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TEACHER BURNOUT
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BY
MICHELLE L. MILLER

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TEACHER BURNOUT

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Abstract

Every year thousands of teachers across the world leave the classroom due to teacher burnout. Teacher burnout syndrome is the emotional and physical exhaustion originating from excessive job stress. Burnout originates from excessive workloads, toxic environments, student behaviors, lack of autonomy, or being under an administrations microscope. Mounting stress causes teachers to feel undervalued and unsupported. Burnout causes health issues in teachers ranging from anxiety and depression to cardiovascular diseases and/or death. This thesis reviews published literature focused on teacher burnout and effective programs to address teacher stress. Implementing effective programs to address teacher stress results in healthier staff, reduced burnout, and increased teacher retention.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Currently, from 19 to 30% of new teachers leave the profession each year due to teacher burnout. This is startling when prior to 2019, only 8% of teachers left the classrooms (Pressley, 2021). Retirement, relocation, or becoming a stay-at-home parent used to be primary reasons that teachers left schools. Today, teacher burnout is one of the leading causes for teachers to leave a school, and the profession, regardless of years of experience.

Teacher burnout has existed for years and is experienced in cultures worldwide. Teachers, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, or years of experience can suffer from this debilitating syndrome. Teachers who have experienced burnout have reported feeling that lessons they prepared are no longer valued, student relationships are in jeopardy, curriculum is dictated by school districts, the support from administrators is lacking, and they are both physically and mentally exhausted. Teachers no longer feel a sense of accomplishment and they have nothing more to give. Burnout is primarily measured by the results of the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educator Survey (MBI-ES) which measures emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments. A higher score results in a greater likelihood of burnout (Camacho, et al., 2021). When symptoms are left untreated, teacher burnout manifests in health issues like depression, chronic insomnia, and the possible increase in cardiovascular diseases, (Prokopv et al., 2020).

Each school year teacher job demands change and increase. While remaining the protectors of children and guardians of future leaders. Teachers are no longer just the instructor of lessons. They now serve as social workers, therapists, nurses, parents, the good and bad guys, and the scapegoats when someone needs to be blamed. They are the first in the line of fire when

it comes to parent disagreements, and the first ones to be blamed when test scores do not meet district standards.

Each school is different. Some differences are apparent such as staff, hours, locations. Others are not so visible. School environments, classroom management and administrative leadership can be antecedents when considering teacher burnout. Friedman (1991) examined organizational characteristics in 78 schools to determine if there was a correlation with teacher burnout. He divided the schools into two groups representing low- and high- teacher burnout schools.

When teachers were not given a voice to teach what they felt necessary for the world today, and their jobs are mandated by test scores, stress was greater. When teachers were observed and told that they were not good enough and felt helpless with the fight, high stress resulted. In a high burnout school, teachers who suffered from emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and less personal accomplishment had symptoms of burnout. On the contrary, when classrooms were noisy, kids ran in the hallways and left paper on the floor, the environment had lower stress. Teachers in low stress schools felt valued and were not test-score-focused but were centered on achievement. Teachers who experienced encouraging school climates and were treated as dependable leaders felt less stress and showed reduced burnout (Friedman, 1991).

During the Covid 19 lockdown months, teachers were forced to change the way they taught. This brought on new challenges for teachers. Lessons were recreated to be comprehensive, understandable, fresh, and entertaining enough to keep students online for the duration of the class. The days were long and stressful. Each day brought new challenges from students, parents, and school leaders. The perceived value of teachers changed during this time.

Parents no longer saw them as heroes. They were zeros. Many parents thought that they could do the job better. Many thought that teachers should not be paid to sit at home and teach. They felt teachers should be in the classroom teaching regardless of the health risks. Teachers felt defeated, worthless, and exhausted. Kumawat (2020) noted over 29% of teachers felt moderate to high levels of stress during online teaching. In addition, teachers reported that 45% felt moderate to high levels of emotional exhaustion and 36% felt moderate to high levels of depersonalization.

Online learning is not the only time that teachers have indicated increased levels of stress leading to burnout. Teachers who work in inclusive schools also have reported elevated levels of stress, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Candeias et al., 2021). School districts often expect that general education and special education teachers will collaborate so that students with disabilities will flourish. The teams strive to see student strengths, and work together to help them succeed in school and out. Teaching children with disabilities is different from teaching general education students. Specialized techniques and strategies are implemented. Teaching and learning do not follow the same pace and are not delivered in the same way. Behaviors can be more significant than of the peer counterparts. Teachers who open themselves to being vulnerable in teaching experience stress. Candeias et al. (2020) noted that teachers unable to use coping strategies to calm themselves during stressful situations in inclusive classroom will suffer from burnout.

The objective of this thesis was to look at teacher burnout, the factors associated with burnout, and what school districts and administrators can do to help staff implement programs to reduce teacher burnout. Teachers working in school districts around the world continue to suffer from burnout. Without measures to address this phenomenon, burnout will continue to be a significant reason for teacher attrition.

Burnout has always been synonymous with tiredness. Burnout, a more readily used word in recent years, is well known among teachers regardless of age and experience. As a special education teacher working with children with disabilities for the last 12 years, I have experienced inclusive learning and online teaching. This topic has importance for all educators. Many times, we hear “I am not sure how much longer I can do this.” “I had to miss my prep to take care of student behaviors.” “You cannot have the time off without a substitute. It is your responsibility to find a substitute before asking for the day off.” “I do not feel safe here anymore.” I have felt or experienced one or more of these situations. I have felt the emotional and physical exhaustion that teachers feel. I have felt that my work was not valued, that I was not valued as a teacher. I have not felt respected as a teacher. Teachers work hard to inspire students to learn and succeed, yet there are a lot of people who feel empowered to critique how the job is done. Teacher burnout is often not addressed until it is too late. Teacher burnout needs to be brought to the forefront of school districts each school year with administrative plans to implement to keep staff mentally and physically healthy to teach successfully. Teacher burnout is an expensive syndrome that steals great educators from the classrooms via resignations and has cost up to 2.2 billion dollars annually as a result Taylor et al., (2021).

Mindfulness-Based Intervention strategies are used all over the world for teachers who experience greater stress levels due to job pressures. When strategies are not used or are used ineffectively, stress increases, and teachers suffer from burnout. Mindfulness has been a strategy used for people to focus in the moment without judgment or prejudice thinking. Used correctly, mindfulness thinking has calmed the minds and bodies of those in stressful situations (Garner et al., 2018). The interventions have helped teachers cope with stressful situations via using different techniques that included breathing, journaling, colouring, etc., ~~to calm~~. When used

properly and effectively, mindfulness-based interventions are beneficial. Understanding and using the techniques has provided new teachers the resilience needed when dealing with stressful situations. After resilience had been built, new teachers were more likely to manage the stressors and continue teaching (Garner et al., 2018).

This thesis is a literature review considering research information addressing teacher burnout. It examines what teacher burnout is and how a teacher may succumb to this syndrome. The research also describes what happens to the body, mentally, physically, and psychologically once the teacher syndrome symptoms have begun. Finally, the research delves into different strategies used by different school districts that have provided teachers relief and taught them resilience.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Search Procedures

To find the literature and information for this thesis the following sites were searched: Academic Search Premier, ERIC (EBSCOhost), Proquest Education Journals, Education Journals, and PsycINFO. The studies were conducted 2009 to 2022. The key words were used to aid in finding research on this topic included: “teacher burnout”, “teacher stress”, “burnout”, “stress”, “health”, “manifestations”, “mental health”, “mentally”, “physical”, “physical health”, “physically”, “psychological health”, “psychological”, “anxiety”, “teacher anxiety”, “colouring”, “mindfulness-based intervention”, “mindfulness”, “occupational stress”, “teaching”, “negative mood regulation”, “coping”, “job satisfaction”, “special education”, “special education teachers”, “teacher efficacy”, “student behaviors”, “well-being”, “depression”, “symptoms”, “stressors”, “educators”, “retention”, “attrition”. This chapter will review the literature on teacher burnout in three sections: What is Teacher Burnout; Teacher Burnout and the Body; and Teacher Burnout Prevention Strategies.

A. What is Teacher Burnout

Chronic Work Stress and Depressive Symptoms

Stress has become a part of a teacher’s daily regimen. Teachers have found themselves dealing with chronic work stress that can wreak havoc on their lives. The Steinhardt (2011) study was designed to show the correlation between chronic work stress and depression among the study participants.

When a teacher felt that their personal goals were no longer attainable, the lessons did not teach the students, the needs of the students were no longer met, the sense of accomplishment left, and alienation had begun, so began chronic work stress. The resulted feelings were

manufactured dissatisfaction and fatigue, which created greater health problems (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

The University of Texas mailed information packets to 170 award winning recipients. The packet included a survey to complete and five other survey packets for teacher to share with colleagues who represented a variety of experiences and abilities. The 267 returned surveys were primarily from women (75%) with an average age of 45 years and teaching experience averaging 18 years. Twenty-two percent of the participants had received the prestigious Teaching Excellence Award from the University of Texas (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

Several factors contribute to chronic stress and burnout. The participants completed three different surveys to help the researchers find answers. One of the first surveys completed was a modified version of the Teacher Stress Inventory. This examined perceived chronic work stress, the exposure, duration, and the stress significance. Participants completed the survey using a 5-point Likert scale that scored stressful situations experienced during the current school year. The teachers then completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) that measured levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. Higher scores indicated the greater the probability of burnout symptoms. Finally, the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) was completed. This scale measured participants depressive symptoms that included: depressed mood, feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness, loss of appetite, and restless sleep from various situations over the past week (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

The discussion of the data led the researchers to conclude links between chronic work stress and depressive symptoms which resulted in burnout syndrome. Although stress had been related to each of the burnout components, researchers recognized the importance of the unbearable amounts of stress teachers had faced, the emotional void for students, colleagues, and

families. Depersonalization used as a coping mechanism to survive is unhealthy. Steinhardt et al. (2011), concluded that interventions need to be used in schools for teachers to reduce their burnout and depressive symptoms. The interventions should not only teach others how to identify the symptoms but define how to successfully intervene with the symptoms and provide support to staff (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

Factors Contributing to Teacher Burnout

Each school year brings a new set of challenges. The 2020-2021 school year drastically changed the previous teaching methodology. Covid-19, a respiratory virus, resulted in a global pandemic forcing quarantine for the citizens of most countries, including the United States. In an effort to continue to provide students uninterrupted learning many schools implemented distance learning where students learned from their home via technology. There were new teaching guidelines, classroom routines, and job expectations. All these challenges brought forth great demands for teachers.

After COVID-19 the teachers who left leaving teaching increased from 19 to 30%. This was a startling comparison when prior to the pandemic teachers left the profession at rates close to 8%. School districts were short-staffed and as few teachers scrambled to do the work of man (Pressley, 2021).

