

## TEACHERS' BURNOUT IN THE CLASSROOM: EXPLORING ITS IMPACT ON STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

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### **Abstract**

*The connection between teacher burnout and student academic achievement is crucial to understand, as exhausted and overwhelmed teachers may struggle to effectively educate their students, potentially leading to lower academic performance. This study aimed to explore this relationship through a descriptive correlational approach. Using a convenient sampling method, the researcher selected 319 secondary school teachers from public sector schools across three districts in Punjab: Lahore, Sahiwal, and Faisalabad. To assess teacher burnout levels, the Maslach Burnout Inventory was used, while student achievement scores were gathered from the official results gazette of the respective districts. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 26. The findings revealed a significant negative correlation between teacher burnout and student academic achievement. In other words, students who performed poorly were more likely to be taught by teachers experiencing high levels of burnout. This study adds valuable insights to existing research, emphasizing the critical role of teacher well-being in shaping student success.*

**Keywords:** *Teachers' burnout, Academic achievement, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion*

### **Introduction:**

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping children's lives, not only by facilitating learning but also by influencing their social and emotional development. They serve as mentors and coaches, guiding students toward academic and personal growth. Teaching is more than just a profession; it is an act of service to education. Despite being a noble and respected career, teaching is also one of the most stressful professions, with high levels of stress often leading to burnout. Burnout is defined as a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion resulting from prolonged and excessive stress (Trauma-and-Stressor-Related Disorders, 2013). While teacher burnout is not a new phenomenon, it has become increasingly prevalent due to various challenges in the education system (Alvy & Robbins, 2010). Teachers often struggle to balance their professional and personal lives, which can lead to emotional distress and decreased job satisfaction. Burnout typically progresses in three stages. The first stage arises from an imbalance between workload demands and available resources. The second stage involves fatigue, sleep disturbances, forgetfulness, and emotional exhaustion, leading to physical symptoms such as headaches. In the third stage, teachers undergo behavioral changes that not only affect their own well-being but also impact student performance and classroom management (Schleicher, 2018). Research suggests that burnout in teachers contributes to poor academic performance, classroom mismanagement, and negative student outcomes (Brower & Tomic, 2000). Teachers today are increasingly overwhelmed by their responsibilities, leading to decreased motivation and an inability to meet the ever-growing demands of the profession. Without appropriate interventions, prolonged stress results in burnout, which negatively impacts not only educators but also students. The issue of burnout is particularly relevant to primary and secondary school teachers, who frequently report high levels of stress

