?" (Capri & Guler, 2017, p. 125). To fully understand the outcomes of their research it is important to highlight the four research instruments used on participants. The first instrument used is the Burnout Scale-Short Form (BS-SF) created by Pines (2005). This scale consists of ten items with seven grades for each item (1=never to 7=always). The aim of this instrument is to measure an individual's occupational burnout level. The second instrument used is the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Sale; this scale was developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967). This instrument consists of 20 items and a five option range from "never satisfied" to "very satisfied" and focuses on the degree of satisfaction an individual feels within their job. The third instrument used was the General Competence Belief Scale (GCBS); this scale was initially developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1981). This instrument consists of 10 items with a four option range; the lowest score is 10 and the highest would be 40, this instrument seeks to measure how much a person believes they are competent at their employment. Finally, a personal information form was used which

collected participant's gender and occupation variables. The research found within this study was unique among the research. According to Capri and Guler (2017), significant negative correlations were found between occupational burnout scores of teachers, job satisfaction and general competence beliefs scores. It was found that general competence belief scores, coupled with job satisfaction scores, were predictors of occupational burnout scores. Contrasting with most of the research found within the United States, Capri and Guler's (2017) research found that significant differences existed between burnout scores and age group. Their research found that teachers age 50 and above experienced less burnout while those teachers between the 20-29 age group experiences the highest levels of burnout. Capri and Guler (2017) determined that as the duty term and age of teachers in special education increased, they may feel they have become more successful and competent, which reduced their feelings of burnout.

A relationship seems to exist between a teacher's emotional labor tasks and their level of burnout. This correlation is universal to teachers around the world. In 2015, researchers Yilmaz, Altinkurt, Guner, and Sen created a study in which the purpose was to determine the relationship that exists between teachers' emotional labor and burnout levels. Yilmaz et al. (2015) asked, what is the level of a teachers emotional labor and burnout? Do teachers' emotional labor and burnout differ according to gender, marital status, school type or subject matter? And finally, does the emotional labor of teachers predict their level of burnout? The sample was comprised of 41 teachers; 43.7% were female and 56.3% were male. 71% were married, 28% were single, and 1% were divorced. 26.6% were classroom teachers, and 60.7% were specific subject matter teachers. Researches used the emotional labor scale to measure participants' levels of

emotional labor within their job and then used the MBI to measure current levels of burnout. According to the emotional labor scale, teachers showed surface acting emotions the least, then deep acting emotions and finally, naturally felt emotions were shown the highest. This shows that teacher try not to reveal their private problems or emotions within the workplace, and keep a certain level of professionalism. The emotional labor of teachers does differ according to gender, marital status, position, school type and subject matter. Male teachers showed a high display of surface acting compared to females, as well as married teachers when compared to single. Elementary school teachers display more surface and deep acting emotions compared to traditional high school teachers, and more naturally felt-emotions compared to general and vocational high school teachers. In this particular study, Yilmaz et al. (2015) found that when examining the MBI, emotional exhaustion ranked the highest, followed by personal accomplishment and finally, depersonalization. Burnout levels did not differ according to variables like gender, marital status, and positions; however, Yilmaz et al. (2015) also found that depersonalization levels were higher in vocational settings than in the elementary setting. Results of the regression analysis show that surface acting and naturally-felt emotions are the important predictors for both emotional exhaustion and the depersonalization of teachers. However, deep acting does not have a significant impact on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Teachers' lack of personal accomplishment is predicted by all aspects of emotional labor. Aspects of emotional labor, as a whole, explain 7% of the emotional exhaustion level of teachers, 16% of depersonalization, and 15% of the lack of personal accomplishment (Yilmaz et al., 2015).

In 2016, Asheson, Luna, and Taylor worked together to create a study focused on the emotional labor teachers in rural cities in the United States face. Their research sought to understand the spiral of teacher burnout. Although Acheson et al.(2016) only interviewed 5 teachers, the teachers interviewed were all Foreign Language Teachers. Background information tells us that teachers in specialized areas such as foreign language, special education, and other specialties often lack feelings of support from supervisors. Acheson et al. (2016) research answers two questions focused on emotional labor, how, why and to what extent do U.S. Florida teachers believe they engage in emotional labor? And, what are the outcomes and effects of emotional labor as perceived by the teachers who perform it? Acheson et al. (2016) discovered five themes through their research that explained the spiral leading to burnout when there is a lack of community and institutional support. While there were only five subjects, it is important to note that there is rich and detailed data collected from the participants. The insights gained through the research sheds light on teacher's perception of emotional labor, including why they engage in emotional labor and the effects it has on them and their work. "Although the findings of this study are not generalizable to all teachers, they may be transferable to other contexts – that is, the theoretical relationship hypothesized here between a context of lack of support, an unreasonable, and unsustainable pressure to perform emotion labor, and teacher burnout may shed light on similar phenomena, in other schools, communities, and regions." (Acheson et al., 2016, p.533).