The goal of the Pressley (2021) study was to provide awareness of the impact that teaching during COVID-19 had on teacher burnout. This study consisted of 359 U.S. Kindergarten through 12th grade teachers who taught for at least one month during the 2019-2020 school year. The participants completed an electronic survey with five different scales that included the COVID Anxiety Scale (CAS). The questionnaire asked five questions about how

often the participants had experienced stress or anxiety due to COVID-19 over the last two weeks, (Pressley, 2021).

The survey findings indicated that at least 45% of teachers experienced mild to significant stress, anxiety, or burnout levels. The areas of concern were teaching online, anxiety about communicating with parents, and administrative support (Pressley, 2021).

The pandemic created multiple stressors for those who returned to teaching following quarantine. Although there has not yet been a lot of research published on teaching during the pandemic, this author felt it was necessary to continue studies to assure that teachers felt supported during the uncertain times. Based on the results of the study, Pressley made the following recommendations regarding anxiety: school districts should provide online support so that teachers under stress can share and can talk through their feelings. School districts need to address and continue focused self-care for their staff to encourage healthy living and combat stress/anxiety and build teacher resilience. And finally, school districts need to provide support for teachers who are on the frontline and take the brunt of criticisms from parents. Districts need to be better prepared with aid for parents and support for parents, (Pressley 2021).

Teacher Stress and Burnout

Burnout looks different for everyone. Burnout can lead to emotional and physical distress. It can also lead teachers to leave the profession that they once loved. The purpose of this study was to find the correlation between a person's mood and their response to occupational stress.

Mearns and Cain (2003) stated stress and burnout have been a subject of interest for many years. Teachers experience a variety of factors daily that can increase their stress levels, including "interpersonal demands, diversity of tasks required, lack of professional recognition,

discipline problems, lack of support, workloads, timelines, and the abundance of paperwork” (p. 71-72). These factors along with teacher reactions determine the impact on both teacher emotional and physical states.

Mearns and Cain (2003) evaluated Rotter’s Negative Mood Regulation (NMR) Expectancies Social Learning theory that states that how a person perceives an experience determines their mental and physical state. The researchers hypothesized that a person with a stronger NMR (a more positive person) would feel more confident handling daily challenges. They would not feel the stress, but they would remain positive. A person with a lower NMR (a more negative person) would feel inept and ineffective. Thus, low NMR individuals would more likely suffer from burnout.

This study included 86 primary and secondary school teachers (65 female and 21 male) from six different schools. Teachers had from one to 43 years teaching experience. Participants were solicited at teacher staff meetings. To increase survey participation, participants names were put in a random drawing for a gift certificate (Mearns and Cain 2003).

Each participant was asked questions about coping, burnout, and distress in their jobs. A number of questions representing each category were included in the survey based on a point scale. When the results were calculated, it was determined that there was a moderate to high correlation between teacher stress and how a person coped with various situations. Those with lower NMR ability scores experienced greater feelings of burnout and inadequacy. Those with higher NMR ability scores positively reacted to stress and were able to soothe themselves. The results of the study confirmed the importance of routinely considering the effects of teacher stress (Mearns and Cain 2003).

Mearns and Cain (2003) stated that there were limitations to the study. The study provided the opportunity for participants to complete the surveys independently. “Thus, one can make inferences concerning the causal direction of relationships observed between variables.” They indicated that the survey was only given once and that additional attempts may have provided them with different results. “Despite some shortcomings, this study echoed previous research suggesting the importance of occupational stress of teachers as a factor relating to their levels of burnout and stress.” They also determined that the evidence showed that teachers with stronger NMR scores were more adaptive and able to use their coping strategies when faced with negative situations that would lead to stress and burnout (Mearns and Cain 2003).

Burnout Syndrome Among Teachers

Prokopov et al. (2020), claimed that burnout syndrome was a modern teacher’s disease because it was found primarily in teachers. While burnout is found in other professions, the teaching profession has been the most commonly linked. Burnout is not the same for everyone. Teachers have symptoms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement but will vary in the severity. If left untreated, teacher burnout has led to mental and physical health issues like depression, chronic insomnia, and possible increased cardiovascular diseases which has caused teachers to leave the profession. The Prokopov et al. (2020) study analyzed 251 teachers from Bulgarian Schools on the mental, physical, and emotional states of teacher burnout.

The participants ranged in age from 25 to 65 years and teaching experience from five to 15 years. Prokopov et al. (2020) used several tools to measure the hypothesis. Each participant completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory that measured the common aspects of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement. The survey participants also

completed questionnaires about personal characteristics, psychological climates, physiological tests that measured breathing, heart rate, etc., and finally the Gerald S. Greenberg Test measured the participants stages of burnout syndrome from the honeymoon stage to critical stage (Prokopov et al., 2020).

The data reviewed determined that Bulgarian teachers had indicators of burnout syndrome. It was noted that 37% of the surveyed teachers suffered from high emotional exhaustion, 35% experienced depersonalization, and a staggering 49% accepted moderate personal achievement in their profession (Prokopov et al., 2020, p. 320-321). The findings were disturbing for professionals that endured the heavy workloads, student behaviors, and lacked support. The numbers indicated the participants suffered from burnout syndrome which affected the instruction for students and the health of the teachers. School administrators need to be aware of the health dangers experienced by teachers and institute procedures and policies that positively support teachers mental, physical, and emotional health (Prokopov et al., 2020).

Burnout in Urban Teachers

Teachers in urban schools have the same educational preparation as rural area teachers. The differences in their experiences can often be alarming. Between one to two percent of urban teachers experienced high levels of job stress in a typical school year. Daily demands placed on teachers are numerous and include motivating students, classroom management, increased workloads with restricted timelines, role confusion, and poor interpersonal relationships. When stressful aspects of work become too overwhelming teachers may suffer from emotional or mental ailments and end up leaving the profession no matter how long they had invested in a teaching career (Camacho, et al., 2021).

The aim of this study was to examine the social and emotional experiences of urban teachers. The study included 162 participants, of which 152 were female and 10 were male. The only criteria for the participants were that they had one year of teaching experience and had a national teaching certification. The participants were recruited from an online study through a graduate school of education looking for teachers who had experience working in urban schools. An urban school was defined as a school located in a county with a population of 200,000 or more (Camacho, et al., 2021).

Each participant in the study completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES) to measure burnout. This survey was divided into three different subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments. From data analysis researchers determined the degree of participant fatigue, drainage of emotions, and negative or positive feelings. The participants also completed the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale. This scale measured confidence and how participants coped with various situation stressors (Camacho et al., 2021).

The results of the study specified that there were multiple stress predictors, indicating that teachers experienced many events in the day that could be antecedents to burnout or other health-related issues. Many of the predictors were unable to be controlled by teachers such as “things that needed to be handled by the administration” or “supporting student needs when there was only the teacher in the classroom.” Other predictors were internal or physiological, “my anxiety rises, I have to consciously tell myself to take deep breaths to remain calm and walk away” or “I feel sick to my stomach at the start of the day because I'm dreading what will happen” (Camacho et al., 2021, p. 1823). Although burnout research is ongoing, researchers need to continue to look at the antecedents and promote social-emotional support for teachers (Camacho, et al., 2021).

Burnout Among Senior Teachers

Burnout is the constant and negative thought pattern faced by teachers. Daily stress examples for teachers include workloads, student behaviors, the absence of relationships with students, parents, other teachers, and administration. Teachers are also reminded that workplace demands have changed over the years. Teachers are no longer just teachers. They are social workers, therapists, doctors, the “good guy” and the “bad guy.” These work-based stressors (burnout) can change and affect the way a person acts, thinks, works, and lives. If left untreated or uncared for, burnout can lead to full-on exhaustion, mental and physical fatigue, lack of motivation at work and at home, and reduced self-efficacy (Van Droogenbroeck et al. 2014).

Older teachers who are experiencing burnout resign in exchange for early retirement, change of career, or for health reasons. Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014) explored this theory by conducting a study with 1,978 Flemish teachers. The study focused on teachers who ranged in age from 45-65 years (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014).

Surveys were sent to the participants through the mail. The first assessment participants completed was a burnout questionnaire. Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014) followed the Dutch version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) that asked questions about emotional exhaustion and feelings. The assessment was scored using a Likert scale of 0 to 7 (0 = never and 7 = every day). A greater score on the Likert scale indicated a higher level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization of participants. Participants were also asked to complete a questionnaire about interpersonal relationships with students, colleagues, and their supervisors. The questionnaire also used the Likert scale with a scale of 0 to 5 (0 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Participants scoring higher on the Likert scale were more likely to experience more positive relationships (p. 103). Questionnaires included information regarding professional

independence, support with policy changes, inquiries about workloads and non-workload duties. These were also scored on a 5-point Likert scale. A score of zero represented extremely positive and a score of five was extremely negative (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014).

The Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014) researchers found a link between senior teachers and burnout. Although workload and non-workload duties scored relatively low in relationship to burnout, when looking at interpersonal relationships, the findings were different. The senior teachers indicated that interpersonal relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and administration were important. If relationships were positive there was less likelihood of burnout. Likewise, if there were negative relationships and lack of support the probability of exhaustion, depersonalization, feeling a lack of personal accomplishment was very high. Therefore, the potential for burnout was extremely high (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014).

The senior teachers brought other areas of stress to light. They noted that they were often expected to be experts in areas they knew little or nothing about. They specified that one great stressor was having to be “accountable at all times,” and “prove their competence.” These expectations gave them a great sense of inadequacy and reduced self-confidence, thus creating unnecessary stress and producing additional factors related to burnout (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014).

Profiles of Teacher Stress

Teachers who experienced stress and burnout may not be able to function effectively in their non-work lives as well as their work lives. Teachers are responsible for providing students with proper education. The Herman et al. (2017) study considered the correlation between teacher burnout and student educational outcomes. Researchers analyzed teacher self-efficacy, stress, burnout, and coping. The participants in this study included both teachers and students;

121 teachers (95 females and 26 males with an average of 11 years of teaching experience) and 1817 students in grades kindergarten through fourth from nine different elementary schools. The participants participated in either a study that continued over a three-year period or participated in a study that focused on classroom data for the duration of one school year.

A random selection of 51 teachers in the study were assigned to intervention groups that focused on student behaviors and effective classroom management (Herman, K. C., et al., 2018).

All teachers completed a self-measuring packet to assess their feelings and levels of self-efficacy, burnout, stress, and coping strategies. Students were assessed for academic achievement by completing the reading and math subtests of the Woodcock-Johnson IIV (WJ III), (p. 92). As the study continued, all teachers were asked to complete the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI measured levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Along with the completion of the MBI assessment, teachers were asked questions about stress, how stressful they felt their job was, and how they coped with their stress. Using a Likert scale from 0-10 (0=not stressful to 10=very stressful) the teachers answered multiple questions and professed their feelings. Likewise, with the stress and coping questionnaires, the teachers completed the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) which measured confidence and abilities regarding student engagement, instructional performance, and behavioral management. This was also measured using a Likert scale from 0 to 9 (0=nothing to 9=a great deal) (Herman, K. C., et al., 2018).