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(NUTP, 2005). A supportive and positive work environment plays a significant role in reducing burnout. Teachers who are open-minded and adaptable tend to experience lower levels of stress and burnout (Zimmerman, 2008). However, studies examining coping mechanisms and burnout have produced conflicting results (Stratton et al., 1995). Some emphasize the role of emotional regulation, while others highlight the importance of adaptive coping strategies (David & Suls, 1999). Teachers who perceive challenges as opportunities for growth are less likely to experience burnout. Burnout is often viewed as a personal failing rather than an occupational hazard, leading to strained relationships with students and colleagues. It can diminish self-efficacy, reduce job satisfaction, and ultimately result in emotional exhaustion. Maslach, Schanfeld, and Leiten (2001) describe burnout as a psychological condition emerging from work-related stress, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of accomplishment. Research indicates that younger teachers are more susceptible to burnout than their older counterparts. Studies suggest that burnout is more common in early-career educators, as well as professionals in fields such as nursing, school administration, and higher education (Zohar, 1997). The pressure to meet educational standards, coupled with limited institutional support, exacerbates stress levels among younger teachers. Academic achievement is often defined as a student's ability to reach specific educational goals in schools, colleges, or universities (Richardson, 2012). A nurturing classroom environment is essential for fostering academic success. However, teacher burnout can create a negative learning atmosphere, which affects both instructional quality and student performance. When teachers experience burnout, their ability to engage with students diminishes, leading to weaker teacher-student relationships. Consequently, students may struggle with academic burnout, disengagement, and poor performance. The adverse effects of burnout can manifest in ineffective classroom management, increased student behavioral problems, and a lack of motivation to teach (Schleicher, 2018). Parental expectations also contribute to teacher burnout. Many parents hold teachers responsible for their children's academic success, further increasing the pressure on educators. Additionally, inadequate administrative support, poor communication, and lack of collaboration among colleagues exacerbate the issue. In this study, the factors contributing to teacher burnout and its correlation with student academic achievement will be examined to gain a deeper understanding of its implications. Recent studies have further highlighted the relationship between teacher burnout and student academic performance. Le, Mansor, and Manogar (2025) explored the connection between social support and burnout among educators. Their findings suggest that fostering emotional support for teachers enhances resilience, reducing stress and improving student outcomes (Le, Mansor, & Manogar, 2025). Zainal, Ghani, Chairul, and Khair (2025) analyzed the role of environmental factors in learning spaces. Their study highlighted how poor working conditions contribute to teacher stress, which in turn impacts student engagement and performance (Zainal, Ghani, Chairul, & Khair, 2025). Hamraeva (2025) examined how warm-up activities in classrooms can reduce stress for both teachers and students, promoting higher academic achievement. The study suggests that structured engagement strategies help mitigate burnout and foster a positive learning environment (Hamraeva, 2025). Teacher burnout is a significant issue with far-reaching consequences for both educators and students. The increasing pressures placed on teachers lead to chronic stress, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished student academic outcomes. Addressing burnout requires institutional support, improved working conditions, and effective coping strategies to enhance teacher well-being and student success. This study aims to explore the correlation between teacher burnout and student

academic performance, offering insights into potential solutions for reducing burnout in educational settings.

### **Problem Statement:**

Teachers encounter numerous challenges and professional difficulties throughout their careers. While many manage to navigate these obstacles, some eventually leave the profession due to burnout. This exhaustion not only affects their personal well-being but also has a direct impact on students' academic performance. Although research has explored the effects of teacher burnout on student achievement, there is limited evidence, particularly from a Pakistani context. To address this gap, this study aims to examine the relationship between teacher burnout and student academic achievement through a correlational approach.

### **Objective of the Study**

1. The aim of this study is to explore how teacher burnout impacts students' academic performance.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. How does teacher burnout affect students' academic achievement?
2. What is the impact of burnout among male teachers on the academic performance of male students?
3. How does burnout among female teachers influence the academic achievement of female students?
4. What is the relationship between burnout among urban teachers and their students' academic performance?
5. How does burnout among rural teachers affect the academic success of rural students?
6. What is the impact of burnout among science teachers on the academic achievement of science students?
7. How does burnout among art teachers influence the academic performance of art students?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study holds significant importance in understanding its impact on the teaching-learning process, educational policies, and future improvements in education.

In the context of the teaching-learning process, teacher burnout can directly affect student learning, classroom dynamics, and peer relationships. By examining this issue, the study provides valuable insights into how teacher burnout influences various aspects of students' academic and social development. Educational policies play a crucial role in shaping the teaching and learning environment, and in many cases, inadequate policies contribute to teacher burnout. Pakistan's education system faces multiple challenges, including insufficient funding, poor policy implementation, an ineffective examination system, a lack of physical resources, and a shortage of well-trained teachers. Additionally, the absence of clear educational direction and failure to enforce policies further exacerbate these issues. Addressing these challenges and implementing effective policies can help alleviate teacher burnout (Iqbal, 1981). This study aims to highlight the factors contributing to burnout and provide recommendations for improving the teaching-learning process. It also sheds light on key areas such as individual differences among students, teacher-student relationships, and collaboration among colleagues, parental expectations, and

administrative pressures. Understanding these factors can contribute to creating a more supportive and effective educational environment in the future.

### **Delimitations of the Study:**

The scope of this study is limited to the following aspects:

1. The research includes only public and private secondary schools for boys and girls.
2. The study is conducted in high schools located in Lahore, Okara, and Faisalabad.
3. Data for the study is collected exclusively through a questionnaire.