According to the research on burnout within this narrow field, we can draw the conclusion that emotional labor tends to be the earliest insight into teachers developing complete burnout. It is then crucial for us to understand the complex relationship between

stress, job satisfaction, and coping skills. In other words, how does a teachers opinion on job satisfaction, stress and their ability to cope with the demands of an emotionally demanding job set them up to be successful teachers and avoid burnout?

A 2015 study completed by Skaalvik and Skaalvik dug deep into looking at the complex relationship between job satisfactions, stress, and coping strategies. The study was unique among the available research in this field because it yielded open-ended interviews as a tool of information the synthesis into common themes. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) interviewed 34 teachers teaching at elementary and middle schools in Norway. The study aimed at shedding light on the following research questions, how did the teachers describe their job satisfaction and its sources of job satisfaction? What job-related challenges and strains did the teacher experience? What consequences of work-related stress did the teachers report? And, what strategies did the teachers use to cope with work-related stress? It is important to note that when random selection was not used in this research and participants were picked for specific demographic criteria they matched such as age, sex, and type of school they were working in. There were three age groups, young (27-34 years), middle- age (35-50 years), and senior teachers (51-63 years). Participants were then interviewed in the form of semi-structured dialogues, each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Interviews were taped and transcribed. Researchers then combed through the transcripts and identified topics and themes that emerged from the information they had been given. Within the area of job satisfaction, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) highlighted four main themes and highlights teachers noted, working with children, variation and unpredictability, cooperation and teamwork, and autonomy. When asked about challenges and stress, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015)

identified six main areas which included workload and time pressure, adapting teaching to students' needs, disruptive student behavior, value conflicts and lack of autonomy, teamwork, and lack of status. When participants were asked about consequences of workload and strains the responses were classified into three large categories of consequences, which included exhaustion, and psychosomatic symptoms, reduced accomplishment and loss of self-efficacy, and negative affect and loss of self-esteem. The final category participants were asked about focused on current strategies they use to deal with the stress of the job. This area could not be broken down into themes, but similarities were found among age groups. The young teachers noted their primary strategy was to work hard to manage everything required of them and be well prepared for their teaching. The younger group avoided using sick time, as they viewed it hurt them and their students. For two younger teachers, they noted that the working-hard-strategy was not working and morphed into the lower the ambition strategy, which still did not seem to work. In the middle age teacher group, middle-aged teachers also reported high ambition and working long hours in order to be prepared for class; however, many of the teachers in this group did utilize sick time as a self-protective strategy in order to recover from the demands and stress of the job. Additionally, two in this group were on part-time leave and reduced their working hours by 20% as a means to cope. Finally, 40% of the senior teachers reported to still have high ambition for their teaching; they noted they actively used short-term sick leave (a week or two) as a strategy to escape from the stress of the workload. 60% of the teachers lowered their ambitions and reduced the amount of time they used to prepare their teaching. They also reported that they exercised or relaxed after work, as a day to day strategy for reducing their stress

and exhaustion. Through all the interviews and analysis of the transcripts, the study indicates that the perceived sources of job satisfaction and stress are the same for teachers regardless of age and experience. However, the consequences of stress and the coping strategies seem to change with age. The younger teachers experienced a heavy workload and held themselves to high expectations, while also lacking the experience and understanding of how to cope with the workload of teaching. Middle-aged teachers shared the same high ambitions and expectations. In addition, this group reported that weekends and vacations were not sufficient enough for recover and teachers were reporting severe exhaustion and psychosomatic reactions. Unlike the younger group, this group did tap into sick leave as a coping strategy to get short breaks from work. Some in this middle age group also sought a workload reduction or asking for partial leave to reduce the demands of work. The senior teachers group were no longer able to work long hours that the heavy workload required. Some teachers tried to alleviate some of their stress by reducing their ambitions. Outside of the working hours, this was the group that reported to utilize exercise as a coping strategy. This group also reported symptoms of exhaustion and even burnout. Eventually this group stated that they have needed to reduce their employment by accepting a lower salary or by partial disability. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) highlight a point that some teachers possess coping skills to deal with the stressful side of teaching.

A 2005 study conducted by Montgomery and Rupp shines light on exploring the causes of stress and their effects in teachers. Montgomery and Rupp (2005) hypothesized that the relationship between stress and coping, as well as coping and emotional responses, has a stronger influence on burnout than background variables. Further,

Montgomery and Rupp hypothesized that environmental variables will have a weaker relationship with teachers' stress. Montgomery and Rupp (2005) conducted a meta-analysis based on 65 empirical studies after completing confidence intervals and correlation coefficients based on various variables on the studies used. They stated, "from the results that follow that emotional responses, personality, mediators, support variables, and burnout play, not surprisingly, a central role in the manner in which teachers respond to external stressors" (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005, p. 483). Their meta-analysis of current studies highlights the relationship between these variables and should guide future researchers to focus in on some of those highlighted influences.