Teachers assigned to the intervention group completed the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation Checklist (TOSCA-C). This checklist included all the aspects of the classroom that students may be subjected to during a day “concentration problems, disruptive behavior, prosocial behavior, emotional regulation, internalizing problems, family problems, and

family involvement.” Herman indicated the reason for completing this checklist was to determine if there was a correlation between student behaviors and teacher stress levels. Results indicated high scores on the scoring scales suggested more problems in the classroom (Herman, K. C., et al., 2018).

The outcome revealed a correlation between the students and the teachers. To start, it should be noted that teacher stress and coping levels varied. Most teachers (60%) indicated that although they had experienced high stress, they were able to cope with the stressors. Thirty percent of the teachers in the study revealed that they were stressed and had moderate coping skills. The well-adjusted, low-stress teachers accounted for 7% of the group. Contrary to all of the teacher's results 3% of the teachers indicated very high stress and burnout levels with very low levels of coping, self-confidence, and personal achievement. When reviewing the student data, the findings suggested that classrooms with the highest rates of behavior and lowest academic achievement were with teachers who were stressed and had low coping skills or strategies. “Significant differences were observed between the four profiles of teacher adjustment in terms of teacher-reported behavior problems.” Consistent with the findings, the teachers with the highest levels of stress and lowest levels of coping experienced the highest levels of student behavior problems and the lowest levels of student achievement. Therefore, the study found that the well-being of the teacher directly impacted student learning and achievement (Herman, K. C., et al., 2018).

Workplace Bullying and Mental Health

Most schools have adopted a zero-tolerance policy for students who bully other students. There has been little to no mention in the news of teachers being bullied in school by their colleagues or administrators. Bullying is the continued act of trying to intimidate or harm another

person. It is an intentional misuse of power. Bullying is not a one-time occurrence of name calling, rejection, or intimidation. It is a continual behavior of one person over another to gain power. Bullying can break a person. Bullying can cause great mental health issues. Bernotaite & Malinauskiene (2017) surveyed 517 teachers from 13 secondary schools in Lithuania. Their purpose was to find parallels with bullying and burnout.

The researchers visited the schools, explained the purpose of the study, and looked for participants. There were 725 questionnaires distributed with 517 successfully returned. The participants median age was 49.92 years. Teachers did not indicate years of teaching experience or their gender. The participants completed the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ). This assessment looked at a wide range of negative behaviors from colleagues, superiors, and students. The participants were asked to reveal if they had felt victimized during the last six months of their employment at the school. Along with the NAQ, participants also completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI measured exhaustion, personal achievement, and depersonalization using a seven-point scale (0 = never to 7 = everyday) (Bernotaite & Malinauskiene, 2017).

The results found 25% of participants had suffered some sort of psychological distress at work. Research findings also indicated high emotional exhaustion was found in 25.6%, high depersonalization in 10.6%, and low personal achievement in 33.7% of the cases. Astonishingly almost half of the respondents (47.4%) reported job strain and 59.6% reported low social support at work (Bernotaite & Malinauskiene, 2017, p. 633). Those who suffered bullying in their job were more likely to develop severe mental health issues. While bullying from students, colleagues, and superiors was high among teachers, research has shown that bullying brings on great emotional and psychological stress. Bullying and psychological stress are factors

contributing to burnout. School policies need to be reviewed and revamped to assure safe places for staff to work. Schools also need to institute programs that promote positive mental health and well-being (Bernotaite & Malinauskiene, 2017).

High- and Low-Burnout Schools

School cultures have been antecedents for stress and burnout and the precursors to classroom management. Schools that have operated with structure rather than without order have confused teachers and caused teachers to be unhappy and stressed. Friedman (1991) studied the organizational characteristics of different schools to determine the varied frameworks were effective or the precursor for teacher burnout. The study consisted of 1,597 teachers in 78 elementary schools. The participants median age was 34 years with an average of 11.5 years of teaching experience.

The Friedman (2011) study was conducted in two different stages. The first stage occurred during the second half of the school year. Teachers completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and a background information sheet. Once the information was tabulated the schools were divided into two groups: a high-burnout school (8 schools) and a low-burnout school (10 schools). The teacher scores indicated the level of stress they were under to give the school the “title” for the study. The second stage of the study was conducted several weeks after the schools were divided into groups. The second stage gathered information that determined the school climate. Friedman reviewed school administration teams and the school physical and social environments. Several experienced researchers were assigned to interview staff in all employed positions (maintenance to principals) (Friedman, 1991).

After the data was reviewed Friedman characterized the reason teachers in each of the schools answered the questionnaires or interview questions the way that they did. There is a

hierarchy of administration in the high-burnout schools. Teachers knew who to address when there were questions. The teachers were perceived as experts in the field. The school stressed knowledge and achievement. Test scores were critical to determine the capabilities of the teachers and students. Rarely were things out of order in the classrooms. The school was quiet and there was no litter in the hallways. Teachers were under constant observation. On the other hand, the low-burnout school had trash in the hallways, and in the classrooms the kids were noisy. The teachers did not rank achievement with any level of importance. The organizational structure was flexible. There was an assistant principal along with other officers in charge. The roles fluctuated over time. Teachers were treated as dependable, capable stewards of education (Friedman, 1991).

There were noticeable variables in the school staff from the two groups. The high-burnout school had older teachers with fewer years in education than the lower-burnout schools. Teachers in the high-burnout schools were more experienced averaging over four more years experience than in the low-burnout school (Friedman, 1991).

Friedman (1991) found that the burnout stages increased as teachers aged and had more experience until teachers reached a median age of 44.5 years. Then decline started. He noted that although the high-burnout school had an orderly structure which appeared easier, teachers clearly worked on educational goals and the associated curriculum. Teachers did not have a voice to stray or make the instruction exciting for students. Conversely, the low-burnout schools gave teachers opportunities to be more flexible in teaching. Spontaneity was welcomed. Teachers had more access to administrators and shared their concerns with teams. Friedman (1991) acknowledged teachers experienced new climates each year and when treated as dependable stewards of education, there would be less stress and reduced burnout (Friedman, 1991).

Burnout in Inclusive Schools

Inclusive classrooms have become more popular for teaching children with disabilities. The classrooms have tools and supports conducive to success and achievement. Specialist (special education) and non-specialist (general education) teachers work together to assure that all children have learned using the educational materials designed for them. The rigorous classroom environment has caused greater levels of stress which has led to teacher burnout. The Candeias et. al. (2021) study studied teachers who worked at inclusive schools and the variables associated with burnout.

A total of 7,528 specialist and non-specialist teachers joined the study on burnout. Non-specialist teachers outnumbered the specialist teachers by 7,086. There were differences to gender and age, but they were not factors in the study as they were similar. Both groups were asked to complete the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to answer questions respectively about the experiences over the last three months. The MBI used a 7-point Likert scale that from never to always, responding to questions about emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and job performance. The teachers also completed the Stress Vulnerability Questionnaire adapted to the Portuguese population. The survey used a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from “I agree to all to I disagree to all”. Participants answered questions in six different dimensions; perfectionism tolerances, inhibitions and dependence, lack of support, and deprivation of affection or rejection; adverse living conditions, dramatization of existence, and subjugation. Like the MBI, teachers answered the questions based on the last three months of teaching experiences (Candeias et. al., 2021).

The findings, although similar in percentages, varied from the non-specialist to the specialist groups. Specialist teachers responded they felt more stress with the components in the Stress and Vulnerability questionnaire where the non-specialist teachers experienced burnout in

emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. The results indicated that higher levels of vulnerability to stress meant a greater likelihood of burnout. It should be noted that specialist teachers had experienced working with children with disabilities and had used coping strategies to calm themselves when they were faced with stress on the job where non-specialist teachers did not have these experiences. In essence when teachers felt vulnerable or had burnout symptoms support was needed. Both specialist and non-specialist educators should be provided with specialized training to develop strategies to effectively manage stress levels for inclusive classroom teaching (Candeias et. al, 2021).

B. Teacher Burnout and the Body

Determination of Self-efficacy and Burnout

As the number of special education students in school districts increases, so has the importance of employing special education teachers. The purpose of the Nuri et al. (2017) study was to investigate self-efficacy and burnout for special education teachers in terms of different variables. The study focused on variables to determine whether special education teachers suffered burnout based on specific categories (i.e., gender, educational levels, hours worked, subjects taught. The study included a total of 68 special education teachers (35 female and 33 male) from 28 different schools in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) Ministry of Education Primary Education Office. Special education teachers (46) taught in a school specifically for children with special needs and 24 of the special education teachers worked at a mainstream/general education school. Researchers used the Maslach Burnout and Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (MBI-ES) to survey the teachers (Nuri et al., 2017).

The results of the survey indicated some differences in the variables, but no significant difference was found between self-efficacy and the gender of teachers. On the contrary, a

significant difference was noted in the areas of increased student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies used by women. There was no difference among gender related to burnout, depersonalization, personal achievement, or exhaustion. On the other hand, researchers found great differences between the self-efficacy of undergraduate vs. postgraduate teachers. The burnout levels were the same. When analyzing the results of the survey questions about working hours and the type of students taught, there was a staggering difference. Teachers who worked fewer hours (<4) maintained classroom engagement and self-efficacy. Teachers who worked five or more hours suffered in both the engagement and self-efficacy categories. Likewise, the teachers with smaller class sizes engaged with more students and demonstrated greater self-efficacy unlike those working more hours with larger class sizes (Nuri et al., 2017).

The researchers concluded that special education teachers with more experience were more likely to suffer from reduced self-efficacy and burnout due to teaching students more often than others. They stated that there should be additional research done using other variables such as climate, behavior management skills, and resilience (Nuri et al., 2017).

Teacher Burnout Dimensions

Researchers have questioned whether underlying health problems and other symptoms could be a catalyst for teacher burnout. In 2019, Menghi et al. (2019), looked more in depth at the claims. The purpose of the study was to analyze the differences in burnout capacity levels between teachers who had experienced health problems and other symptoms in the last year versus those who had not. Teachers from public and private schools in the province of Entre Rios and Buenos Aires were contacted about the study. They were provided consent forms and completed questionnaires. When the questionnaires were completed and reviewed, it was deemed that 223 of the questionnaires were complete and correct. The 223 participants consisted

of both male and female teachers ranging in ages from 30 and 49 years. The intended sampling of teachers included that they had more than four years of teaching experience (Menghi, et al., 2019).