### **Operational Definitions**

Burnout is characterized by symptoms such as emotional exhaustion, a detached attitude, and a diminished sense of accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). It is a form of long-term chronic stress (Maslach, 2003) and is classified into three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 2018).

#### **Teacher Burnout**

Teacher burnout refers to prolonged mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion, leading to stress and reduced professional effectiveness (Hickmon-Rosa & Reinke, 2018).

#### **Academic**

Good (1959) defined academic achievement as the knowledge students acquire, which is typically measured through tests or scores.

#### **Achievement**

### **Research Methodology**

This study follows a structured research methodology, covering key aspects such as research design, methodology, population, sample selection, data collection tools, and data analysis. Each step is carefully implemented to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research.

### **Research Paradigm**

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of teacher burnout on students' academic performance at the secondary school level. The study aims to establish a correlation between teacher burnout and student learning outcomes while identifying the key challenges affecting both teachers and students. A quantitative research approach is adopted, focusing on public and private secondary schools in Punjab, Pakistan. This methodology allows the researcher to systematically control and analyze study variables. Data is collected from both male and female secondary school teachers (SSTs) in both urban and rural settings. The study specifically focuses on three major divisions in Punjab: Lahore, Faisalabad, and Sahiwal, to better understand the challenges faced by teachers and students in this region. For data collection, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) questionnaire is used, which consists of 22 items categorized into three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

### **Research Design**

This study investigates the impact of teacher burnout on students' academic achievement at the secondary school level. A quantitative research approach is used to efficiently analyze the opinions of a large sample population. The study follows a survey-based research design, allowing for systematic data collection and analysis. To gather information from teachers, a 22-item questionnaire was developed specifically for this research.

