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Stress and Burnout: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of Elite School Teachers Beliefs and Experiences

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Abstract: *This study explored the beliefs of elite school teachers concerning the effect of students' behaviour on teachers' stress and burnout in an elite school. It also aimed to find out the perceptions of elite school teachers about organizational climate inducing teachers' stress and burnout. This study used an interpretive phenomenological research design to get an insight into the lived experiences of stress and burnout elite school teachers face. A criterion sampling technique was used to select a sample of fifteen teachers employed in an elite school in Lahore. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to get a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of elite school teachers. The thematic cross-case analysis revealed that most teachers experience work stress and burnout. Some of the major stressors for teachers were administrative conflicts, collegial issues, excessive workload, lack of appreciation, and organizational environment. Students' disruptive behaviour is the most significant predictor of teacher stress and exhaustion. It has been concluded that teachers need to have a properly articulated policy that could possibly protect their rights.*

Key Words: Teachers stress, Burnout, Students behavior, Classroom management, Elite school

Introduction

Teaching is becoming more difficult with the passage of time, advancements in teaching techniques, improvement in education policies, and rising work complexities. Research shows that global teachers encounter a full stack of work stressors (Ratanasiripong, Ratanasiripong, Nungdanjark, Thongthamarat, & Toyama, 2021). Researchers such as Chang et al. (2006) assert that stress is one's reaction to the events (environmental conditions) full of stressors to which the person belongs. According to (Hasan and Azad 2014), these stressful conditions do not cause any trouble until or unless the person becomes unable to put together the situation and gets involved in poor coping exercises. Contrary to that,

job stress can possibly be the cause of one's own particulars or attachment to his/her surroundings.

Workplace stress happens when the job demand surpasses one's knowledge, capabilities, strengths, and ability to manage things (Adawiah & Romadona, 2021). Since teachers consume a huge amount of their potential in doing school work and students work apart from their family responsibilities, they are prone to stress. A research study conducted to assess the occupational stress among twenty-six jobs concluded that teaching was the most stressful job (Desouky & Allam, 2017a) owing to extensive workload, including excessive paperwork, management and administrative working, substituting colleagues, students performances, being accountable for their holistic development while

maintaining healthy relations with all the stakeholders ([Desouky & Allam, 2017a](#)). Moreover, high levels of coercion through educational organizations, community attitudes, and role contradiction are often linked to creating anxiety among teachers and hence apprehend the quality of a teachers life ([Li, Sheliang, 2020](#)), consequently leading to poor work performance and burnout ([Khan, A., Anwar, Khan, & Rehman, 2020](#)).

Teacher burnout has negative consequences, which include lower self-esteem, decreased organizational attachment, and use of coercive behaviours. Some other effects of burnout include cynicism, emotional breakdown, pessimism, aggressiveness, lesser collegiality, and moodiness ([Makhdoom, Irsa Fatima, Mohsin Atta, & Najma Iqbal Malik, 2019a](#)). Accordingly, teacher burnout, stress, professional gratification, and self-capability are possibly interconnected and multi-dimensional. Self-efficacy is an important determinant of managed classrooms and is directly affected by a teacher's understanding of student behaviour. To conclude, students' misconduct not only adds to teacher stress and burnout but also shakes the classroom environment.

Research suggests that the self-perception of teachers regarding their classroom management ability is a beneficial dimension for understanding teacher burnout ([Brouwers & Welko Tomic, 1999](#)). A research study by [Ozdemir \(2007\)](#) has shown that classroom management efficiency is closely and considerably linked to the emotional fatigue, cynicism, and individual achievement of teachers. Many other studies have indicated that the classroom environment as a whole and students' disruptive behaviour are the strongest constructs in explaining burnout among teachers. Hence it would be imperative to study the beliefs of teachers regarding stress and burnout caused by students' misbehaviour and how it affects their classroom management efficacy ([Maslach & Leiter, 1999](#)).

