



Teacher Educator Burnout In Colleges Of Education: Causes, Impact And Recommendations

1Sri Chandra shekara K, 2Dr Praveena K B

1Research Scholar , 2Professor

1University of Mysore ,

2University of Mysore

Abstract:

Teacher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of future educators, but the growing demands on teacher educators themselves often go unrecognized. This study investigates the phenomenon of burnout among teacher educators working in Colleges of Education, with two primary objectives: (1) to assess the level of burnout among these professionals, and (2) to compare burnout levels between male and female teacher educators. Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, has been identified as a significant factor affecting the efficiency, motivation, and mental well-being of educators. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from a representative sample of teacher educators across various institutions through a standardized burnout inventory. The results indicate that a substantial proportion of teacher educators experience moderate to high levels of burnout. Gender-based analysis reveals that female educators tend to experience higher emotional exhaustion, while male educators report greater depersonalization. The study also explores potential causes, including workload, institutional pressures, role ambiguity, and lack of administrative support. The impact of burnout extends beyond individual educators, influencing the overall quality of teacher education programs and the learning experiences of future teachers. The findings emphasize the need for institutional strategies such as workload management, mental health resources, and professional support systems to address and reduce burnout among teacher educators.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Burnout, Teacher Educators, Emotional Exhaustion.

Introduction:

Teacher education is a critical pillar in the development of effective educational systems. It provides the knowledge base, skills, and values essential for preparing competent and reflective future teachers. The process of teacher education goes beyond imparting pedagogical content; it includes fostering professional identity, critical thinking, and ethical responsibility among prospective teachers. Colleges of Education, as specialized institutions, are central to this process, and the quality of teacher education programs depends significantly on the expertise and commitment of teacher educators. As the educational landscape evolves—marked by technological change, curriculum reforms, and increasing accountability—teacher educators face mounting pressure to meet professional standards and produce high-quality graduates (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

A teacher educator is an academic professional who plays a multifaceted role in preparing future teachers. These roles include designing curricula, teaching educational theory and practice, supervising teaching practice, conducting research, and mentoring pre-service and in-service teachers. Loughran (2006) defines teacher educators as individuals engaged in the education and development of teachers, often requiring deep pedagogical knowledge, research acumen, and field experience. Despite their pivotal role, teacher educators often experience significant stress due to the complex nature of their responsibilities, the demand for academic output, and limited institutional support. These pressures can result in occupational stress and, if prolonged, may lead to burnout—a state of physical and emotional exhaustion that compromises professional effectiveness and well-being.

Burnout, first introduced by Freudenberger (1974), is a psychological condition characterized by emotional depletion and a sense of reduced personal accomplishment due to prolonged workplace stress. Later, Maslach and Jackson (1981) conceptualized burnout as a multidimensional syndrome consisting of three key components: emotional exhaustion (feeling overextended and emotionally drained), depersonalization (developing a distant or cynical attitude toward one's work or recipients of services), and reduced personal accomplishment (feeling ineffective or inadequate professionally). Burnout is particularly prevalent in helping professions such as teaching, where emotional labor and constant interpersonal engagement are required. In teacher education, burnout not only affects individuals but also impairs the broader goals of educational quality and institutional development.

The causes of burnout among teacher educators are often multifactorial. Contributing factors may include excessive workload, lack of administrative support, time constraints, student-related challenges, pressure to publish research, and role conflict (Mukundan & Ahour, 2011). The growing demand to adapt to new teaching technologies and methodologies, especially in the wake of digital transformation in education, further exacerbates stress levels. Gender differences have also been observed in how burnout is experienced, with some studies indicating that female educators tend to experience more

emotional exhaustion, while male educators may show higher levels of depersonalization (Purvanova & Muros, 2010). These complex dynamics necessitate a deeper investigation into the levels and patterns of burnout, especially within Colleges of Education. Understanding burnout among teacher educators is essential for maintaining a productive and supportive academic environment. When burnout goes unaddressed, it can lead to decreased job satisfaction, reduced quality of instruction, absenteeism, and eventual withdrawal from the profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Given the essential role teacher educators play in shaping future generations of teachers, it is critical to assess the level of burnout they experience, identify underlying causes, and explore gender-based differences in burnout symptoms. This study aims to fill that gap by examining burnout among teacher educators working in Colleges of Education, focusing on its levels, causes, and implications for the teaching-learning process and professional sustainability.