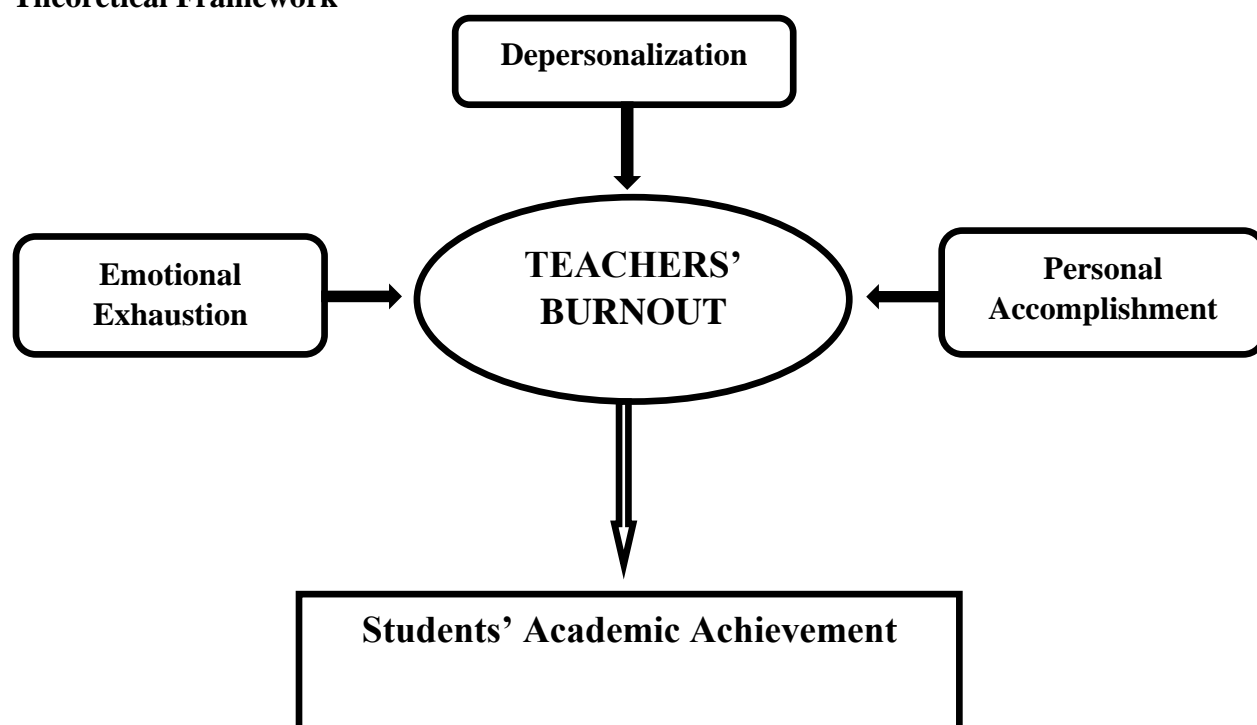
### **Population of the Study**

The study focuses on public and private high schools across Punjab, Pakistan. Data was collected from both male and female teachers, representing schools in both urban and rural areas to ensure a diverse and comprehensive understanding of the issue.

### Sample and Sampling Techniques

Punjab consists of ten divisions, but for this study, the researcher selected three divisions—Sahiwal, Lahore, and Faisalabad—using a convenient sampling technique. Data was gathered from a total of 319 secondary school teachers (SSTs) to provide a representative sample for analysis.

### Theoretical Framework



**Figure 1: The three components of burnout based on the Maslach & Jackson theory**

Maslach and Jackson (1981) identified three key dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Teachers experiencing burnout often feel they have given their best instructional efforts to students but no longer have the energy or motivation to continue providing effective teaching. Depersonalization refers to a state of emotional withdrawal caused by occupational stress. Individuals affected by depersonalization develop negative attitudes and distance themselves from family, colleagues, and social interactions. They tend to avoid gatherings, refrain from addressing their problems, and deliberately isolate themselves from others. Reduced personal accomplishment occurs when individuals feel ineffective in their professional roles. Teachers experiencing this form of burnout may lose interest in improving their students' performance and begin to doubt their own abilities. This condition is often accompanied by physical symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, stomach issues, ulcers, an elevated heart rate, breathing difficulties, and neurological problems (Talmor,



2005). In addition to physical symptoms, psychological effects of burnout include anger, depression, chronic stress, confusion, impaired cognitive function, and persistent feelings of inadequacy (Talmor, 2005). Other signs of burnout include sluggishness, disrupted sleep patterns, and cognitive decline (Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003). These symptoms can severely impact both the personal well-being of teachers and their ability to effectively support student learning.

### Research Instrument

To gather data from the respondents, a questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. Specifically, the researcher utilized the Maslach Burnout Inventory (1981), which comprises 22 items categorized into three key factors. The details of these factors are outlined below:

Sr	Factors	Items
1	Occupational Exhaustion (EE)	1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16,20
2	Depersonalization (DP)	5,10,11,15,22
3	Personal accomplishment Assessment (PA)	S4,7,9,12,17,18,19,21

### Data Collection

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used to assess the impact of teacher burnout on students' academic achievement within the Pakistani context. The questionnaire was designed using a seven-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "Never" to "Every day" to measure varying levels of burnout. In addition to burnout assessment, demographic information such as school name, location, subject area, pay scale, gender, and student academic performance was also collected. The questionnaire was distributed among 401 secondary school teachers, out of which 319 responded, resulting in a response rate of 79.75%, which was considered satisfactory for the study.

### Data Analysis

Once data collection was completed, the responses were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The collected data was coded based on the variables and factors outlined in the questionnaire. To analyze the results, the t-test was applied as the primary statistical technique.

### Data Analysis

This study aims to examine the impact of teacher burnout on students' academic achievement at the secondary level. This chapter presents a comprehensive statistical analysis of key study variables, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment as components of professional burnout. Data analysis is a crucial aspect of research, as the findings rely on accurate interpretation of the collected data. In this section, the gathered data is systematically examined, described, discussed, and analyzed. For this purpose, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-20) was used to conduct the analysis. Further details are provided below:

### Relationship between Teachers' Burnout and Students' Academic Achievement

**Table 2**

*Relationship between Teachers' Burnout and Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
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Burnout	319	2.829		
Achievement	319	3.50	-.165	.003

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data analysis presented in Table 2 indicates a significant negative correlation between teacher burnout and students' academic achievement ( $P = .003 < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.165$ ). This suggests that as teacher burnout increases, student academic performance declines.