In 2018, researcher Bozgeyikli conducted a study which examined one of the influences of burnout noted by Montgomery and Rupp (2005). Bozgeyikli (2018) wanted to examine the psychological needs of special education teachers and if there was a relationship to their working-life quality. Bozgyikli (2018) hypothesized that there was a correlation between special education teachers' life quality and their psychological needs. Using a descriptive survey model, he surveyed 238 special education teachers, 55% of whom were women and 45% were male. Bozgeyikli (2018) used the Professional quality of Life scale and the New Psychological Needs Scale in order to gather data from participants. The Professional Quality of Life Scale was comprised of three subscales each having ten questions. The first sub scale looked at burnout, the second measured feelings of satisfaction and content, and finally, the third subscale measured compassion fatigue. The New Psychological Needs Scale is broken down into four subscales that measure success, relationship, autonomy, and dominance, which are all described as psychological needs. Based on results, Bozgeyikli concluded that, "as the level of

psychological needs of special education teachers rises, so does the compassion satisfaction level, but burnout and compassion fatigue levels fall" (Bozgeyikli, 2018, p. 293). Additionally, Bozgeyikli (2018) found that as the levels of dominance and autonomy needs rise so does their burnout levels, by 37%. This means that if a teacher is not getting their needs met in that area, and those needs increase, they are likely to start feeling symptoms of burnout.

While psychological needs are a much more personal need, part of psychological needs are social needs. Teachers interact with students often and some of their psychological needs may be met by the relationship they have with students. A 2018 study done by the University of Stanford, professors Taxer, Becker-Kruz, and Frenzel wanted to understand how relationships with students impact a teacher's emotional exhaustion or lack thereof. While a majority of the research is focused around verifying negative influence on teacher's temperament, it is important to remember why teachers begin teaching and investigate if some of those factors work in favor of teacher retention and job place enjoyment. We know that teaching is an emotionally exhausting, however, Taxer et al. (2018) understood that it is important to identify ways that protect teachers from feelings of emotional exhaustion. In two studies, Taxer et al. (2018) examined the indirect role teacher-student relationships have on teachers' levels of emotional exhaustion through teachers' experiences of enjoyment and anger. Taxer et al. (2018) utilized a latent path analysis in study one and deepened their understanding of their research by using a longitudinal design to understand the impact a teacher-student relationship has on emotional exhaustion. According to results, Taxer et al. (2018) found that a high quality teacher-student relationship acted as a shield to teachers and protected

them from feelings of emotional exhaustion because the amount of enjoyment they experienced within their teaching setting increased and feelings of work-related anger decreased.

Research in causes of burnout tend to focus on demographics as well as personality and temperament of teachers. Oakes, Lane, Jenkins, and Booker (2013) dug deeper into this topic with a one-year longitudinal study which examined teacher efficacy and burnout within comprehensive, integrated, three-tiered (CI3T) models of prevention. According to Oakes et al. (2013) the CI3T model provides detailed procedures for designing, implementing, and evaluating school-wide systems. This takes a unique lens to burnout because it focuses in on schools who have strongly outlined supports for teachers. The purpose of Oakes et al. (2013) study is to examine level of teachers' sense of self-efficacy and burnout within schools that implement CI3T models of preventions. Participants within the study consisted of 86 middle school teachers, 67 were female and 19 were male. Teachers taught within one of the two middle schools used. Seventy-three were general educators and nine were special educators; teachers could report multiple teaching areas. The average teacher in the sample size had ten years of teaching experience and 59 participants had a master's degree. The two middle schools were within the same school district and varied slightly in terms of the population served. Oakes et al.(2013) used Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educators Survey (MBI), Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, School wide Evaluation Tool, Teacher Self-Report Integrity, Primary Intervention Rating Scale, and Student Risk Screening Scale to gather data and information. Each participant completed the checklist or questionnaires during an initial meeting. After gathering all the information Oakes et al. (2013) primarily looked at this

as a descriptive study comparing scores from the two schools. Results indicated that both schools implemented all components of PBIS with 93.75% in school A and 95.89% in school B. When looking into the full CI3T model, both schools were at 80% or above in terms of integrity with implementation. Both schools were implementing PBIS three-tiered model of support effectively. Next, Oakes et al. (2013) looked at teacher burnout and efficacy ratings. They compared scores obtained by the teachers in school A and school B, and compared them with the national average given to them by MBI. According to Oakes et al. (2013), teachers using PBIS had a slightly higher level of emotional exhaustion compared to the national norms for overall teaching subgroups. There was no difference between the two schools within their burnout levels. Digging deeper it, Oakes et al. (2013) determined that higher academic degree levels produced higher levels of emotional exhaustion. Conclusively, it was determined that a three-tiered model of intervention may be viewed as emotionally exhausting to some teachers, especially those with master's degrees.

Oakes et al. (2013) highlighted the importance of systemic support through school-wide systems and briefly highlighted the impact of self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy can be defined as, "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance (Bergman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly & Zellman, 1977, p. 137), "or as `teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Guskey & Passaro, 1994, p. 4). A study completed by Brouwers and Tomic in 2000 highlights the effect that a teacher's self-efficacy can play in their level of burnout. Brouwers and Tomic's (2000) research goal was to understand the relationship that exists between teacher reported self-

efficacy and level of burnout symptoms in order provide interventions to prevent and treat burnout among schoolteachers.