Need and Importance of the study:

The teaching profession has long been recognized as one of the most demanding occupations due to its emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal intensity. Within the realm of teacher education, these challenges are magnified, as teacher educators are responsible for shaping not only the knowledge base of pre-service teachers but also their pedagogical values and professional identity. Despite their critical role, teacher educators often operate under high-stress conditions caused by heavy workloads, institutional pressures, and increasing demands for research productivity and innovation in instructional delivery (Darling-Hammond, 2006). These stressors make them particularly vulnerable to burnout, a psychological condition that can hinder their effectiveness and overall well-being. Therefore, investigating burnout among teacher educators is crucial to understanding how their professional health impacts the overall quality of teacher education programs.

Burnout among teacher educators has significant implications for both individual professionals and educational institutions. Chronic burnout can lead to decreased job satisfaction, emotional detachment, absenteeism, and eventual attrition from the profession (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). For institutions, this results in reduced teaching quality, instability in academic staffing, and a negative effect on student learning outcomes. Moreover, gender differences in how burnout is experienced and expressed also warrant careful examination, as societal expectations and professional roles may shape how male and female educators respond to stress (Purvanova & Muros, 2010). Addressing these issues through empirical research can provide valuable insights into the systemic causes of burnout and help design targeted interventions to support teacher educators' mental health and professional sustainability.

Given the global emphasis on improving teacher quality and educational standards, the well-being of teacher educators must be a priority in educational policy and institutional planning. This study fills a critical research gap by focusing specifically on teacher educators in Colleges of Education—a group

often overlooked in burnout literature that tends to focus more broadly on school teachers. Identifying the levels and causes of burnout among this group and comparing experiences across gender lines provides a nuanced understanding of the problem. The findings can inform institutional leaders, policymakers, and mental health professionals in creating supportive environments that foster motivation, engagement, and retention among teacher educators (Kyriacou, 2001; Mukundan & Ahour, 2011). Ultimately, promoting the well-being of teacher educators is essential to ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of teacher preparation programs.

Literature Review:

Wendy M Reinke, Keith Herman, Melissa Stormont & Farshad Ghasemi (2025) have conducted by **Teacher Stress, Coping, Burnout, and Plans to Leave the Field: A Post-Pandemic Survey**. Teachers were leaving the field at high rates, highlighting the importance of investigating factors that impacted teacher attrition, including stress and burnout. In a sample of 468 teachers, 78% reported having thoughts of leaving or had already left the field. Teachers were asked about their stress levels, coping strategies, burnout, and efficacy in classroom management. Overall, they reported high levels of stress and burnout associated with their jobs. Teachers with higher efficacy experienced lower burnout and demonstrated a greater ability to cope with job-related challenges. Experienced teachers reported higher efficacy but also experienced greater burnout and were more likely to express intentions of leaving the profession. Furthermore, stress and burnout were stronger predictors of intentions to leave the field than either efficacy or coping. Qualitative data revealed that a lack of administrative support, being overworked, underpaid, and managing challenging student behaviors were among the top reasons cited by those not returning to teaching. Teacher stress, burnout, and attrition were found to negatively affect student social, emotional, and academic outcomes. Implications for both practice and policy were discussed.

Turner and Garvis (2023) have conducted a study on “**Teacher Educator Wellbeing and Burnout**”. Teacher educator wellbeing has increasingly become a focal point in educational research, particularly in light of growing institutional demands and evolving professional expectations. A comprehensive scoping review by Turner and Garvis (2023) emphasized that burnout among teacher educators remains an under-researched area despite its significant implications. Their study identified several key stressors, including workload intensification, role ambiguity, job insecurity, and insufficient institutional support. These factors collectively contribute to emotional exhaustion, diminished morale, and psychological disengagement. Teacher educators often face the dual pressure of maintaining high teaching standards while simultaneously contributing to academic research, which places considerable strain on their mental and emotional resources. The review calls for broader recognition of teacher educator wellbeing in academic and policy discussions, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and institutional support systems to protect the emotional health of these professionals and, by

extension, enhance the overall quality of teacher education programs.