### **Relationship between Teachers' Burnout and Students' Academic Achievement**

**Table 3**

*Relationship between Male Teachers' Burnout and Male Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
Burnout	201	2.837		
Achievement	201	3.40	-.149	.035

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 3 shows a significant negative correlation between male teachers' burnout and male students' academic achievement ( $p = .035 < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.149$ ). This indicates that as burnout levels increase among male teachers, the academic performance of male students' declines.

### **Relationship between Female Teachers' Burnout and Female Students' Academic Achievement**

**Table 4**

*Relationship between Female Teachers' Burnout and Female Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
Burnout	118	2.8171		
Achievement	118	3.69	-.214	.020

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 4 reveals a significant negative correlation between female teachers' burnout and female students' academic achievement ( $p = .020 < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.214$ ). This indicates that higher burnout levels among female teachers negatively impact the academic performance of female students.

### **Relationship between Urban Teachers' Burnout and Urban Students' Academic Achievement**

**Table 5**

*Relationship between Urban Teachers' Burnout and Urban Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
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Burnout	263	2.8111	-.145	.019
Achievement	263	3.55		

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 5 indicates a significant negative correlation between urban teachers' burnout and urban students' academic achievement ( $p = .019 < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.145$ ). This suggests that increased burnout among urban teachers negatively impacts the academic performance of urban students.

#### Relationship between Rural Teachers' Burnout and Rural Students' Academic Achievement Table 6

*Relationship between Rural Teachers' Burnout and Rural Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
Burnout	56	2.9180	-.198	.143
Achievement	56	3.30		

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 6 indicates no significant correlation between rural teachers' burnout and rural students' academic achievement ( $p = .143 > 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.198$ ). This suggests that burnout among rural teachers does not have a significant impact on the academic performance of rural students.

#### Relationship between Science Teachers' Burnout and Science Students' Academic Achievement Table 7

*Relationship between Science Teachers' Burnout and Science Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
Burnout	158	2.7657	-.227	.004
Achievement	158	3.53		

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 7 reveals a significant negative correlation between science teachers' burnout and science students' academic achievement ( $p = .004 < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.227$ ). This indicates that higher burnout levels among science teachers lead to a decline in the academic performance of science students.

#### Relationship between Arts Teachers' Burnout and Arts Students' Academic Achievement Table 8

*Relationship between Arts Teachers' Burnout and Arts Students' Academic Achievement*

Variable	N	Mean	Pearson r	P-value
Burnout	151	2.8928	-.076	.336



Achievement 151 3.48

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 8 indicates no significant negative correlation between arts teachers' burnout and arts students' academic achievement ( $p = .336 > 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.076$ ). This suggests that burnout among arts teachers does not have a significant impact on the academic performance of arts students.

### Conclusions

This study examined "The Impact of Teacher Burnout on Students' Academic Achievement" at the secondary school level, revealing significant correlations between teacher burnout and student academic performance. The findings indicate that while teachers experience burnout at a relatively low level, it still has a notable negative impact on students' academic achievement. The three key components of burnout—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment—were analyzed, showing that teachers may not strongly perceive burnout symptoms, yet their students struggle to stay engaged in learning, resulting in poor academic outcomes.

The study found no significant difference between male and female teachers' burnout levels. However, there was a significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students. A negative correlation was found between male teachers' burnout and male students' academic performance, whereas a significant correlation was observed between female teachers' burnout and female students' academic performance. This suggests that while burnout levels are similar among male and female teachers, their students' academic performance varies.

Similarly, the study found no significant difference between urban and rural teachers' burnout levels, as well as no significant difference in academic achievement between urban and rural students. However, further analysis revealed that urban teachers' burnout had a greater impact on students' academic performance in urban schools compared to rural schools, where burnout had less of an effect on student outcomes.

