



# IMPACT OF MODERN WORK DEMANDS ON TEACHER STRESS AND BURNOUT

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**Abstract:** As educational systems worldwide undergo rapid transformations, the teaching profession faces increasing pressure from modern work demands. This study examines the impact of contemporary workplace challenges which includes technological integration, administrative burdens, and heightened accountability—on teacher stress and burnout. Drawing on the Transactional Model of Stress and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) framework, the research utilized a quantitative, cross-sectional design with a sample of 120 teachers. Results from one-sample t-tests indicated that teachers experience significant levels of both stress ( $M = 19.80$ ) and burnout ( $M = 60.13$ ), with extremely large effect sizes ( $d = 3.62$  and  $3.82$ , respectively). A key finding was that burnout levels were substantially higher than stress levels, supporting the theoretical understanding of burnout as a long-term consequence of chronic, unmanaged occupational stress.

**Index Terms** - teacher stress, burnout, modern work demands, Job Demands–Resources model, educational quality, Maslach Burnout Inventory.

## 1.INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary global landscape, the role of an educator has shifted from simple knowledge diffusion to a complex navigation of multifaceted professional demands. Historically, teacher stress was attributed to classroom management and student behavior; but currently the "modern work demand" era introduces new stressors such as rapid technological integration, continuous professional monitoring, and an ever-expanding administrative workload.

Right now, schools are shifting in ways few expected. Long ago, teachers were seen as stable figures - guiding young minds with calm and purpose. Yet step by step, that clear picture fades under constant motion. Instead of a single focus, attention splits across screens, spreadsheets, student moods, behavior logs, software updates. One moment they teach fractions, next they fix login errors, then comfort someone overwhelmed - all before lunch. These added layers pile up fast, arriving faster than training or time can keep pace. Little thought went into how it feels to carry so much each day. Now exhaustion runs deep, quiet but widespread, showing up where it matters most

At the heart of this shift are "modern work demands." While technology was promised as a tool to simplify education and ease of teaching learning process, for many teachers, it has introduced a "24/7 connectivity" trap. There is pressure on teachers to be constantly available via email, several what's app group to maintain complex Learning Management Systems (LMS), and to provide real-time data on student progress has blurred the boundaries between professional and personal life. These are not merely logistical changes; they are cognitive and emotional burdens. When a teacher spends more time

navigating software or documenting compliance than they do interacting with students, a sense of professional alienation begins to set in.

When pressures build up, teachers might feel overwhelmed. What adds pressure? Endless paperwork, parents' rising expectations, unclear job roles, constant testing, plus little backup from leadership. This gap grows if personal strength or outside help feels too thin. A person notices stress once what's required passes what they can handle. The mind labels it when effort stretches past supply. It is a state of constant "running on empty." If this imbalance persists, the stress response does not just vanish; it hardens into burnout.

Burnout is far more than just being "tired." It is a profound, systemic erosion of the self. It begins with emotional exhaustion, where the teacher feels they have nothing left to give. This often leads to depersonalization—a defensive mechanism where the teacher subconsciously detaches from their students to protect their remaining energy. Finally, the sense of personal accomplishment withers, leaving the educator feeling like a mere "cog in a machine." Given that the quality of any education system is fundamentally limited by the well-being of its teachers, exploring how these modern demands act as catalysts for stress and burnout is not just an academic exercise; it is a necessity for the survival of the profession. This study seeks to investigate the depth of this impact, providing a data-driven look at the psychological health of those at the front lines of our classrooms.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The relationship between job demands and psychological outcomes is extensively documented in recent psychological research. Demerouti et al. (2001) proposed the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, which serves as a primary framework for this study. Their research identifies two distinct psychological processes: a health impairment process, where excessive job demands lead to the depletion of energy and burnout, and a motivational process, where job resources lead to high engagement. In the context of modern teaching, technology can act as both a resource and a demand, depending on the level of institutional support provided to the educator.

Further studies have explored the specific drivers of burnout. Fernet et al. (2012) found that autonomous motivation acts as a buffer against emotional exhaustion, suggesting that when teachers feel they have a choice and voice in their work, the impact of high demands is lessened.

Conversely, Kyriacou (2001) argued that the "intensification" of teacher work—where teachers are expected to do more in less time—is the leading cause of chronic stress.

In the Indian context, Rana and Soodan (2019) observed that organizational climate is a significant predictor of teacher job satisfaction, noting that a lack of supportive leadership often accelerates the transition from stress to burnout.

Research indicates that prolonged stress leads to burnout, which negatively affects teachers' emotional well-being and professional performance (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Studies have also shown that teachers experiencing burnout are more likely to exhibit reduced motivation, absenteeism, and lower job satisfaction.

Geographical variations also reveal the universality of the burnout crisis. In Ethiopia, **belay et al. (2023)** found a 37.4% prevalence of work-related burnout among public school teachers, identifying low role clarity, job dissatisfaction, and student demotivation as the primary psychosocial predictors. Their study reinforces the notion that burnout is a substantial public health issue driven by an imbalance between professional expectations and the resources available to meet them.

The impact of global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has further intensified these stressors. **Vargas Rubilar and Oros (2021)** examined 9,058 educators using the interactional model of stress, finding that over 60% of teachers experienced high stress due to uncertainty and work overload. Their results confirmed a significant correlation between these pandemic-related threats and increased emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, emphasizing the urgent need for institutional interventions to preserve teacher health during periods of systemic instability.

