

## **Relationship between Workload and Burnout of Special Education Teachers**

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### **Abstract**

Special education teachers tend to undergo burnout more than general education teachers. One of the reasons of burnout is work load and unjustified division of workload in special education sector. Consequently, the turnover rate and rate of absenteeism is higher over there. The purpose of the present study is therefore, to examine the relationship between workload and burnout among special education teachers in the department of special education Punjab. Correlational research design was used for this research study. The data of this study was obtained from 374 special education teachers from 9 districts of the Punjab. Stratified cluster random sample technique was used to draw the sample. The data were collected through questionnaire developed by the researchers for work load and burnout. The results of this study showed that more workload does result in higher levels of burnout, which means that there is a positive correlation between workload and burnout. In order to increase job motivation level of teachers, time scale promotion of teacher of special education may be ensured.

**Keywords:** Burnout, workload, special education teachers.

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## Introduction

Workload refers to the amount of work one person has to do in order to complete his task. Workload is interconnected with many psychological problems; burnout is among one of them. (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). *One of the major aspect of workload is job burnout. When workload exceeds and person find himself helpless to deal with workload, job burnout develops. Burn out is characterized by three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Emotional exhaustion deals with the feeling of emotionally drained and exhausted by one's work. Depersonalization refers to detachment and being indifferent from work place. lack of feelings of personal accomplishment from the job is a sign of teachers' burnout. When a person goes through all these three component consequently he develops feeling of alienation from workplace. Generally, it has been noted that those professions which demand more interactions with people, generate burnout. The study of Kirsch and van den Berghe, 2010) established that teachers are more vulnerable to burnout out because of their frequent personal interactions as compared to employee who works in product sector (Kirsch & van den Berghe, 2010).*

In special education sector, coping with the daily emotional and behavioral and learning needs of special children makes teachers' job more stressful. This happens not only in Pakistan but across the world that special education teacher feels heavy work load and becomes victim of burnout. Singer (1992) reported that approximately half of the special education teachers across the world leave their jobs within first five years of their job.

It has been observed that reasons for high turnover rate of teachers is heavy and unjustified workload in Special education schools of Punjab. In remote areas of special education institutes of public sector only one or two teachers has to run the whole school and their responsibilities include administrative and academic both. This situation leads them towards burnout so eventually they quit their jobs or switch over to another sector. Moreover, along with their job extra workload they had to bear the extra pressure of stake holders, parents and unusual behavior patterns of children with disability. There is no proper job description of teachers so far. So those teachers are unable to do justice with their profession. Emotionally exhausted and burnout teachers have low performance and disturbed relationship with colleagues (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff & Harniss, 2001). Therefore, the fundamental

purpose of this study was to examine relationship between workload and burnout of special education teachers.

### **Rationale of the Study**

In Punjab special education teachers are undergoing many problems and one of them is burnout but there is no awareness of burnout and unjustified workload in schools because of untrained heads of schools. So, despite getting good salary package and extra special allowance, turnover rate has been increased and job performances of teachers are low. Therefore, the present study was an effort to identify these gaps and mainly relationship between workload and burnout.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

Nine randomly selected districts of the Punjab comprised the accessible population of the study. Teachers and heads of special education schools Punjab working in four disabilities was included in the study. Total 374 respondents were selected.

#### **Sample**

Cluster stratified random sampling technique was used to draw sample of study from probability sampling methods to draw sample from the population of special education school teachers.

#### **Instrument**

Two questionnaires comprised of 23 and 38 items each were used to measure the burn out dimensions and workload. These questionnaires were developed by researchers. the pilot test for questionnaire of workload was .791 The reliability of the pilot test for questionnaire of burnout was .812.

## Results

### Frequency Table

Table 1

*Frequencies distribution of respondents according to their demographics*

Sr.	Variable		Frequency	Percent
1	Gender	Male	108	28.9
		Female	266	71.1
2	Age	25 to 40 years	281	75.1
		41 to 60 years	93	24.9
3	Education	Matric	8	2.1
		Intermediate	8	2.1
		Graduation	9	2.4
		Masters	334	89.3
		M.Phil	15	4.0
4	Designation	JEST	170	45.5
		SST	135	36.1
		Others	69	18.4
5	Experience	Less than one year	74	19.8
		2 to 4 years	139	37.2
		5 to 7 years	84	22.5
		More than 7 years	77	20.6