Regarding subject areas, the study showed a significant difference in burnout levels between science and arts teachers, whereas no difference was found in academic achievement between science and arts students. The findings suggest that science teachers experience lower burnout levels and are more satisfied with their jobs, leading to better student engagement in the learning process. In contrast, arts teachers experience higher levels of burnout and job dissatisfaction, which negatively affects their students' academic performance.

Overall, the study highlights that teacher burnout, regardless of its level, significantly influences student academic outcomes. Addressing burnout through institutional support, improved working conditions, and effective coping strategies can contribute to better student engagement and overall academic success.

### Discussion and Recommendations

This study aimed to analyze the impact of teacher burnout on students' academic achievement at the secondary level using a quantitative approach. Data was collected through the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI, 1981), which included 22 items categorized into three key factors.

Teacher burnout plays a significant role in influencing student performance (Schleicher, 2018). When teachers experience burnout, students face numerous challenges, including difficulties in understanding their teachers' attitudes and hesitations in engaging in classroom discussions. On

the other hand, teachers experiencing burnout struggle to provide positive reinforcement and support to their students. Research by Klusmann et al. (2008) suggests that burnout particularly affects language learners, while Madigan and Kim (2020) found that teacher burnout is linked to poor educational outcomes and reduced enthusiasm in the classroom. However, their study did not find a direct connection between teacher burnout and student well-being. Arens and Morin (2016) further established a relationship between burnout and students' academic results, reinforcing the findings of this study, which indicate that burned-out teachers struggle to develop and nurture students' skills effectively.

Burnout among urban teachers can be attributed to multiple factors, as highlighted in previous research. Urban teachers tend to experience higher levels of burnout compared to their rural counterparts (Wong Yee Von, 2022). This may be due to unhealthy work environments, lack of suitable surroundings for online teaching, and excessive administrative pressure. Studies by Zhang (2020), Zhou (2020), and Canitio & Gasparilla (2021) suggest that high workloads and constant pressure from school administrations further contribute to teacher burnout. In contrast, rural teachers experience burnout primarily due to heavy workloads, lack of resources, inadequate time management, and insufficient teaching tools. The socio-economic conditions of underdeveloped rural areas also contribute to teacher stress, particularly among female teachers. Additionally, poor internet connectivity in rural areas further exacerbates burnout, ultimately affecting students' academic outcomes.

A comparison of burnout levels between science and arts teachers revealed that science teachers were more satisfied with their jobs, leading to better student outcomes. Conversely, arts teachers exhibited higher levels of burnout, negatively impacting student achievement. Although the academic performance of science and arts students was found to be similar, the high burnout rate among arts teachers suggests that if they were provided with better support and working conditions, their students' outcomes might surpass those of science students.

Previous studies have explored the relationship between teacher burnout and student performance in different subject areas. Research by Sündüs & Yerdelen (2016) indicated that time constraints and administrative pressure contribute significantly to teacher burnout. Soyibo (1994) found that teachers with higher job satisfaction performed better when trained in both science and arts disciplines, compared to those with education degrees alone. Educators from education faculties reported lower levels of personal accomplishment, whereas those trained in science and arts faculties were more satisfied with their achievements. However, other studies (Taşdan & Tiryaki, 2008) suggest that teachers from various educational backgrounds exhibit similar burnout levels, indicating that job satisfaction is not necessarily linked to faculty type.

The increasing burnout rate among arts teachers and future arts educators presents a serious concern for the education sector. Addressing the various factors that contribute to teacher burnout is crucial for improving student outcomes. To mitigate the impact of burnout, schools should focus on creating a healthy and supportive work environment for teachers, both within the institution and at home. School administrators should value teachers' perspectives and opinions while ensuring reasonable workloads. Equal resources and facilities should be provided to both science and arts teachers, along with adequate teaching tools. The government should invest in better infrastructure, increased salaries, and professional counseling workshops for teachers. Additionally, policymakers should reform educational policies to address existing challenges and promote research on teacher burnout at different academic levels, with particular attention to arts

teachers. Ensuring fair treatment and support for all teachers, regardless of subject specialization, is essential for enhancing the overall quality of education.

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