Maslach & Jackson's Burnout Inventory Scale (1981) measured the participant answers associated with burnout. The survey consisted of 22 questions with subcategories asking about emotional fatigue, depersonalization, and low personal achievement. Answers were ranked using a Likert-scale of 0 - 6 (0=never to 6=every day) (Menghi et al., 2019).

To find the correlates between health problems and burnout, researchers analyzed the number of teachers who demonstrated health problems in the last 12 months. It was determined that 88% of the teachers suffered from some form of health problems in the last 12 months. Significant differences were found in the values of emotional fatigue and depersonalization between the groups who had experienced burnout symptoms or health problems and those who had not. It was noted that those with more health problems had greater emotional fatigue in depersonalization. The most recurrent health problems recognized in this study were: hypertension, depression, flu, pharyngitis, pneumonia, anxiety, neck pain, anemia, and bronchitis (Menghi, et al., 2019).

Through this study, researchers determined that teacher burnout may have different origins. They confirmed that the manifestation of burnout not only included "emotional fatigue and feeling of depersonalization but may be accompanied by various ailments" noting that the teachers who scored the highest on the scales experienced some sort of health problem. The authors recommended that this study be performed using a broader scale of teachers looking at different variables so that interventions could be put in place at the first sign of teacher burnout (Menghi et al., 2019).

Does Burnout Mediate Negative Effects of Job Demands

Teaching puts mental and physical demands on a person's body. The Baka (2015) study considered direct or indirect links between job demands where physical and mental health problems increased burnout. Demands are put on teachers each school year. This study considered three approaches to finding the depression and physical symptoms effects experienced by teachers. The demands measured were: interpersonal conflicts at work; organizational constraints, and workloads. Participants in this study were Polish teachers from eight different elementary schools. Initially, 400 questionnaires were distributed, with 316 returned and completed correctly. The target group was chosen because of their vulnerability to job stress and burnout. The group consisted of 316 teachers (250 women and 66 men) ranging in age from 22 to 60 years with teaching experiences from one to 37 years (Baka L., 2015).

The study measured different aspects of the results using different scales. To measure job demands, researchers use the Interpersonal Conflicts at Work Scale (ICAWS), the Organizational Constraints Scale (OCS), and the Quantitative Workload Inventory (QWI). The inventories considered the relationships between work demands and stressors linked to burnout. Job burnout was measured by the Polish version of the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OBI). Computations deciphered the interrelationship of exhaustion and disengagement to the symptoms of burnout. Finally, the Beck Hopeless Scale (BHS), measured indicators of depression, and optimistic and pessimistic outlooks into the future (Baka, L., 2015).

Personal conflicts and organizational constraints were connected with job burnout more so than workload. The data also revealed that burnout levels of more experienced teachers were lower than those of new teachers. The more hours a teacher worked in the day/week was correlated with job demands, depression, physical symptoms, and burnout. Considering the

results, it can be concluded that job demands have a strong likelihood of causing mental and physical issues in teachers, leading to illnesses and burnout. Researchers noted both job burnout and health issues were afflictions that arose when teachers were subjected to prolonged periods of stress (Baka, L. 2015).

Stress and Burnout in Online Teaching

During the lockdown months of COVID-19, teaching changed from in-person to distance learning or online learning and gave teachers new challenges and added job demands. Teachers were faced with creating and rewriting lessons to function in an online presentation. The days were long and stressful. Stress was handled differently by each teacher and the way the teacher managed the stress determined whether their mental health could handle new the demands.

Kumawat (2020) stated that teachers felt perceived stress during online teaching. Perceived stress is the relationship between the teacher and their environment and feeling a lack of control attributed to the stressor they faced. When teachers felt the new stress of online teaching some felt hopelessness and the perception that things would never get better. They felt the symptoms of burnout. The purpose of the Kumawat (2020) study was to analyze the relationship between perceived stress and burnout.

The participants in the study were from 30 different schools across India. After surveys were sent out, 194 respondents were chosen. The sample consisted of teachers ranging in age from 25 to 54 who had taught from May of 2020 or before. Gender was not a factor in this study, (Kumawat, 2020).

The teachers participated in 2 different surveys after the 2020 school year had ended. Participants had the full experience of online teaching. Participants completed the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) that measured the perception of stress and what degree things, or experiences

were deemed as stressful. The next survey completed was the Maslach Burnout Inventory which measured emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment, (Kumawat, 2020).

Kumawat found that all teachers surveyed felt some or high personal accomplishment in the work during online teaching. However, in order to have felt personal accomplishment there was a high presence of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and stress. The results indicated that over 29% of teachers felt moderate to high levels of stress during the online teaching. In addition, the teachers reported that 45% felt moderate to high levels of emotional exhaustion and 36% felt moderate to high levels of depersonalization during the online teaching school year. It can be concluded that when teachers experienced the feelings at moderate to high levels, they would experience burnout symptoms and would choose to leave teaching. The indicators should be taken seriously with interventions developed and added to reinforce the importance of teacher health and well-being (Kumawat, 2020).

C. Teacher Burnout Prevention Strategies

Extinguishing Teacher Burnout

Teaching is a stressful occupation that can lead to burnout, “which can manifest itself psychologically, emotionally, and physically. While stress and its effects are unavoidable, these pressures can be mitigated if appropriate action is taken” (Hurley, 2021 p. 22). The number of teachers who reported job stress is staggering. Researchers noted job related stress was experienced in over 90% of teachers and daily 46% of teachers experienced high stress. This is a serious issue that needs to be brought to the forefront to protect teachers. Burnout can cause psychological, emotional, and physical fatigue, which can precipitate other related health issues that can be detrimental. Burnout can also lead to high rates of absenteeism, exhaustion, and

teacher turnover. “Teacher burnout has become one of the biggest problems plaguing the education system today because it negatively affects the ability of teachers to perform their roles effectively by exhausting their mental health, draining their emotional wellness, and fatiguing their physical welfare” (Hurley, 2021 p. 22).

Burnout appears when job demands are greater than the availability of resources to cope with the demands. The lack of resources creates stressors that can impact a person psychologically. Psychological effects may include anxiety, frustration, lack of self-confidence, cynicism, and depersonalization. If a person is unable to cope with stressors, they feel inadequate which can negatively influence their self-efficacy when trying to create a positive teaching environment. On the other hand, those who find themselves more confident and able to quickly overcome the job-demanding stressors may in turn be more inclined to have a stronger sense of self-efficacy. Unfortunately, teachers who endure prolonged periods of low self-efficacy experience burnout, which leads to them leave teaching. When teachers felt powerless, mental health issues increased. These escalated psychological issues including depression and depersonalization, which precipitated emotional exhaustion. (Hurley, 2021).

Aside from psychological effects teachers can also suffer emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is not being able to give any more of oneself and exudes the perception of others as being uncaring. Researchers noted emotional exhaustion has led to a person’s thoughts and views being processed negatively. In return, the person has responded by getting angry or wanting to quit.

In other words, emotional exhaustion takes over the way a teacher acts, thinks, and feels towards others and the situations they face (Hurley, 2021).

Psychological and emotional burnout can lead to physical effects on the body. When people are put in situations that result in prolonged stress, anxiety, or depression it can lead to physical fatigue, back pain, aching joints, and headaches and other ailments such as stomach ulcers, gastritis, and insomnia. Burnout can also bring about increased symptoms of hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disorders for those who already suffer from those ailments. In these situations, teachers find themselves forced to leave the teaching profession due to health issues (Hurley, 2021).

Stress is psychological, emotional, and physical. Teacher burnout occurs when the job demands outweigh the ability to cope with them effectively. Burnout will continue to increase if school districts do not look into ways to help reduce or combat the demands given to teachers. Hurley (2021) concluded that chronic stress would inexplicably affect teachers, making them incapable of working, resulting in burnout.

Mindfulness Colouring to Tackle Burnout

Czerwinski et al. (2020) stated early interventions for teachers would decrease stress-related concerns including teacher well-being, physical and mental health, and job satisfaction. A UK intervention study was completed looking at Mindfulness-Based Intervention (MBI). Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBI) are strategies that teachers use to help relieve anxiety and daily stressors. The Czerwinski et al. (2020) study randomly chose 43 participants (33 female and 10 male) ranging in ages from 19 to 60. The participants were elementary to post-secondary teachers. The purpose of this study was to integrate colouring with a guided MBI to reduce symptoms of burnout, encourage resilience for the promotion of self-awareness, and improve levels of well-being (Czerwinski, et al. 2020).

Participants in this study were asked to engage in colouring over the course of five working days (Monday to Friday). During this time, participants used colouring sheets during free time when they felt stressed, anxious, or depressed. At the end of the week, participants completed a post-assessment questionnaire that collected their feelings and attitudes after the activity to determine if mindfulness colouring contributed to decreased stress, anxiety, and depression. The study, although short in duration, determined that colouring for even five minutes of self-care was helpful for the teacher's well-being. Researchers found that participants indicated that feelings of anxiousness, stress, and depression were reduced by using colouring as a self-care tool (Czerwinski et al., 2020).

Although this study appeared to have linked colouring as a positive tool for mental well-being, researchers noted that there were problems in the study. The study included a small ratio of men compared to women. Having a more diverse population may have also provided different answers. Another factor that could have changed the outcome results was having the participants complete a post assessment which would have allowed the participants to discuss whether they liked or disliked the intervention (Czerwinski, et al., 2020).

Teachers will always face some sort of daily stress. Mindfulness techniques may alleviate some of the stressors. This study determined that colouring on a daily basis if only for five minutes at a time, can make a difference (Czerwinski et al., 2020).

Mindfulness and Special Education Teacher Burnout

Burnout is a response to chronic emotional and interpersonal work stressors, and typically manifests in three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Sun et al. 2019). Findings indicated that teaching is a stressful occupation, and that burnout is common among teachers. Special education teachers (SET),

experienced moderate to high levels of burnout due to a lack of occupational success and excessive workloads. Unfortunately, burnout not only affects teachers, but the students as well. Burnout diminishes teacher self-efficacy, thus can be detrimental to student success, especially those with special needs. SET with chronic work stressors “lack of occupational success and an excessive workload (Sun et al. 2019).

The purpose of the Sun et al. (2019) study was to confirm that different variables for special education teachers (SET) affect their self-acceptance and to consider the correlation of mindfulness and burnout. The 307 participants (260 women and 47 men) in the study were SET teachers from an elementary school. SET represented teachers from 21-56 years with <1 year to 75 years of teaching experience (Sun et al., 2019).