Brouwers and Tomic (2000) administered MBI and the self-efficacy scale for classroom management and discipline to 243 participants at two different time intervals, which were five months apart. Structural equation modeling analyses indicated that a teachers' lack of self-efficacy has a long-term effect on feelings of depersonalization and a positive self-efficacy results in a positive feelings of personal accomplishment. Brouwers and Tomic (2000) concluded that perceived self-efficacy in classroom management must be taken into consideration when providing intervention for burnout.

Preventing and Reducing Teacher Burnout

Research in the field of burnout is highly focused on measuring burnout and the contributing factors of burnout. Researchers seem to have a solid foundation on measuring burnout and hold reliable tools to measure the common themes associated with burnout. In the area of contributing factors to burnout, researchers have looked at demographics, psychological health, and professional support as a tool to look at teachers that are at risk of developing burnout. Research is just beginning to shift focus from determining those contributing factors to honing in on preventing burnout in the first place and ways that we can reduce burnout once it has begun.

A common theme within the research on factors that contribute to burnout is the support teachers feel by their peers and administration. In 2017, the International Journal of Educational Psychology printed an article where researchers Langher, Caputo and Ricci sought to understand the relationship between special education teacher's burnout levels and their perceived support and collaboration with colleagues. The purpose of the

study was to understand the potential role of perceived support from colleagues and its effect on the reducing potential of burnout symptoms. Langher et al. (2017) comprised a sample of 276 special education teachers working in the city of Rome, Italy. 81.2% were female teachers' and 18.8% were male teachers. The teachers worked in both lower grades and higher grades. Langer et al. (2017) utilized two instruments when gathering data from the teachers'. Participants were given the perceived Collaboration and Support for Inclusive Teacher Scale (CSIT). The CSIT scale was created in 2015, by Caputo and Langher, and is comprised of 12 items. Each item is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (always). The instrument is intended to evaluate a teacher's perceived support or lack thereof. The second instrument used to evaluate participants burnout level was the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). According to the findings of this research, perceived support has a negative correlation with teachers' feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Opposing that, perceived support is positively correlated to feelings of personal accomplishment. The findings within the study highlight the importance of staff development and guidance from colleagues and administrators within the school environment. It is important to note that model of special education in Italy. Special education teachers work alongside general education teachers and practice a fully inclusive model. The research strongly provides hearty evidence for a need for improving supportive environments as a way to reduce burnout. The research highlights specific needs for those in 'at risk' situations which include, teaching in a school from a socio-economically disadvantaged area, female teacher's with high levels of emotional exhaustion and, lower secondary schools were high levels of depersonalization are noted. A key limitation within the study is found within the MBI

tool. Langer et al. (2015) feel that although MBI looks at the three key areas of burnout, it does not take into account the teacher's proneness to receive and enjoy support from colleagues.

In 2014, researchers Jennings, Brown, Frank, Tanler, Doyle, Rasheed, DeWeese and Greenberg wanted to replicate and verify the result of a previous study conducted by Jennings in 2011. Jennings et, al. (2014) wanted to test to effectiveness of the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE), which is a mindfulness based professional development program that is designed to reduce stress and promote social and emotional competence among teachers and improve teachers' performance and classroom environment. According to Jennings, Snowber, Coccia and Greenberg (2011), the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) is a professional development program which combines emotional skills instruction, mindful awareness practices, and compassion building activities to provide teachers with skills to reduce their emotional stress and to improve the social and emotional skills required to build supportive relationships with their students, manage challenging student behaviors, and to provide modeling and direct instruction for effective social and emotional learning. CARE is an intensive, 30-hour program presented in four, day long sessions over 4-6 weeks, with intersession phone coaching and a booster help approximately two months later. The program was refined during the first year of the IES-funded development grant through an extensive process of presenting, assessing, and refining the program in response to teachers' feedback." Based on the 2011 study, researchers replicating the study in 2014 again predicted that teachers who received the CARE course would show improvements within their general well-being, as well as improvements in efficacy,

burnout, and mindfulness. The study was conducted in a high-poverty section, with a large urban area, in northeastern United Stated. Participants came from eight different elementary schools. 55 teachers were recruited for the study, 90.2% were female, and 53% were white. The group of teachers were all given a self-report and then randomly assigned to receive the CARE intervention or to the wait-list control group. Upon completion of the CARE intervention group, all participants were again administered the same self-report battery. Findings indicated that teachers who received the CARE intervention showed significant improvement in their wellbeing and were significantly less anxious. CARE participants reported fewer depression symptoms then when they began, fewer gastrointestinal symptoms, cardiovascular symptoms, and reported increased positive affect as well as improvements in sleep. While this study aimed at replicating a previous study, it is important to note the small sample size and the highly specific sample size, which only looked at elementary teachers within high-poverty schools, where social and emotional demands may be higher for educators.