McDonough et al. (2021) have conducted study on “**Impact of Workload and Institutional Pressures**”. The study explored how the pressures of academia—including high teaching loads, performance-based evaluations, and administrative responsibilities—can lead to significant burnout among teacher educators. The study highlighted that the increased demand for digital adaptation, especially in the post-pandemic context, has further intensified these challenges. Teacher educators are often required to balance multiple, and frequently conflicting, roles—such as educator, researcher, mentor, and administrator—without receiving proportional institutional support or necessary workload adjustments. This role conflict frequently results in emotional fatigue and depersonalization, ultimately undermining both job satisfaction and professional identity. Moreover, when institutions prioritize productivity and output over employee well-being, they inadvertently contribute to a toxic work culture that accelerates burnout. McDonough et al. emphasized the urgent need for systemic reforms in higher education policies to equitably distribute responsibilities and to acknowledge the holistic contributions of teacher educators to both academic excellence and student success.

Purvanova and Muros (2010) have conducted study on “**Gender Differences in Burnout Experiences**”. Burnout is not experienced uniformly across all demographics; gender plays a critical role in how stress manifests among teacher educators. In a widely cited meta-analysis, revealed that women in academic professions tend to report higher levels of emotional exhaustion, while men are more likely to experience depersonalization. This distinction is particularly significant in the field of teacher education, where emotional labor—often expected more of female educators—forms a substantial part of professional engagement. Female teacher educators are also more likely to juggle familial responsibilities alongside professional duties, exacerbating their vulnerability to burnout. The findings suggest that interventions must be tailored not only to individual needs but also take into account gender-based stressors and expectations. Institutional awareness and sensitivity to gender dynamics in workload distribution, leadership roles, and support services are essential for reducing burnout and promoting gender equity in academic workplaces.

Maslach & Leiter (2016) have conducted study on “**Consequences of Teacher Educator Burnout**”. The ramifications of burnout among teacher educators extend far beyond individual health issues; they affect institutional performance, student learning, and long-term educational goals. Chronic burnout can lead to disengagement, reduced creativity, increased absenteeism, and even early exit from the profession. For educational institutions, this results in staff turnover, instability in faculty teams, and inconsistent mentorship for student teachers. Burnout also hinders innovation and collaboration, as emotionally exhausted educators are less likely to engage in research or curriculum reform. According

to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010), burnout erodes self- efficacy—a key factor in teacher motivation and effectiveness. As teacher educators lose confidence in their abilities, the ripple effect is felt in the classroom, where pre-service teachers may receive diminished instruction and support. Addressing burnout is thus not just a personal health issue, but a structural challenge that impacts the quality and sustainability of teacher education systems.

Research Objectives

The researcher have framed the following objectives as follows;

1. To assess the level of Burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.
2. To compare the burnout of Male and Female Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Hypothesis tested:

The researcher have framed the following hypothesis as follows;

1. There is no significant difference between Male and Female burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Methodology:

The present study was conducted using the descriptive method of research, adopting a quantitative approach for data collection and analysis. To ensure representation across different types of institutions, the stratified random sampling technique was employed. The sample consisted of 100 B.Ed. students selected from various Teacher Education Colleges located in the Bangalore zone.