The SET teachers completed a pencil and paper survey divided into four mini surveys (Mindfulness, Self-acceptance, Perceived Stress, and Teacher Burnout). Each survey was measured by its own rating scale. After reviewing the results, researchers concluded that all four measured areas worked synergistically. Researchers found mindfulness positively correlated with self-acceptance and negatively correlated with perceived stress and burnout. Self-acceptance was also negatively correlated with perceived stress and burnout. However, perceived stress was positively correlated with burnout. To better explain the findings, when a SET is aware of their thoughts and feelings, they are more likely to view their experiences positively and are less likely to experience minimal stressors or feelings of burnout. However, if a SET accepted the experiences negatively, their feelings resulted in self-efficacy that negatively affected them and resulting in the likelihood of moderate to high stress and burnout (Sun et al. 2019).

There were limitations in the Sun et al. (2019) study. The Mindfulness scale measured only a single trait. Future research should include non-judgmental or nonreactive components.

Social support should be added as a variable because lack of mindfulness support leads to stress and burnout. Mindfulness and self-acceptance work together to determine burnout levels for a SET. It is important to continue research considering the correlations of burnout to mindfulness (Sun et al., 2019).

Job Satisfaction and Coping Strategies

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2015) explored job satisfaction, work-related stressors, and coping strategies used among Norwegian teachers. The study was based on the qualitative interviews of 30 current and four retired teachers. The participants varied in age from 27 to 63 years and taught in both elementary and middle schools. “This sample was built gradually and purposefully in order to attain variation in age, sex, and type of school” (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., (2015).

The 60 to 90-minute face-to-face interviews were conducted via semi-structured dialogues. Each interviewee was asked to share their thoughts about being a teacher, why they believed what they did, and to provide examples. Open-ended questions requested information on job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, challenges and strains, and reactions to the challenges and strains in the profession (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., 2015).

The findings indicated that all 34 teachers enjoyed being teachers (current or retired). They felt that they had made the right career choice, enjoyed working with the children in their schools, and felt teaching provided meaningful work. They appreciated interactions with students and were delighted with students success. The interview results were evenly split when teachers were asked about variations in the daily work. Half of the group thought not having the same experiences each day was exciting, while the other half thought that the unpredictability brought new challenges. In Norwegian schools, much like in the US, collaboration and teamwork are

expected with teachers responsible for specific grades or age groups. The younger teachers (44%) enjoyed learning from their colleagues and stated that everyone had strengths that could be beneficial when working with different students (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., 2015).

Even though the teachers demonstrated job gratification and fulfillment, when asked about the challenges and stress associated with teaching, each teacher (100%) interviewed acknowledged that they had faced workload and time pressure, and adapted teaching to student needs, and addressed disruptive student behavior. The teachers stated that these negative factors reduced the ability to effectively teach the students. The workload and timelines put stress on the teachers, so they had difficulty separating their work and home life. The results showed that 29 of the 34 teachers stated that there were too many tasks to be completed in too little time. Aside from teaching students, teacher days consisted of prepping for classes, making phone calls, meeting with parents, meeting with colleagues, copying learning materials, etc. Teachers acknowledged that they felt they could not provide the best service for students with special needs. It was a great responsibility and extremely difficult to meet all student needs. Almost 75% of the teachers stated that the school day could be filled with discipline issues, thus no learning for the students who behaved. Teachers noted 80% of the day was spent on students with behavioral problems (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., 2015).

As mentioned, all teachers found high job satisfaction, but it was apparent that all teachers suffered from some degree of stress such as emotional or physical exhaustion which can, in time, lead to burnout. The consequences of stress and coping seemed to coincide with age. The younger teachers explained that they could experience a heavy workload. Their high ambitions lead to long hours. They admitted to feeling tired and exhausted but knew that they could rejuvenate on weekends or vacations. The middle-aged teachers also had high ambitions

and worked long hours but found they were not able to find enough rest on weekends and vacations, so they tended to use sick days as short breaks away from their jobs. The teachers in the senior group were no longer able to work heavy workloads and long hours. They were no longer able to recharge their bodies on weekends or vacations. This resulted in depression and low self-esteem. They found themselves with severe exhaustion, no longer able to perform their job duties, habitually taking extended sick leaves, reducing work hours, or leaving the profession. “Both the workload and the accumulation of numerous sources of stress have a number of maladaptive consequences” (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., 2015 p. 190).

The limitations of this study should be noted. Although the authors felt that 34 teachers provided a large sample, it was not a random sample. They said that there should have been additional schools with teachers from diverse cultures and grade levels. Another limitation cited was that this study was completed in Norwegian and important information may have been lost in translation (Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S., 2015).

Special Education and Job Satisfaction

Special education teachers, like general education teachers, are under a tremendous amount of pressure and stress. “In the 2000s, 98% of school districts across the country reported a shortage of qualified special education teachers” (Robinson et al., 2019), yet each year approximately 22,000 special education teachers graduate from teaching programs. Unfortunately, due to not being able to find a correct balance between teaching, paperwork, lesson planning, behavior management, and burnout, “about 50% of special education teachers quit within their first five years of teaching” (Robinson et al., 2019).

Special education teachers are required to balance several roles in their positions: acting as a case manager, developing individualized instruction for students on IEPs, and sometimes co-

teaching with general education teachers. It is these stringent tasks that can lead special education teachers to feeling exhausted, overwhelmed, and overworked, thus putting a strain on their personal health, motivation, job, and student performance. When teachers feel physical and emotional exhaustion, they feel unable to cope with what they face on a daily basis. They start to become detached from the job, employ social distancing, begin to dehumanize others, and generally develop negative attitudes towards others in the work environment (Robinson et al., 2019).

Previous research has linked job satisfaction to job burnout. Most research has indicated that the school environment, access to resources, workload manageability, and support impact their feelings towards job satisfaction. If teachers feel supported in these areas, they are more likely to be happy, with their job position and remain employed. Conversely, teachers who struggle to feel supported in the work environment from lack staff support, and resources, or who have heavy workloads, etc. will more likely feel depressed, anxious, and burnout (Robinson et al., 2019).

The purpose of the Robinson et al. (2019) study was to determine if there was a statistical significance and job satisfaction related to teacher burnout among public school special education teachers across the United States. The survey included 363 (294 females and 64 males) public school (charter school and private school teachers were not included) special education teachers from 34 states. Initially, the survey was sent to 125 special education teachers who were asked to complete the survey and forward it to their special education colleagues. The survey became popular, so the team stopped when they found 363 participants. The participants varied in age from 20 to over 40 years with the majority of the special education teachers holding

master's degrees. The teachers represented students from Pre-K to ninth grade, with half representing Title 1 schools (Robinson et al., 2019).

The survey was conducted electronically for all the participants and consisted of 22 questions from the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey MBI-ES (1986). “The MBI-ES (1986) is the most widely used instrument for measuring burnout among educators. The 22-question inventory used a seven-point Likert-scale (0-6 scale: 0=never to 6=every day) comprised of three subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Robinson et al., 2019). Each question included variables such as demographics, teaching-related questions, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization in their jobs. The survey included questions about how the teachers perceptions of staff support, professional development, and whether they had planned to leave teaching in the next three years. The answers determined participant job satisfaction levels (Robinson et al., 2019).

The canonical correlation analysis (CCA) analyzed whether job satisfaction in special education teachers and burnout were related. The findings from the MBI-ES (1986) results found three burnout variables that included emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Job satisfaction variables consisted of feeling supported by the school, leaving the field, and professional development opportunities. The study stated that the job satisfaction variables were fewer in number than those of the burnout variables. Researchers found that burnout variables influenced special education teachers feelings of emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. Comparably, job satisfaction variables were highly correlated with teachers leaving the field and feeling supported. Burnout was highly influenced by depression and personal accomplishment (Robinson et al., 2019).

The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between burnout and how a teacher feels about the job. Teacher who expresses a lower number of burnout variables will stay in the position. On the contrary, if a teacher experiences variables associated with burnout, they will leave. The study also indicated that job satisfaction needed to be improved for teachers to remain employed. Teachers need to feel supported in their work. Recommendations to increase job satisfaction include asking schools to provide meaningful personal development courses related to specific areas of teaching. School districts should emphasize wellness programs that reduce teacher stress and anxiety and address the topic of burnout among teachers in order to retain current and future staff (Robinson et al., 2019).

Reducing Workload Improves Teacher Well-being

Teacher workload and responsibilities have increased. The Department of Education and Teaching Schools Council and teachers in the UK performed a meta-analysis study concluding reducing workloads not only benefits the teachers but has no effect on student learning (Churches et al., 2022).

The study origin was centered around how teachers use their time and their sense of well-being. Because teachers leave the field as a result of exhaustion and burnout, retention was on the minds of school districts and the UK Dept of Education. Prior to beginning the study, teachers received a three-day face-to-face training session along with remote support during the training days, about ways to reduce their workloads. During the training, teachers were provided with a work reduction toolkit and workload audits focused on the study performance. The toolkit included resources and practical tools for teachers on the topics of grading and planning (Churches et al., 2022).

The control groups for this study included students from three schools, St. Andrew's School, St. Bartholomew's CE First School in London, and Hilltop Infants and Junior School. The first study conducted was at St. Bartholomew's. The teachers explored the pros and cons for reduced lesson planning for a half of a term. There were no negative effects on student learning or retention. The staff saw increased teacher well-being. The second study included students and teachers at St. Andrew's School, specifically grades two, four, and six. The teachers sought to reduce the abundance of written markings on student work by using metacognitive learning strategies and face-to-face feedback to see how greatly this feedback impacted students work. The teachers found that the strategies significantly positively affected both the students and their progress. In this group staff well-being was also higher than prior to the study. And finally, the teachers at Hilltop Infants and Junior Schools, analyzed how teachers at different grade levels approached communication about the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics by comparing the differences prior to the intervention and following. The findings detected no significant changes for student retention or attainment, with progress in many areas continuing to improve significantly despite teacher workload reduction (Churches et al., 2022).

Overall, the study found that there was no harm in reducing teacher workloads. Different analyses showed that reduced teacher work streamlined and improved communication, data reporting, and provided alternative forms of student feedback. Schools determined that work reduction for teachers significantly improved their well-being. Researchers believed that continual research needs to be done in this area to find acceptable solutions for teachers and the students (Churches et al., 2022).

Mindfulness in Education

“The stress teachers face is one of the leading factors in their disengagement, health issues, dissatisfaction with the job, and burn out, which fosters the desire for them to leave the profession” (Pinthong, U., 2021 p. 63). Pinthong (2021) explored ways to decrease teacher stress and burnout by implementing a virtual online mindfulness intervention. The online mindfulness study was a six-week intervention with five participants who experienced elevated levels of job stress. The study initially had additional participants but due to the impact and restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic, several participants could no longer commit. The study participants were not familiar with online mindfulness. The weekly instructional sessions included daily guided practice that highlighted techniques for participants to use over the course of the following week. At the end of the week, the participants were asked to complete a reflection log showing the amount of time they completed mindfulness activities. Along with the log, participants completed weekly questionnaires with open-ended questions that allowed them to reflect on their mindfulness journey (Pinthong, U., 2021).