The research done by Jennings et al. (2014), in the CARE intervention study, incorporated pieces of mindfulness training and laid a foundation for further research to build upon. From the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, Connecticut, Hartigan conducted a study in 2017, which focused specifically on understanding the impact of mindfulness on teacher candidates and giving them tools to teach their students mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). Hartigan (2017) conducted her research with 29 first year, Master of Arts students who were enrolled to earn a special education license or an early childhood education license. These candidates were of diverse races, gender, and socioeconomic status. Methodology for her study included pre and post

reflections from teacher candidates, journals, student work, and personal interviews. Hartigan (2017) wanted to shine light on the insight mindfulness based stress reduction has on stress management of teacher candidates who teach during the day and attending graduate school at night. Hartigan's (2017) research also sought to shine light on the effectiveness of mindfulness instruction within the classroom setting and the impact it has on the teacher personally. Hartigan's (2017) research incorporated a unique model. Teacher candidates were instructed within their graduate school classrooms on MBSR, each class began with a MBSR exercise, and most homework involved students researching and gathering information about the effects of MBSR. In addition to their graduate classroom experience, they were also asked to teach MBSR to their own classroom students through two given curriculums*, Learning to BREATHE* (Broderick, 2013), and *The MindUp Curriculum: Grades Pre-k- 2* (Hawn Foundation, 2011). Teacher candidates were not only experiencing mindfulness from the student's perspective but were asked to teacher MBSR to their students as well. After 16-weeks of the implementing MBSR in their classrooms and experiencing it firsthand in graduate school, the candidates self-reported on a post-semester questionnaire. Collectively, all candidates made mention of feeling less stressed over the course of the semester and a sense of calmness when practicing mindfulness. All 29 candidates stated that graduate classroom discussion helped them teach MBSR in their own classroom. All candidates also indicated that they saw changes in their own levels of stress and demeanor as a result of MBSR daily practice in both their personal and professional lives. Additionally, all 29 students reported that they would continue to incorporate MBSR in their classrooms as they saw a benefit to students. This unique study continues to validate the importance and

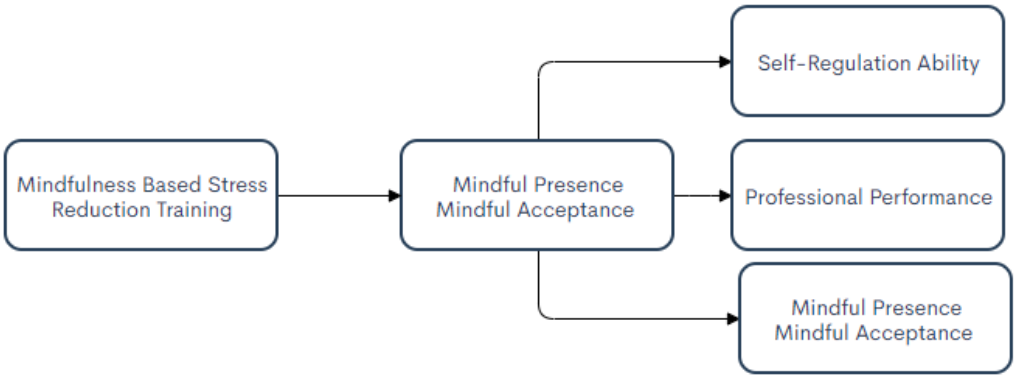
positive impact mindfulness practice can have on a student and teacher. The sample size is rather small and research was limited to incorporating just two curriculums. Additionally, the research did not identify how stressed teachers or students were prior to implementing a MBSR and could also speak to self-reports of feeling "improved".

While research has coined mindfulness as a key tool at reducing burnout within teachers, mindfulness is only a piece of the bigger skill of self-care. Teachers are part of a professional category that is considered a helping career. Research literature in regards to helping careers is vast and it is important to take note of key findings from other helping careers that have decreased their levels of burnout. For example, social work is a helping career which can also lead to burnout. In 2008, the National Association for Social Work issued a policy statement that defined professional self-care as, "a core essential component to social work practice and reflects a choice of commitment to become actively involved in maintaining one's effectiveness as a social worker" (p.269). This prompted researchers Grise-Owens, Miller, Escobar-Ratliff, and George (2014) at Spalding University, School of Social Work, to explore the effectiveness of their self-care curriculum that was in place for all Master's of Social Work students. The guiding question of their research was to determine if their curriculum design was effective at preparing students to enter a workplace where they may be prone to symptoms of burnout. Grise-Owens et al. (2014) implemented three components into their self-care curriculum. Component one was an introduction in which students read brief articles on self-care and participated in a short orientation to self-care practices. Component two was the implementation of skills in which students participated in self-care planning, ongoing check-ins and updates on self-care plans. Additional direct faculty feedback as also given

to students. Component three consisted of a supporting phase in which self –care resources and strategies were given and discussed as well as follow up on initial assignments. While the curriculum is implemented with every incoming class, Grise-Owens et al. (2014) took a snapshot assessment in the Spring of 2014. Twenty-five students completed a five-point scale which asked student to rate the degree in which they agreed or disagreed to the proposed question. Results indicated that an overwhelming majority of students saw the value and importance of self-care. Ninety-six percent of students indicated that the self-care assignments helped them to understand the value of self-care. Ninety-six percent also indicated that the self-care assignments helped them learn new skills for on-going self-care after their master's program. Seventy-six percent of the students predicted that they will be more likely to practice self-care in their ongoing professional practice. While Grise-Owens et al.(2014) looked at students within the social work field, there are many similarities between their work and the work of teachers in regards to caring for another person. The information gathered from this study highlights the impact that self-care curriculum can have on a student and should motivate employment settings to implement this type of professional development.