Table 2

*Regression Analysis of workload in organizational culture and burnout*

Variables	Correlation	B	r <sup>2</sup>	Significance
Emotional exhaustion	-.144	-.144	.021	.005
Depersonalization	-.120	-.120	.015	.138
Personal Achievement	.005	.005	.000	.994

Table 2 reveals correlation, and regression values of organizational culture's variable workload and emotional exhaustion of teachers. Table shows that correlation value is -.144, which shows that there is negative correlation between workload and emotional exhaustion. This means that emotional exhaustion will increase with the increase of workload in an organizational and vice versa. Table shows that the value of Beta ( $\beta$ ) is -.144 which also shows the negative relation between emotional exhaustion and workload in an organizational and there is statistical significant difference as the significance value is .005. It means that there is a significant difference

between respondents' opinion. While on the other hand R- square ( $r^2$ ) value is .021, which means it can be said with 79% confidence that if workload of teacher will increase emotional exhaustion will increase.

Table 2 reveals correlation, and regression values of workload and depersonalization of teachers. Table shows that value is -.120, which shows that there is positive correlation between workload and depersonalization of teachers. This means that depersonalization of teachers will increase with the increase of workload in an organizational culture and vice versa. Table shows that the value of Beta ( $\beta$ ) is-.120 which also shows the positive relation between depersonalization of teachers and his workload in an organization and there is no statistical significant difference as the significance value is .138. It means there is no significant difference between respondents' opinion. While on the other hand R- square ( $r^2$ ) value is .015, which means it can be said with 85% confidence that if workload of teacher in an organizational will increase, the depersonalization of teacher will also increase.

Table 2 reveals correlation, and regression values of workload and personal achievements of teachers. Table shows that correlation value is .005, which shows that there is positive but very weak correlation between organizational workload and personal achievements of teachers. This means that personal achievements of teachers will increase with the decrease of workload in an organization. Table shows that the value of Beta ( $\beta$ ) is .005 which also shows the positive but very weak relation between personal achievements of teachers and workload in an organization and that is no statistical significant difference as the significance value is .994. It means there is no significant difference between respondents' opinion. While on the other hand R- square ( $r^2$ ) value is .000, which means it can be said with 100% confidence that if workload of teachers will increase the personal achievements of teachers will decrease.

Overall this table reveals that there is negative relationship between burnout and workload of teachers in an organization. If teacher's workload will decrease in an organization, burnout will also decrease and similarly if teacher's workload will increase, burnout will also increase.

Table 3

*Factor analysis variables of Burnout in Special education teachers*

	Communalities	
	Initial	Extraction
Emotional Exhaustion	1.000	.762
Depersonalization	1.000	.839
Personal achievements	1.000	.849

Table 3 shows that personal achievement of teachers is major factor in relation to other factors of organization with value of 0.849 and emotional exhaustion is the least affecting variable of organization with value 0.762.

### **Findings**

Correlation value which is  $-.144$ , shows that there is negative correlation between workload in organizational culture and emotional exhaustion. This means that emotional exhaustion will increase with the increase of workload in an organizational culture. Correlation value which is  $-.120$ , shows that there is positive correlation between workload and depersonalization of teachers. This means that depersonalization of teachers will increase with the increase of workload in an organizational culture. Correlation between workload and personal achievements of teachers. This means that personal achievements of teachers will increase with the decrease of workload in an organization.

### **Conclusion**

Teacher's workload will decrease in an organization then burnout will also decrease and job performance will be high. Similarly, if teacher's workload will increase the burnout will also increase. Work load generates stress among teachers because it leads towards high demand and low job performance which eventually leads towards burnout. Extra workload produces stress among teachers which generates depersonalization and lead towards problem of burnout. Hence, there is a dire need to distribute reasonable work load equally among all teachers.

### **Recommendations**

The organization should avoid putting extra work load and unnecessary assignments on special education teachers which increases their burnout. In order to increase job motivation level of teachers' time scale promotion of teachers of special education may be ensured by the department of special education. Their promotion may carry special incentives like accelerated promotion based on their high achievements and better job performance. In order to refine teaching skills a well-equipped resource room in each special education institution may be established. Head of the institutes may measure the burnout of their teachers by using burnout tool developed by the researcher or some other

burnout tool to improve their work output. The Policy makers must also resort to upscale the professional abilities of teachers and administrators of special education institutes inter alia stress management launching capacity building programs through ADP funded schemes.

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