The findings indicated that there was an average of 44% stress reduction for the participants. The study also revealed a significant increase in the awareness of mindfulness and acceptance of the strategy without judgment. Finally, participants indicated that they used mindfulness techniques independently between 10 and 22 minutes over the course of the six-week intervention period to effectively reduce daily stressors due to individual circumstances. One participant stated, “I’ve never believed mindfulness alone will help me reduce stress but now I think so” (Pinthong, 2021, p. 69). Pinthong determined that mindfulness helped participants improve their stress-coping skills. By implementing the skills, participants reduced their stress levels and became aware of mindfulness interventions benefits (Pinthong, 2021).

Stress and burnout impacts teacher retention rates. Research has shown mindfulness is a growing technique used to relieve stress among teachers. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is an approach that has been widely used as an ideal mindfulness intervention model to aid in stress reduction. When used effectively, mindfulness lowers stress, increases health levels, and increases effectiveness in the personal and work lives of teachers (Pinthong, 2021).

The Pinthong (2021) study explored the effectiveness of mindfulness. Participants were recruited from local suburban primary schools. They were shown a brief presentation about mindfulness and those who were interested in the study, signed up. The qualified participants included nine teachers and two teaching assistants. In the mix of participants were 10 women and one male ranging in age from 20 to 50. Those chosen identified that they had experienced greater levels of stress without having any medical issues. The study was an eight-week intervention course that took place after school for two and a half hours. The candidates completed the different scale questionnaires prior to starting the study. The first scale was the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS21) that measured participants levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. The following scale questionnaire completed was The Global Problem Scale. Participants were asked to determine problems affecting them and to rate them in severity. This scale was most helpful in the post-analysis of the study. Finally, participants completed the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS) that looked at the consciousness of mindfulness (Pinthong, 2021).

Initial data showed that all teachers experienced significant stress. In fact, eight of the teachers scored above the clinical cut-off for severe or extremely severe ranges of anxiety, depression, and stress. As the study continued, participants journaled about mindfulness and its progression. At the end of the journey, it was apparent that using mindfulness had effectively

reduced teacher anxiety, depression, and stress levels. All participants, but one, reduced their levels by over 50% from the onset of the study (Pinthong, 2021).

Although the study showed significant decreased anxiety, depression, and stress levels, the sample size was small. Had there been a larger number of participants, the results may have varied, and conclusions may have been different. The researcher noted that due to the small number of participants in the study, it was difficult to determine if the intervention was as effective as if it had been a larger study (Pinthong, 2021).

Mindfulness-Based Intervention (bMBI)

Resignations and stress coincide with one another as related to teachers. Astonishing amounts of money have been lost each year due to teacher resignations. The Joint Committee of Experts on the Application of Recommendations Concerning the Status of Teachers (ILO/UNESCO) reported that overwhelming stress has significantly added to the accumulated stress that contributes significantly to teachers leaving the field, with a cost of up to 2.2 billion annually. School administrators have looked at the negative effects of stress and burnout and have implemented programs to help alleviate the stress associated with teaching. Taylor et al. (2021) examined how implementing mindfulness-based interventions resulted in decreased teacher stress and burnout symptoms.

The faculty at a high-performing magnet school in the Southern Eastern United States were the subjects in the study. The group consisted of 24 randomly selected participants ranging in age from 25 to 70 years with an average of 49 years of teaching experience. Those who participated in the study were arbitrarily divided into two groups, an intervention group, and a wait-list control group. The intervention group participated in the study from January to June. The wait-list control group was offered an intervention from August to November. Each staff

member who participated in the study was given six continuing education credits (Taylor et al., 2021).

The 16-week bMBI program included one 90-minute session per month. The program combined attentive awareness, receptive attitude, and intentionality. Sessions were led by two clinically trained researchers with expertise in the various mindfulness techniques. Each session followed the same timeline 1) review of the previous session, 2) awareness of the current moment, 3) informative presentation, 4) mindfulness activity, 5) group discussion, 6) journal entry, 7) closing exercise. Group participants were provided a workbook to be used as a reference for information and to take notes (Taylor et al., 2021).

Data collection began after participants completed surveys used to determine a baseline for the study. Researchers compared the results following the study completion. After baseline data was gathered, participants were administered a plethora of tests and surveys. The Teacher Stress Inventory determined participant stress levels. Next, staff completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) that established levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. Psychological distress was measured by using results from a short survey titled the Symptom Checklist-90 R (SCL-90-R). The Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) measured participant aspects of mindfulness. Finally, researchers collected cortisol levels which measured stress via the endocrines in saliva (Taylor et al., 2021).

When data results were reviewed, the intervention group demonstrated significant reductions in all facets of teacher stress. There were no significant changes for the wait-list group. There were no real significant differences between the cortisol and CAR results for either group. The data revealed that mindfulness-based interventions had indeed relieved and decreased stress related to teaching. The findings deduced that when mindfulness-based interventions were

introduced and implemented to school staff there was a reduction in teacher stress and burnout and noted that this was a cost-effective and successful way to retain staff (Taylor et al., 2021).

Burnout Profiles and Proactive Strategies

Teacher burnout has not been only a nationwide problem, it is a worldwide problem. Burnout has been attributed to different antecedents for different teachers. The antecedents may be gender, age, years of experience, grades taught, school environment, administration, or the school locality. Although Finnish teachers have suffered from work stress, only about 12% of Finnish teachers have been known to suffer from extreme stress and burnout. The Pyhältö et al. (2020) study examined the individual differences in precursor experiences for teachers with burnout and identified which proactive strategies were used to maintain a successful working relationship between stress and burnout (Pyhältö et al., 2020).

In 2010, over 6000 surveys were sent out to general education and special education Finnish teachers. Upon return of the surveys, researchers had 2,310 candidates for the study. All participants had master's degrees, represented a median age of 45.3 years, and had taught an average of 17.3 years. Two scales were created for this study by researchers. The first scale, the Socio-Contextual Teacher Burnout Scale (designed from information from the Maslach and Jackson's burnout scale), measured teachers social-contextual burnout and the second measured proactive strategies. The socio-contextual scale was designed to analyze three different factors: exhaustion, cynicism of teaching, and the inadequacy of student interactions. The Proactive Strategies Scale measured teacher self- and co-regulation when it came to stress in teaching (Pyhältö et al., 2020).

The completed study profiles revealed that teachers could be sorted into several category profiles. The first profile indicated that 47% of teachers surveyed were at a "no burnout risk".

They had reduced levels of stress, cynicism of teaching, inadequacy of teacher/student interactions, and were less likely to suffer from burnout. The next group of teachers represented 25% with “minor burnout risk”. The data showed moderate levels of the three factors being measured. The teachers experienced more likelihood of burnout than teachers with lesser stressor levels. The third profile group consisted of 19% of teachers with an “increased level of exhaustion”, although the levels of cynicism and inadequacies of teacher/student interactions were not in the at-risk levels. The next profile group was characterized by six percent of the participants. The group members had “increased exhaustion and cynicism.” Finally, the last group was the “highest burnout risk” group. This group comprised four percent of teachers (Pyhältö et al., 2020).

The teacher profiles in the study differed for each group based on different experiences and personal feelings. Teacher burnout levels coincided with the number and type of stress exposures. Teachers with low levels of exhaustion and burnout had successfully used self or co-regulation strategies that allowed participants to de-stress, contrary to the greater levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and inadequate student interactions. Each group showed symptoms related to burnout: half of the participants were at risk for burnout. The results indicated that there was a need to develop strategies to be address teacher mental, physical health and well-being. It is important that strategies are introduced at the onset of the symptoms to reduce burnout among the teaching staff (Pyhältö et al., 2020).

Effects of Mindfulness

Due to the number of teachers who suffer from exhaustion and burnout all over the world, it is important for educators to be aware of mindfulness practices and benefits. Mindfulness has been defined as purposely focusing on the present moment non-judgmentally

and includes three components: self-regulating attention, self-awareness, and self-compassion. Adopting mindfulness strategies can empower teachers to manage stressful situations with healthy manners to reduce the likelihood of burnout. Abenavoli et al. (2013) looked at the relationship between mindfulness and burnout.

The participants consisted of 64 middle school educators from two middle schools in Pennsylvania. Classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and other support staff were an average of 43 years old with a median 14 years of experience. At the start of the school year, the educators completed a number of online self-reported surveys. The Interpersonal Mindfulness Teaching Scale (IMTS) and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) rated the participants about daily activities using a Likert scale from “never true” to “always true.” Both surveys considered mindfulness awareness (Abenavoli et al., 2013).

Next participants completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI) about their feelings of burnout. The questionnaire also used a Likert scale that ranged from “never” to “every day.” Educators completed surveys about positive and negative effects of affected emotions, sleep-related impairments, physical symptoms, stress, and ambition. With each survey researchers found correlations between burnout and mindfulness (Abenavoli et al., 2013).

Mindfulness, when practiced correctly and frequently, can be instrumental in the lives of educators. Researchers found that when there were greater levels of mindfulness, there were fewer reported symptoms of exhaustion, stress, and burnout. The study found that there were benefits to those who used mindfulness daily. Users of mindfulness experienced fewer sleepless nights and had less physical and emotional exhaustion. They also felt great personal accomplishment. Users of mindfulness noted increased resilience when faced with work related

stressors. Looking forward, mindfulness is not a strategy used to accomplish goals in an hour. Mindfulness is the ongoing learning of different strategies (i.e., deep breathing, yoga, meditation, etc.) that can be used to promote teacher well-being. The Abenavoli et al. (2013) study concluded that mindfulness practices boosted resilience in teachers and reduced the negative effects that would lead to burnout.

Impact of the Good Behavior Game

Not all special education teachers teach in schools that include general education students. Some special education teachers work in segregated school settings with students. The schools are specifically designed to teach students with emotional or behavioral disabilities. The probability of teacher burnout in a specialized school is likely due to a combination of student behaviors, disrespectful language, and sometimes injuries. Hopman (2017) and her team studied the Good Behavior Game (GBG) and the effect on special education classrooms, noting how playing the game related to special education teacher burnout levels. The GBG is a classroom-based behavioral management program that provides teachers with behavioral modification skills focused on positive interactions and praise and encourages teachers to use effective classroom rules. The GBG encourages teachers to make no more than three rules using positive language, such as we work in silence. Each student in the classroom is given a set number of cards at the start of the day for the GBG. The intervention stresses the importance of positive reinforcement for on-task behaviors and discourages disruptive behaviors. The premise of the cards is that as the day progresses, those who have disruptive, or off-task behaviors lose a GBG card. At the end of the day, the students with higher card totals can exchange them for free time or small prizes (Hopman et al., 2017).