Research surrounding MBSR is promising and provides a good starting point for the development of strategies to decrease burnout however, it does not provide details into MBSR as it relates to self- regulation and teacher classroom performance. Rupprecht, Paulus, and Walach developed a study in 2017 which investigated the impact that MBSR training had on teachers' self-regulation and professional performance. Rupprecht et al. (2017) assumed that increased skills in mindfulness after a mindfulness training will have a positive effect on self-regulation abilities, and this improvement will

in turn lead to greater teacher health and performance. (Figure 1.)



Rupprecht et al.(2017) asked research questions that focused on identifying if teachers regard MBSR as beneficial. Did they complete the training and comply with the home practice piece? Would they recommend the program? Do those teachers who were assigned to the intervention group show a greater increase in mindfulness when compared to the control group? Did the teachers assigned to the intervention show greater improvements in teacher health, and self-regulation strategies? During the three-month follow up was there a difference between the two groups and finally do the teachers notice changes professionally within their own performance that they feel could be attributed to MBSR? Rupprecht et al.(2017) conducted their research with 32 teachers which were divided into two groups. One group received the mindfulness training while the control group was told they were on the wait list. The mindfulness group consisted of 18 teachers who were all female. The average age of teachers was 46 with the average years of experience being 15. There was a participant in the mindfulness group that dropped out after the first session, stating that she did not have the time needed to devote to practice of mindfulness. The wait-list control group consisted of 14 teachers with 86% being female. The average age of participants in the control group was 50 with 18 years

teaching experience. Rupprecht et al.(2017) used various tools to measure specific things within the study. Tools used were the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI-14) which is an instrument for measuring trait-mindfulness (Walach, Buchheld, Buttenmüller, Kleinknecht, & Schmidt, 2003, 2006), General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) which focused on measuring the well-being of the teacher (Goldberg, 1978; Linden, Maier, Achberger, & Herr, 1996). The Irritation Scale, which is a 12-item scale is designed to capture symptoms of strain resulting from an imbalance of personal resources and professional stress (Mohr, Muller, & Rigotti, 2005; Mohr, Muller, & Rigotti, 2007). The Occupation Stress and Coping Inventory (AVEM), is a 44-item scale that assesses the ability to cope with professional challenges (Schaarschmidt & Fischer, 2006). Self-efficacy was assessed with a 10-item scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1999). Emotion regulation skills were assessed using the Scale for Emotional Competence SEK-27 (Berking & Znoj, 2008). (European Journal of Educational Research, p. 569). In addition to these measures, compliance of mindfulness practices through practice logs, on a daily basis was utilized and completion of the program was noted as well.

Results from Rupprecht et al. (2017) gave a lot of information about various factors of burnout prevention. The mindfulness group had a high participation rate, 52.9% of the group participated in all sessions, 35.3% only missed one session, and the remaining 11.8% missed two or more, mostly due to illness. Within the mindfulness intervention group, participants reported that they practiced some form of mindfulness on the assigned practice days 80% of the time. Ninety-four percent of participants felt the program was beneficial, while some noted it was not for everyone and should only be offered to those open and willing. The mindfulness intervention group developed greater

skills related to mindful presence and mindful acceptance at the post-test, and the three-month follow up, as opposed to little growth in those in the control group. Digging deeper into the information gathered in the mindfulness group intervention, cognitive and emotional strain decreased while the control group showed an increase in strain. Self-regulation greatly improved among the mindfulness intervention group. Interestingly, participants in the intervention showed a decrease in professional engagement and were not working until exhaustion or willing to work to that point; additionally participants were okay with their work not being perfect. Teachers in the intervention boasted huge improvements in their emotional competence. The three-month follow up was conducted during midterm, which is noted to be a stressful time for all teacher; the intervention group sustained or improved all skills while, the control group showed a decrease in their skills. Finally, in regard to professional performance, those who participated in the intervention reflected through personal narratives. Themes that emerged from their reflections included wiser engagement, greater self-efficacy, better emotional regulation and greater resilience. While the sample size is rather small, the depth of the research is notably broad and offers a foundational starting point for further larger sample sizes to be conducted. This study looks at the wide range of areas impacted through the improvement of mindfulness skills.