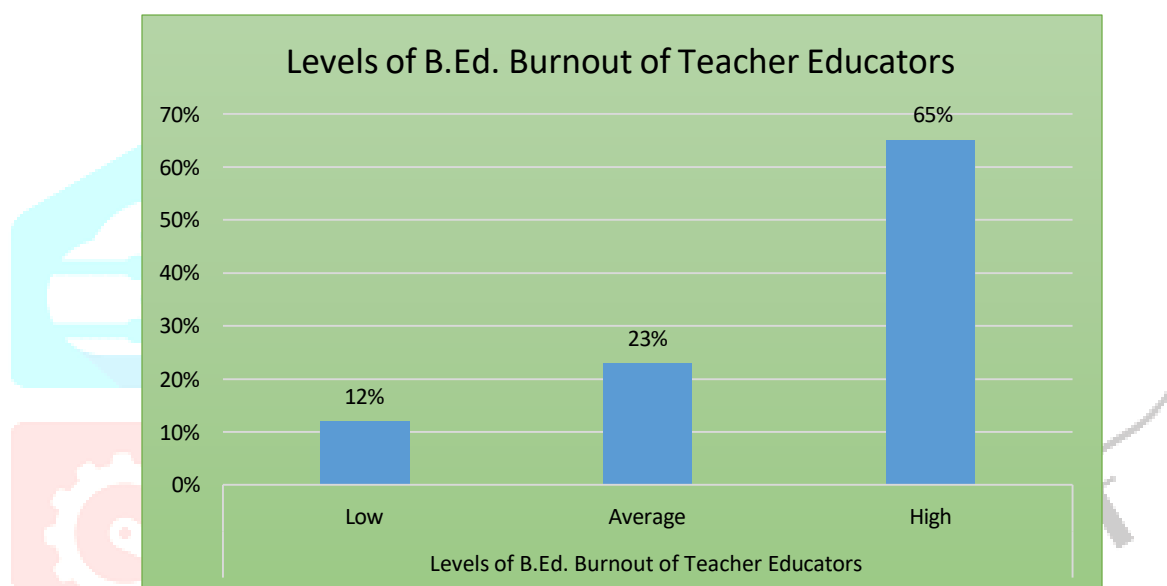
Results and Discussions

Objective: 1. To assess the level of Burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Table 1.1: The levels of Burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Variables	Levels of B.Ed. Burnout of Teacher Educators			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Teacher Education Colleges located in the Bangalore zone.	12	23	65	100
	12%	23%	65%	100%

Table 1.1 presents the distribution of burnout levels among B.Ed. Teacher Educators working in Teacher Education Colleges located in the Bangalore zone. The data is categorized into three levels of burnout: Low, Average, and High. Out of a total sample of 100 teacher educators, 12% were reported to experience low levels of burnout, 23% fell under the average level, while a significant majority of 65% experienced high levels of burnout. This distribution clearly indicates that burnout is a prominent issue among teacher educators in the region, with nearly two-thirds of the respondents exhibiting high burnout symptoms. The findings highlight the urgent need for institutional interventions, stress management strategies, and supportive work environments to address the professional wellbeing of teacher educators.



Graph: 1.1 Levels of Burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

The above graph 1.1 depicting the **levels of burnout among B.Ed. Teacher Educators in Teacher Education Colleges located in the Bangalore zone** clearly illustrates a noticeable disparity across the three categories: **Low**, **Average**, and **High**. As shown in the graph, a significant majority—**65%** of teacher educators—fall under the **high burnout** category, indicating a widespread issue of professional stress and emotional fatigue. Meanwhile, **23%** of educators experience **average levels of burnout**, and only **12%** report **low levels of burnout**. The graphical representation highlights a skewed distribution toward high burnout, emphasizing the need for effective stress management, institutional support, and well-being programs within teacher education colleges. This visual data serves as a compelling indicator of the challenges faced by educators and the urgency for systemic interventions.

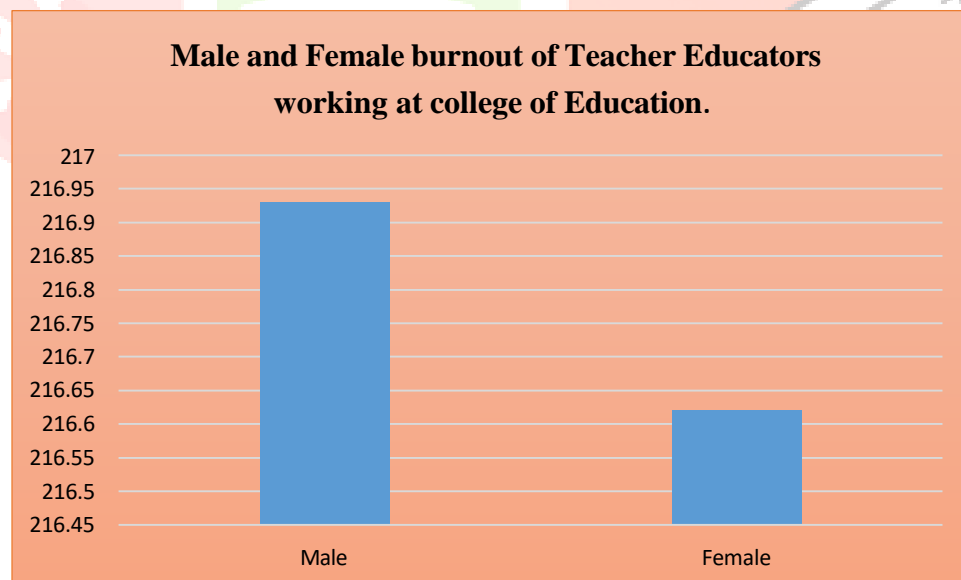
Objective: 2. To compare the burnout of Male and Female Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Hypothesis: 1. 1. There is no significant difference between Male and Female burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Table 4.12: Shows number of Gender, N, Mean, Standard Deviation and ‘t’ value about the difference between Male and Female burnout of Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	Significant at 0.05 level
Male	50	216.93	18.47	.862	No significant
Female	50	216.62	18.37		