The invention took place in the Netherlands over the span of a school year. After reviewing the study applicants, 15 school classrooms matched the criteria for the study. The classrooms were divided into two groups. Eight of the chosen classrooms were labeled as experimental and the other seven were labeled the care-as-usual or control classrooms. A total of 176 teachers were included in the study ranging in age from 22.3 to 62.8 years. To test the study effectiveness teachers completed questionnaires about burnout using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), their sense of self-efficacy using the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Teaching behaviors were measured by classroom observations using methods from the GBG (Hopman et al., 2017).

Teachers working in specialized special education classrooms may feel that it is hard to reach students and build relationships with them. The lack of interpersonal relationships reduces self-efficacy and teacher perceptions about personal and professional achievement because teachers may not feel that they make a difference in student successes. The results of the study indicated that teachers in the control group reported greater levels of emotional exhaustion. With regard to the teachers in the experimental classrooms, increased levels of self-efficacy and student engagement and better classroom management were noted. GBG reduced stress levels in teachers and increased self-efficacy and positive behaviors for students in the classroom. If more GBG programs were implemented in classrooms, schools would likely see fewer burnout symptoms for teachers and students. The GBG program not only introduced strategies to increase student engagement and decrease unwanted student behaviors but implementing this type of program may also result in increased in job satisfaction for teachers, increased teaching efficacy, and the retention of teachers (Hopman et al., 2017).

Reflective Functioning and Teacher Burnout

When burnout symptoms begin to take hold, it is hard for teachers to regain composure to successfully endure the school day. They feel insignificant and do not have stamina to teach students effectively, deal with disruptive behaviors, and provide a positive atmosphere for learning. When teachers reach a low point, they need to reflect on what has happened to bring them to the low point and determine what they need to do to resume being productive and successful. Dexter, C. A & Wall, M. (2021) assessed the relationship between reflective functioning and teacher burnout. The researchers wanted to determine what role reflective functioning played with self-efficacy and burnout. They realized the role of the teacher was demanding and when faced with the uphill battle fighting student engagement, disruptive behaviors, classroom management, and excessive workloads, etc., teachers were exhausted, burned out, and leaving the profession. Teachers from 46 different elementary schools in the Southeastern United States were included in the study. The teachers experience ranged from first year teachers to those who had over 20 years of experience. Post-secondary education levels varied from bachelor to doctoral degrees (Dexter, C. A & Wall, M., 2021).

The teachers completed a survey that measured three variables that may be attributed to burnout. The first was the Parent Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (PRFQ). This questionnaire was normally completed by parents to reflect on their children, but in this instance the questionnaire was modified to reflect teacher thoughts and feelings. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine teacher levels of emotional availability and stress levels. Higher scores on the scale meant that participants were more likely to make judgment or overthink situations about the students without the background knowledge of the student mental state. If the numbers were moderate, participant were more inclined to inquire and attempt to understand the students' mental state. Next, they completed the Teacher Burnout Scale (TBS) which used

the Likert scale to quantify: mental, physical, and emotional feelings about burnout. The Likert scale ranged from 0 to 5 (0 = strong disagree to 5 = strongly agree). A greater sum indicated burnout levels for teachers. Lastly, the participants completed an Efficacy Scale which measured how they felt about their self-efficacy in the classroom regarding student engagement, teaching, and classroom management. A higher score on this scale indicated that the teacher considered themselves highly effective in those areas (Dexter, C. A & Wall, M., 2021).

The end result of the questionnaire analysis showed that approximately 36% of the teachers reported some feelings of burnout with a moderate level of pre-mentalization happening. Thus, answering the hypothesis, yes, there was a correlation between reflective functioning, self-efficacy, and burnout. When teachers cognitively processed the situation and easily coped with the environment, they were less likely to demonstrate symptoms of fatigue and burnout (Dexter, C. A & Wall, M., 2021).

Mindfulness-Based SEL

Garner et al. (2018), stated that over 50% of teachers leave the classroom within the first five years in the teaching profession. Sometime during a teacher's first year of teaching, there are several trainings explaining the "hows" "whens," and "what ifs" related to the classroom and students. This is not enough training for the stress of the new role. More time is needed to focus on the well-being for both new and veteran teachers to keep their minds and bodies healthy for themselves and students.

Mindfulness-based SEL (Social Emotional Learning) was the basis of Garner et al. (2018) study. Mindfulness has been a strategy used for people to reflect in the moment without judgment or prejudice. Used correctly, SEL has calmed the minds and bodies of those in stressful situations. Eighty-seven new teachers participated in the study, ranging in age from 19 to 26

years of age. The 87 participants were divided into two groups, 44 teachers in the intervention group and 43 in the control group. Each group was assembled randomly to determine if pre-service training in MBP (Mindfulness-based Practices) and SEL supported their efforts to cope with stress of teaching, prevent the symptoms of burnout, and increase classrooms and student responsiveness. Prior to the study, new teachers completed a mindfulness survey that provided knowledge and skill levels in mindfulness practices and techniques (Garner et al., 2018).

The intervention group participated in a six-week MBP and SEL mediation. During the first week, participants met for a two-hour session focused on mindfulness and the practice of mindfulness meditations. In this time, participants concentrated on breathing techniques, and breathing cycles, sitting comfortably, and ridding the mind of unwanted thoughts so that non-judgmental thoughts were welcomed. The remaining five weeks focused on the importance of SEL components with two-hour long sessions. The sessions consisted of lectures, role-play hypothetical case studies, group discussions, and collaborative work, learning to tune emotions (understanding and regulating), and learning the role of the student emotions that could foster stronger relationships with students who have challenging behaviors (Garner et al., 2018).

The control group was given the same mindfulness training as the intervention group but did not receive instruction or training about social/emotional learning. The SEL instruction was provided to the group of participants in written communication, (Garner et al., 2018).

After each group finished the training participants completed four different surveys used to help researchers determine the findings. The first survey was the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory. The 14-item questionnaire assessed mindfulness on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = rarely and 4 = always). The Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (SREIS) was the next questionnaire to be completed by the participants. This 19-items inventory measured the participants' emotions on

a scale of 1 to 5 (one = very inaccurate to 5 = very accurate). Next participants supplied information on the rules of emotional display by completing the Emotional Labor of Teaching Scale. Items were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not at all likely to 5 = very likely). Finally, participants read case studies that depicted scenarios with challenging student behaviors. After the scenarios were read, participants provided perceptions on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not at all likely to 5 = very likely) (Garner et al., 2018).

Researchers found the intervention group showed increased levels in the MBP and SEL comfortability and practices. It was noted when the programs were implemented together that outcomes were more likely to have had a positive impact on the participants ability to respond to classroom behaviors effectively. It was also determined that effective use of MBP and SEL gave new teachers a different perspective when faced with challenging student behaviors. The training provided new teachers with tools to cope with behavioral situations in the classroom and aided in developing relationships with students without a cost to the students in the classrooms, especially those who displayed behaviors. Pre-training in MBP and SEL has been needed to integrate new teachers into the classrooms. Understanding and use of the techniques has provided new teachers the resilience training needed for teaching roles. After the resilience was built, new teachers are more likely to manage the stress and continue teaching (Garner et al., 2018).

Transformational Leadership and Teacher Burnout

When a teacher feels valued and that their work is meaningful and important teachers feel good. Teacher empowerment and worth need to be recognized by leaders for teachers to hold themselves with high regard. An effective leader impacts the way a teacher perceives themselves, their work, and self-efficacy. When leaders ignore teacher value and worth, teachers suffer from depersonalization, low personal achievement, stress, and burnout symptoms and have

left the profession. Tsang et al. (2022) claimed transitional leadership and psychological empowerment worked adversely with teacher burnout.

In November and December of 2020, 339 primary and secondary teachers from China were recruited to participate in a study about transformational leadership, empowerment, and their relationship with burnout. The participant average age for the group was 36.47 years and teaching experience averaged 13.53 years. Researchers had the participants complete three different surveys that were modified to Chinese versions. The first survey included the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES). The survey asked respondents questions that referenced emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. All answers were measured on a Likert 5-point scale 1 = totally disagree to 5 = totally agree. The next survey was the Chinese Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (CTRLQ) that measured transformational leadership. Respondents answered questions about morals, personal concerns, and charisma in leadership. Like the MBI-ES, the CTRLQ was measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Lastly participants completed the Psychological Empowerment Scale (PES) that measured teacher self-determination, competence, and the impact of the work (Tsang et al., 2022).

The analysis of the surveys revealed that teacher burnout, transformational leadership, and psychological empowerment significantly correlated with one another. When leaders looked at themselves and showed the teachers that they were not only “talking” leaders but “doers” if motivated the staff. When leaders envisioned higher standards by utilizing open-mindedness and encouraging the staff and genuinely caring for them and their well-being, leaders created a community of happy, healthy, and better teachers. Tsang et al. (2022) stated that when a successful transformational leadership was developed it increased teacher self-determination and competence which has led to great resilience and positive feelings reduced burnout. Tsang et al.

(2022) noted that leaders needed to ensure teachers that they understood the purpose of their work, and empathy must be offered so that teachers know that their completed work impacted the school and the students.

Three-Tiered Models of Prevention

Education includes many facets: curriculum, lesson plans, test scores, achievement, etc. None of which means anything if there are no systems in place to assure students of success in an environment. Schools today use different programs to ensure student success by implementing tiered prevention models. Oakes et al. (2020) wrote that using models has given educators a framework to promote learning by determining which students need extra educational support and providing targeted intervention services for them.

The most popular tiered models have included the School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (SWPBIS), Response to Intervention (RTI), Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and Comprehensive, Integrated, Three-Tiered models of intervention (Ci3T). Each model has provided educators with a guided structure to promote student and staff positive well-being. The tier-based models are used in special education communities to aid in student achievement. Tier 1 prevention is used for approximately 80% of the students without requiring additional educational supports. Tier 2 prevention indicates students may need some academic or behavioral assistance. Tier 2 equates for 10% to 15% of students. Finally, Tier 3, the smallest group of students, 3% to 5% includes students who the most intensive learning and behavior needs in the learning communities. Each tier used planning and inventions to meet the students' diverse needs. The Oakes et al. (2020) study researched tiered intervention programs to determine if the programs were implemented and how they correlated with teacher burnout and efficacy.