The consensus among researchers is that while stress is a common professional experience, burnout is the long-term price of chronic, unmanaged occupational pressure. Modern work demands have significantly increased the "cognitive load" on teachers, making traditional coping mechanisms less effective. There is a clear gap in understanding how the disparity between stress and burnout levels manifests in current educational settings, which this study seeks to address.

The present study serves as a critical intervention by providing empirical evidence of how modern, tech-driven work demands directly enhances the transition from routine occupational stress to chronic burnout. Spotting the growing "burnout gap" in classrooms shows school leaders that old ways of handling stress might not work anymore under today's tech-heavy demands. Because pressures have shifted, new systems matter more than ever - clearer job expectations along with stronger backing from institutions can shield teachers' well-being, which directly shapes how students learn. In time, these insights could shape smarter support plans rooted in real data, keeping both teaching effectiveness alive and educators on the job longer.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Objective

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the levels of perceived stress and burnout among teachers and to determine if there is a significant difference between immediate stress responses and long-term burnout symptoms in the face of modern work demands.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The present study follows a quantitative, cross-sectional research design. This allowed for the collection of data at a single point in time to provide a snapshot of the psychological state of the teaching workforce.

#### 3.3 Sample Size

The study consisted of 120 school teachers aged between 18 to 60 selected through convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was chosen because it is a non-probability sampling method where participants are selected based on their easy accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Participants represented different teaching backgrounds from govt, private funded, nonaided organization etc. and different teaching levels like pre-primary, primary, secondary and senior secondary.

#### 3.4 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that the participants were actively engaged in teaching roles that involve modern administrative and technological demands.

#### 3.5 Inclusion Criteria

- Full-time teachers with at least one year of experience.
- Teachers who utilize digital learning management systems or online grading tools.

#### 3.6 Exclusion Criteria

- Part-time or substitute teachers.
- Non-teaching administrative staff.

### 3.7 Sources of Data Collection

Primary data were collected through two standardized psychological instruments: the Teacher Stress Scale (TSS) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES).

- **Teacher Stress Scale (TSS):** This standardized instrument assesses the frequency and intensity of stress experienced by teachers in relation to their professional responsibilities. Higher scores indicate greater perceived stress.
- **Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES):** This validated scale assesses three core dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. High scores in the first two dimensions, combined with low scores in the third, indicate higher levels of burnout.

### 3.8 Procedure

Participants were briefed on the study's purpose and assured of confidentiality. The questionnaires were distributed digitally, and participants were asked to respond based on their experiences over the last six months to ensure the data reflected "modern" work conditions.

### 3.9 Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) and One-Sample t-tests to compare the sample means against the mid-points of the standardized scales. Cohen's d was calculated to measure effect size.

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The mean score for teacher stress was 19.80 (SD = 5.47), while the mean score for burnout was significantly higher at 60.13 (SD = 15.75).

| Variable             | Mean  | SD    | t-value | p-value | Cohen's d |
|----------------------|-------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Teacher Stress (TSS) | 19.8  | 5.47  | 39.67   | < .001  | 3.62      |
| Burnout (MBI)        | 60.13 | 15.75 | 41.82   | < .001  | 3.82      |

## IV. DATA INTERPRETATION

The interpretation of data focuses on the intensity of the scores relative to the maximum possible scores on the TSS and MBI-ES. A Mean score of 19.80 on the Teacher Stress Scale suggests a moderate-to-high level of daily stress. However, the Mean score of 60.13 on the Burnout scale indicates a disproportionately higher level of long-term exhaustion.

The significant t-values (39.67 for stress and 41.82 for burnout) suggest that these results are not due to chance but are representative of the sample population. The large gap between the stress mean and the burnout mean suggests that while stress is present, the "burnout" phase is much more advanced among the participants.

## V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis confirms that teachers are facing extreme psychological pressure. The extremely large effect sizes ( $d > 3.0$ ) indicate that the impact of modern work demands is not just statistically significant but practically overwhelming. The discussion centers on the "burnout gap"—the finding that burnout is more severe than stress. This suggests that the current educational environment is not just "stressful" in the

short term; it is unsustainable in the long term. As demands like "24/7 connectivity" and "data-driven accountability" increase, the lack of recovery time pushes teachers directly into the burnout zone.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Modern work demands are an inevitable part of the technological evolution of education, but they carry a heavy human cost. This study concludes that burnout has become a more dominant feature of the teaching profession than simple stress. Without institutional changes to provide more "resources" (support, time, autonomy), the "demands" of the modern classroom will continue to deplete the teaching workforce.

## VII. LIMITATIONS

The study is limited by its cross-sectional nature, which prevents the establishment of a causal timeline. Additionally, the sample size of 120, while significant, may not capture the full diversity of teacher experiences across different geographical regions.

## VIII. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should expand to include qualitative interviews to understand the "lived experience" of modern demands. Investigating the role of personal resilience factors and demographic variables (age, years of experience) would also provide a more nuanced view.

## IX. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to observe how teacher well-being fluctuates over an entire academic year. Comparative studies between public and private sector teachers could also reveal how different organizational structures influence burnout.

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