Another study that looked into the impact MBSR can have on teachers was completed in 2010 by Gold, Smith, Hopper, Herne, Tansey, and Hulland. Gold et al. (2010) recruited local primary school teachers who expressed that they had feelings of stress. Eleven participants were recruited, nine female, and one male. One participant was omitted from the study because they did not complete the post-course data. Ages of

participants ranged from 20s to late 50s. Participants completed three tools to give Gold et al.(2010) concrete data prior to completing the 8-week intervention course. Participants completed The Depression Anxiety Stress Scales, The Global Problem Scale, and the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills. After gathering pre-course data, participants in the study then underwent an 8-week course taught by Gold. The course met for 2.5 hours weekly and included a five hour silent day. Pre-course scores indicated that all teachers were experiencing emotional distress. All scored above the threshold for depression. Eight participants showed clinically significant scores in two or three of the subscales. Gold et al. (2010) analyzed data using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test to determine that there were improvements in depression and stress but, the improvements within anxiety were not clinically significant. The same test was used to determine that participants also showed improvements within the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills. Although the researchers were only able to obtain a small sample size, the information and growth in participants is encouraging and speaks to the effect mindfulness can have. One participant commented, “I wish I’d known about it thirty years ago, I now find time to sit quietly.” Another participant noted, “I enjoy moments now” (Gold et al., 2010, p.187). All participants had positive feelings towards their training and felt that they would continue to work on and implement mindfulness based stress reduction moving forward in their careers.

CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Summary of Literature

Burnout in the field of education is a new topic of research. While some measures of burnout date back to 1982, such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), the field of research surrounding this topic is just beginning to develop. Highlighting the importance of reliable measures, the MBI is deemed the most accurate and effective way of measure symptoms of burnout in teachers and is used in 90% of international studies of burnout (Bryne. 1991; Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2016). Another measure of burnout used within the field of burnout is the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI), which is also viewed as a reliable and valid tool for teachers to gauge burnout levels (Milfont et al., 2007).

Research within the field of burnout has focused on identifying variables that influence levels of burnout, and identifying anything that may predispose an individual to feelings of burnout. Self-efficacy was a term that was highlighted often within the research. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief that they are capable and able to do what is being asked of them. Teachers who have high levels of efficacy in handling everyday stressors of the classroom, such as behavior management show less symptoms of burnout and increased feelings of personal accomplishment (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; O'Brennan et al. 2017). Many schools incorporate Positive Behavior Intervention Plans or different types of tiered support systems for school-wide guidance. These types of supports can influence teachers' efficacy. An important point made within the research is that teachers' perception of outside stressors and their ability to deal with that stressor, whatever it may be, will have the biggest influence on their level of burnout (McCarthy et al., 2009). For example, if a teacher is given a task which is perceived to be stressful and

that teacher also lacks the means to complete the task according to the manner they see fit, emotional exhaustion and burnout are sure to follow. (McCarthy et al., 2009; Oakes et al., 2013; Talmor et al., 2005) There are also a multitude of additional influences that lead to feelings of low self-efficacy. Teachers often feel there is a lack of community support from parents outside of the educational environment, as well as a growing lack of student motivation. This lack of motivation on the students' part creates an environment where teachers feel they need to work harder than the student to engage them in the learning process, which leads teachers to increase emotional labor. Emotional labor can quickly turn into emotional exhaustion which again will lead to a negative view of self-efficacy. (Acheson et al., 2016) Self-efficacy is also influenced by professional development opportunities. Teachers who feel poorly supported by administrators or professional development training show increased levels of emotional exhaustion (Langher et al., 2017; Nicholas & Sosnowski, 2002). A teacher's individual personality will also contribute to how stress is perceived; for example, those who show caring and compassionate traits and strong emotional responses can be more prone to burnout (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; Teven 2007).

Age and experience within the teaching field can also guide us to some conclusions surrounding burnout. Younger teachers often have heavy workloads when first beginning to teach. Younger teachers also hold themselves to high standards and want to do well, while lacking coping skills, which creates a perfect storm for stress to set in. Older teachers tend to understand their role, and have grown in experience while feeling confident in their craft, using coping skills when they feel they are over stressed (Capri & Guler, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik. 2015). Environment was also found to be a

contributing factor to burnout with depersonalization being highest among those who teach at the high school level, as well as those who are in a graduate school program (Kadi et al., 2015;Williams & Dikes, 2015; Yilmaz et al., 2015). A big part of the teachers' environment is their students. Teachers who have strong relationships with their students, and even get some of their psychological needs met by these relationships, will have decreased levels of burnout (Bozgeyikli, 2018; Taxer et al., 2018).

Research on prevention and improvement of symptoms surrounding teacher burnout is just beginning to gain momentum. Mindfulness Based Strategies have proven to be common and widely effective. Mindfulness has been proven to decrease levels of stress, improve classroom management, reduce emotional and cognitive strain, and lead teachers to be more mindful about their stressors while setting healthy work boundaries (Gold et al., 2010; Hartigan, 2017; Rupprechy et al., 2017). Mindfulness can also be included within a self-care plan, which could include practicing daily mindfulness activities, identifying one self-care strategy to do 10 min. daily, or even teaching self-care within the classroom. Including daily self-care can greatly increase overall well-being, reduce anxiety, and improve sleep (Grise-Owens et al., 2014; Jennings et al., 2014). MBSR is a simple tool every teacher needs to have in their toolbox in order to effectively combat and prevent teacher burnout.