Over 120 teachers from 14 elementary schools were surveyed for the study. Participants averaged 14.63 years of teaching and were from 22 to 64 years of age. The schools and teachers who participated in the study were in the second year of using the Ci3T model of prevention. To measure the correlation between the tiered models and burnout/efficacy, educators completed different surveys. The first survey was the self-reported Ci3T Treatment Integrity: The teacher Self-Report (Ci3T: TSR) measured the integrity of Tier 1 prevention efforts for students asking questions about teaching, reinforcing behaviors, and monitoring those behaviors. The self-reported survey used a 4-point Likert scale (0 = not at all to 3 = all of the time). Also used to review the Tier 1 intervention was the Primary Intervention Rating Scale (PIRS). This survey looked at the social significance of the intervention goals and used a 6-point Likert scale (0 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). Educators completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES) that measured feelings on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement on a 7-point Likert scale. The Teachers Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) was the final survey the participants completed. This survey looked at efficacy of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Oakes et al., 2020).

After the results were computed, researchers reported that 40.83% of the teachers had moderate to elevated levels of exhaustion, but fewer teachers (22%) indicated they felt levels of depersonalization. Contrary to the negative results on exhaustion, over 80% of teachers reported they felt personal accomplishment from their job. Oakes et al. (2020) noted that the tiered models worked favorably by providing positive student outcomes and have boosted teacher efficacy and attrition. Researchers also shared that the educators appreciated using the systems and gave a voice to the students when they have implemented interventions. Positive outcomes were shown when school districts integrated effective and beneficial intervention tools for the

staff to utilize for the betterment of the students. Teachers were less likely to suffer the symptoms of burnout and exit the profession (Oakes et al., 2020).

Wellness a Mitigating Factor

Teacher stress and dissatisfaction has grown each school year. Thus, school districts have seen teachers leave the profession in alarming numbers. Studies demonstrated that almost half of all new teachers leave the profession within the first five years. Administrators have tried to determine ways to reduce teacher attrition rates and intervene with solutions to offset the stress contributing to burnout. The purpose of the Brasfield et al. (2019) study was to provide administrators with information about interventions that support teachers.

The occupational hazard known as stress comes from many different sources and has included: legislation, lack of resources, lack of support, lack of time, and student behaviors. Most recently, teachers have felt they cannot do the job properly and effectively. The relationships forged with students have become insignificant. With occupational stress there are no winners. The study contained 105 Pre-K through 12th grade teachers from a semi-rural district in the United States. The female group (84.8%) ranged in age from 2 to 66, and experience fluctuated from 1 to 39 years. The researchers had participants complete a geographic survey and found varying levels of teacher burnout. Aside from the geographic survey, the participants completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educators Survey (MBI-ES) and the Five Factor Wellness Inventory (5F-WEL). The MBI-ES survey measured the teachers emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lowered personal accomplishments. Along with the MBI-ES, the teachers completed the 5F-WEL survey. The survey used five different factors: creative, coping, social, essential, and physical for participants to self-report degrees of wellness (Brasfield et al., 2019).

The results of the surveys indicated no significant differences in results for the variables of age, years of experience, or grades/subjects taught. However, teachers who coped with stress or had stronger wellness practices were less likely to suffer from burnout symptoms. By way of contrast, the findings indicated on average 53.85% of participants reported that they suffered from moderate to higher emotional exhaustion; 16.35% of teachers indicated that they felt depersonalization on the job, and 35.58% advised that they felt high-moderate to low levels of personal accomplishments in the job. After the data was reviewed, researchers predicted that teachers who suffered from moderate to higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment would be the teachers who would leave the profession in the next five years (Brasfield et al., 2019).

Teachers who have left the field have had greater levels of stress and have felt it each day when they walked through the doors of the school building. Thus, Brasfield et al. (2019) believed the purposeful implementation and maintenance of wellness programs for teachers benefited not only the teachers but also the school districts with lowered staff attrition. Recommendations were made to make meaningful and rewarding staff wellness programs. The strategies need to be continuously monitored for success and must be sought to replace those that have not worked.

Chapter III: Discussion and Conclusion

In this literature review evidence was presented that teacher burnout is rapidly increasing around the world. Data stated that up to 30% of new teachers are leaving the profession due to high stress levels faced in the classroom (Pressley, 2021). This is a costly loss for the teacher who has to pay back student loans and to the district that has invested hours of training in the new teacher.

Teacher burnout can result in high attrition rates. Teacher burnout symptoms, although present, may not be fully recognized as burnout. Districts need to intervene, implement, and provide constant assessment regarding teachers well-being and health.

Teacher's duties have changed over the years. School environments and students have also changed resulting in increased stress in the classroom and for teachers. Teachers now face larger workloads, elevated student behaviors, greater demands from school administrators, fewer prep hours, and more burnout. Burnout symptoms are different are everyone. To determine levels of burnout several researchers administered the Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educator Survey (MBI-ES) with study participants. The inventory requested participant information about emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. A high score indicated that greater levels of burnout symptoms were present. Data clarified that teachers around the world are feeling symptoms of teacher burnout. In the Herman et al. (2018) study it was found that although 60% of teachers had experienced elevated levels of stress, they were able to manage the stress by using coping strategies. On the other hand, 3% of the participants stated that having exceedingly high levels of stress with very low coping skills, increased emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and decreased personal achievement.

If symptoms of increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal achievement are present, there is a significant probability there will be teacher burnout and greater odds health issues will manifest if ignored. Menghi et al. (2019) discovered that there was a direct link between health issues and teacher burnout. Participants in the study showed that 88% demonstrated some form of health ailment in the last 12 months including repeated bouts of hypertension, depression, flu, sore throat, anxiety, neck pain, anemia, and bronchitis. There have also been links to stomach ulcers, gastritis, insomnia, and increased symptoms in high blood pressure, diabetes, and cardiovascular disorders (Hurley, 2021). These health issues create barriers for teachers to continue in the classroom and many are forced to leave.

The development and implementation of mindfulness-based interventions has become a favored technique that school districts use to assist staff in addressing stress management and coping skills. Mindfulness-based intervention programs combined attentive awareness, receptive attitude, and intentionality and teach users to think in the moment and to initiate different strategies to calm (Taylor et al., 2021). When used correctly users can see decreased in stress levels and fewer symptoms of burnout. In the Pinthong (2021) study, there was an average of 44% reduction in stress levels when teachers were aware of mindfulness techniques and accepted of using them. The study also noted that using mindfulness techniques 15 to 22 minutes a day over the course of a 6-week process effectively reduced daily stressors, increased health level, increased the effectiveness in personal and work lives (Pinthong, 2021).

Burnout forces teachers to leave the classroom. There are mental, emotional, physical, and psychological health dangers. The number will continue to increase if school districts are lax in implementing strategies to support a healthier staff. Interventions should not only make others

aware of how to identify the symptoms but define how to successfully intervene with the symptoms and provide support to staff (Steinhart et al, 2011).

I chose the topic of teacher burnout because it is prevalent in the US and abroad. The abundance of teachers that have left the profession have put a strain on teachers who have remained in the classroom. The COVID 19 pandemic has changed the perceptions and values of teachers. In return, parents and student respect has decreased leaving the classroom a difficult place to teach with children lacking in social skills and increased undesirable behaviors.

The researchers had participants complete the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey to determine levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The higher the score the greater the likelihood of teacher burnout. School districts need to take a closer look at staff health and implement strategies before burnout symptoms begin.

Notably, teacher duties have increased. Teachers are no longer only an instructor. They are the social workers, nurses, mediators, therapists, the good and bad guys, and sometimes the parents. They are often left in the lurches with angry parents without support. Sometimes they are the ones running the ship.

School districts in Minnesota and worldwide should evaluate all staff at the beginning of the school year and implement continual programs and provide supportive services for those who wish to use it. The programs that could include yoga, meditation, exercise, etc. should be offered on a weekly basis. Staff can also lead these programs. They do not need to be provided by outside vendors. Third-party non-judgmental programs for those with greater burnout symptoms should be provided to process thoughts and feelings without the fear of being ridiculed or targeted.

Surveys or questionnaires should be given to staff three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring) as a part of Continuing Education to determine levels of stress in the schools. The results will provide districts opportunities to step in and start to make changes and/or implement further interventions to decrease burnout symptoms. When districts begin to analyze teacher mental, emotional, physical, and psychological health sooner, there will be a positive effect and more teachers will remain employed in classrooms.

The results of research data presented in this thesis provided a lens into teacher burnout causes, effects, and solutions, but there were limitations. When researching the topic of teacher burnout there were few studies performed in the United States in recent years. However, there were several current studies in other countries. I had expected to find a surge of research after the reopening of schools after COVID 19, especially as the work demands of teachers increased and student behaviors escalated due to a year without face-to-face positive social interactions with peers or staff. Had more studies been performed in the United States there would be probability that school districts would be able to identify and reduce teacher burnout before attrition rates continue to increase.

There was limited research information indicating whether the media has provided additional and increased teacher stress. Some teachers are forced into stressful situations that include violence and decreased safety in schools, whether it be from student behaviors inside the buildings or intruders gaining access. Further research designed to determine if media increased teacher stress would be beneficial. This too would give researchers additional factors when defining teacher burnout.

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Mindfulness-based interventions and colouring were the only interventions found in the research currently being used to reduce teacher stress. There is a reasonable belief that surveys completed using teacher input about which strategies they prefer to use as calming tools, would produce research that discovers the effectiveness of different interventions.

Today, just like years ago, mental illness has a stigma. Teacher burnout carries a stigma too. In the eyes of many, teachers are not doing their jobs as they believe is required. Teachers are giving it their all; and it is not enough. This creates stress and anxiety among educators. Teachers are not quitters. They want to help students find success and be productive citizens in the community. Are teachers not leaving the classroom because they do not want to have the “shame” follow them?

As burnout becomes prevalent, more studies need to be completed in school districts with high attrition rates to determine why. There were articles that interviewed teachers after they had left the profession, but there were no studies that had indicated why they left. Research performed with school district information would be valuable in reducing teacher burnout and attrition.

I was incredibly surprised to see that mindfulness-based interventions (breathing, journaling, etc.) and colouring were the only calming strategies that I found in my research for staff. (There was a program in the UK called the GBG (Good Behavior Game) that increased positive behaviors in the students and reduced staff stress.) I had expected to find more techniques used as burnout is a worldwide issue. Are there different strategies besides mindfulness-based inventions and colouring that are utilized?

The research on the topic of teacher burnout was eye-opening for me. I knew what the word burnout meant. I know that I had used it in association with teaching before myself. I did

not know the implications that it had on a person's body and how detrimental it can be to a person if they do not take care of themselves. I hope that burnout research and prevention measures continue in my district as well as those across the world to keep my colleagues and my mind and body healthy. My research detailed how teacher burnout was defined and how increased levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, along with decreased personal accomplishments were symptoms. Although teachers felt their minds and bodies working against them, they continued to teach until they no longer could present themselves as an effective teacher and leader. Health issues such as stress, anxiety, body aches, increased blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases were suffered by many teachers before leaving the classroom. School districts are implementing mindfulness-based interventions to reduce the stress and anxiety in their teachers. They are increasing staff well-being to build-up staff and decrease attrition.

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