Table 1.2 presents a comparison of burnout levels between male and female B.Ed. Teacher Educators in Teacher Education Colleges located in the Bangalore zone. The table shows that male educators (N = 50) had a mean burnout score of 216.93 with a standard deviation of 18.47, while female educators (N = 50) had a mean score of 216.62 and a standard deviation of 18.37. The calculated t-value of 0.862 indicates that the difference in mean scores is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that there is no meaningful difference in burnout levels between male and female teacher educators, implying that gender is not a significant factor influencing burnout in this sample.



Graph: 1.2 Difference between burnout of Male and Female Teacher Educators working at college of Education.

The above graph 1.2 illustrating the comparison of burnout levels between male and female teacher educators in Colleges of Education shows minimal variation between the two groups. As represented visually, both genders have nearly identical mean scores—216.93 for males and 216.62 for females—indicating a consistent experience of burnout across gender lines. The standard deviations (18.47 for males and 18.37 for females) further suggest a similar spread of responses within each group. The t-value of 0.862 confirms that this difference is statistically insignificant at the 0.05 level. The graph supports the conclusion that gender does not significantly influence burnout levels among teacher educators, reinforcing the idea that institutional factors, rather than demographic variables, may be more critical contributors to burnout.

Causes of Teacher Educator Burnout:

1. Teacher educators often face excessive workload, juggling teaching, research, mentoring, and administrative duties.
2. Lack of administrative and institutional support leads to feelings of isolation and under appreciation.
3. Role ambiguity and conflict arise when expectations are unclear or when multiple responsibilities clash.
4. The constant pressure to publish academic work adds to the stress of maintaining teaching excellence.
5. Rapid changes in educational technology require continual adaptation, often without adequate training or resources.
6. Gender-based societal and professional expectations, particularly for women, contribute to unequal stress burdens and work-life imbalance.

Impacts of Teacher Educator Burnout:

1. Burnout leads to **emotional exhaustion**, making educators feel drained and unmotivated.
2. It results in **depersonalization**, where educators may become detached or indifferent toward students.
3. Burnout causes a **decline in teaching quality**, affecting student engagement and learning outcomes.
4. Affected educators may experience **reduced job satisfaction**, leading to absenteeism or early retirement.
5. Institutions face **staff instability and higher turnover rates**, disrupting program continuity and effectiveness.
6. Long-term burnout can **undermine the success of teacher education programs**, impacting the preparation of future educators.

Recommendations

1. Colleges of Education should introduce regular wellness initiatives and counseling support to help teacher educators manage stress and prevent burnout.
2. Academic institutions must evaluate and balance the workload among faculty to avoid overburdening teacher educators with teaching, research, and administrative duties.
3. Administrators should actively support teacher educators by acknowledging their efforts, providing clear role expectations, and offering mentorship and professional guidance.
4. Since gender differences exist in burnout symptoms, institutions should design gender-responsive strategies that address the unique challenges faced by both male and female educators.
5. Allowing for hybrid teaching models or flexible scheduling could reduce burnout by supporting a better work-life balance.
6. Regular training in digital tools, pedagogy, and stress management can equip teacher educators to handle evolving academic demands confidently and effectively.
7. Peer networks and collaborative teaching models can ease individual burdens and provide emotional and academic support among colleagues.
8. Teacher education institutions should embed burnout assessment tools and wellbeing checks into their institutional policies to ensure proactive support mechanisms.

Conclusion

This study explored the levels, causes, and gender-based differences in burnout among B.Ed. Teacher Educators in the Bangalore zone. The findings revealed a high prevalence of burnout, with 65% of respondents experiencing high levels, underscoring the urgency of addressing this issue in teacher education institutions. While no significant gender difference was observed in overall burnout levels, literature suggests that male and female educators may experience and cope with burnout differently. Burnout in teacher educators not only affects individual wellbeing but also impacts the quality of teacher training and, ultimately, the preparedness of future teachers. Therefore, it is imperative for institutions and policymakers to develop targeted, evidence-based strategies that support the mental and emotional health of teacher educators. Prioritizing their wellbeing will lead to more sustainable teacher education systems and a stronger foundation for educational reform.

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