Limitations of the Research

To locate the literature for this thesis, searched of Education Journals, ERIC, and EBSCO MegaFILE were conducted for publications from 2000 – 2019 and included research conducted in all countries. This initial list of research was further narrowed by only reviewing peer reviewed articles that focused on addressing the guiding question

outlined in Chapter 1. The key words that were used in these searches were “teacher burnout,” “measuring teacher burnout,” and “reducing teacher burnout”. After only gathering 22 articles that fit within my research question, I went back and opened my search to include articles from 1990-2019 which yielded more research that was applicable.

Overall, the pool of available research was limited because there is not a lot of research surrounding burnout measures or prevention, most studies focused on what contributes to burnout, but we have not developed a lot of research surrounding effective strategies at preventing burnout. Additionally, the research was limited by rather small sample sizes. Finally, the research obtained for this thesis had to include international studies because there is not much research happening in the United States. This is key because other countries may have different educational systems in place that are going to impact the research they are producing as it relates to burnout.

Implications for Future Research

The research surrounding burnout is growing, but there are still many gaps within the research that need to be filled. Future research should focus on creating studies within the United States that dig deeper into understanding how our educational systems impact burnout. Researchers seems to understand things that can lead to burnout within demographics or personality, but the lack of research surrounding burnout care plans or prevention is lacking immensely. Longitudinal, large sample studies focusing on the impact a self-care plan has on teacher’s feelings of burnout would also be key to developing the research surrounding burnout.

Further, self-efficacy seems to be a hot topic in contributing factors to burnout, but there is little research surrounding plans to improve self-efficacy and the impact that has on teachers' levels of burnout. This type of research would be another gap within the current literature that needs to be filled in order for teachers within the United States to really decrease burnout.

Finally, while there is evidence to support that older teachers experience fewer symptoms of burnout, these are international studies where school systems are often different from that within the United States. Research should focus in on conducting similar studies within the parameters of our educational system.

Implications for Professional Application

Teacher burnout affects thousands of teachers every year. Symptoms can begin early in your teaching career although it may not grow into full burnout until you are a seasoned teacher. The topic of burnout is extremely important for teachers to educate themselves about because education could be the difference in a career that burns you out and a career you love and are passionate about. If, as educators, we understand how to identify where we are at in terms of burnout symptoms, also take into account what may increase our odds of burnout, and then be able to put into play practices that will combat our symptoms or prevent burnout from happening to begin with. We can decrease rates of burnout in our field if we work together.

Through research on contributing factors of burnout, teachers can identify if they have any personality traits or demographics that predispose them to burnout (Langer et. al, 2017; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; O'Brennan et.al, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Teven, 20017; Williams & Dikes. 2015). This is key in the fight against burnout because

teachers can build self-awareness and grow in their sense of how their personalities or demographics will play into any symptoms of burnout, prior to experiencing symptoms. With this knowledge teachers will be better equipped to be proactive at combating burnout symptoms before they get to a point of no return. Teachers also will gain insight into effective strategies that reduce symptoms of burnout especially those associated with emotional exhaustion (Hartigan, 2017). From my research, teachers will understand the importance of self-care and the impact self-care has on not only your personal and emotional health but your teaching craft as well (Gold et al., 2010; Grise-Owens et al., 2014). While teachers need to build their knowledge of burnout, the support to grow in knowledge should be supported through teachers' unions. Teacher's unions should advocate for the need to develop MBSR skills for all teachers during professional development days, as the impact of MBSR is profound. (Gold et al., 2010; Hartigan, 2017; Jennings et al., 2014). Unions should also advocate for teachers to be allotted mental health days. Teachers who are able to utilize small breaks from the demands of teaching have decreased their feelings of burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Secondly, teachers' unions should be advocating for personalized professional development, especially for those teachers that are in specialized instruction such as special education. Teachers who lack professional development that is tailored to their craft show chronic levels of emotional exhaustion, which is the first sign of burnout (Nicholas & Sosnowski, 2002). Unions not only need to ask for professional development opportunities but they need to be specific in asking for specialized training where teachers are lacking self-efficacy.

Administrators should also take many notes from the research presented in this thesis. The research on burnout should act as a guide to administrators to imbed weekly MBSR meetings, where they can learn MBSR skills and ask questions about stress reduction strategies (Jennings et. al, 2014). Department leads should then follow up with their department staff through weekly check-ins and/or emails of encouragement to engage in MBSR strategies. Finally, administrators should focus professional development around classroom management and behavior inventions to build self-efficacy (Browers & Tomic,2000). Administrators should understand that burnout is preventable and with the support of administrators, teachers are going to be more likely to engage in mindfulness activities or other self-care strategies.

Conclusion

Teacher burnout is experienced by many, researchers have identified tools that are effective at measuring burnout including the MBI, and the CBI as the primary reliable tools. Researchers have also identified a multitude of factors that contribute to burnout including, self-efficacy, age and experience, classroom environment factors and personality factors. Conclusively, mindfulness based stress reduction had proven to have the biggest impact on combating and preventing burnout for all teachers.

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