Research in Pakistan, in consensus with international research, shows that a bulk of the teaching workforce is not pleased with their part in school, and its the chief source of work-related stress. [Zamir \(2020\)](#) did a literature review and concluded that there has been much research on the understanding of stress and burnout and that further

studies should be conducted with the aim of finding the effect of different stressors on teachers' lives. There are a smaller number of research studies that examine teacher well-being in relation to students' behaviour. Hence, future studies should be based on these propositions ([Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011](#)).

There are generally two types of schools in Pakistan: public and private schools. Both school types are characterized by their curriculum, assessment methods, teaching faculty, institutional environment, issues, and crises ([Kara, 2020](#)). It has been found that private school teachers have generally advanced levels of work stress anti-parallel to the teachers in public schools ([Chughati Farah Deeba & Uzma Perveen, 2013; Zamir, 2020](#)). Research also indicates that secondary school teachers are more stressed than primary school teachers ([Ali, K., Ishtiaq, & Ahmad, 2013; Kara, 2020](#)). Another class in the stream of private schools in the elite schools. However, there is not much research on elite schools in Pakistan. Also, no study has been found to be reporting the views of teachers working in an elite school, which serves as the basis for the current study.

Literature Review

Stress is a hard-to-define phenomenon. It is a condition of mental strain which adversely impacts one's mind and body ([Demir, 2018](#)). According to [Hasan \(2014\)](#), stress is the force of negative influences owing to the conditions in the environment which disrupt the natural physical equilibrium of the mind. [Asaloei, Wolomasi, and Werang \(2020\)](#) explain stress to be any kind of coercion faced by individuals in day-to-day life. Stress is made of two elements, namely, physical and mental/psychological. It can be the result of anything which makes a person wrath, frustrated, and anxious. Stress has been distributed into three stages, i.e., mild, moderate, and chronic. Mild stress is characterized by symptoms like laziness, headaches, tiredness, muscular pain, and disturbed sleep. These signs should not be ignored and must be prevented. Stomach ache, ulcer, fluctuating sleep patterns and menstrual cycles, losing focus, and decreasing memory are the symbols of moderate stress. Acute or chronic stress is associated with multiple diseases like breath shortening, anxiety attacks, etc.; severe stress happens over a larger time span and is treated by

experts ([Adawiah & Romadona, 2021](#)).

Stress may be positive or negative. If it adversely impacts people's relationships, their performance, and work-related behaviours, it is said to have been negative stress. ([Demir, 2018](#)). Owing to its multi-dimensional nature, teaching is usually regarded as a highly stressful profession ([Batool, Atta, & Riaz, 2020](#)). Nowadays, teachers have more paperwork, bureaucratic workplaces, and highly unruly classes ([Hasan, 2014](#)), which usually adds to the burden and thus hampers a teachers ability to function effectively. ([Desouky & Allam, 2017b](#); [Herman, Hickmon-Rosa, & Reinke, 2018](#)).

Studies have identified teachers stressors to be identical in various cultures; however, individuals, based on their coping mechanism, their prevailing mindsets, gender and personal relationship, experience its intensity differently. ([Kebbi, 2018](#); [Kyriacou, 2001](#)). Nevertheless, the sources of stress vary in different schools, generally depending upon the school culture ([Galanakis et al., 2020](#); [Kyriacou, 2001](#)). Studies report that it is usual for teachers to face a number of challenges in their classrooms that are mistakenly regarded as synonymous with stressors. Stress occurs when teachers don't find a way to work through these challenges. Non-supportive management, non-flexible work environment, role ambiguity and inhumane deadline further aggravate the situation ([Asaloei et al., 2020](#); [Dawn, Talukdar, Bhattacharje, & Singh, 2016](#); [Desouky & Allam, 2017b](#)). [Kebbi \(2018\)](#), in addition to the aforementioned, regarded an inadequate compensation reward as one of the major stressors among teachers.

Teachers stress, alongside hampering their personal and professional life quality, if not addressed, eventually leads to burnout ([Wu, 2020](#)).

Burnout is a condition that is caused by long hold stress in which the individual gets emotionally consumed and drained out. Owing to this prolonged stress, the individual loses his/her interest in the work and becomes de-motivated for the concerned job. It's a psychological condition in which individual experiences emotional fatigue, non-accomplishment, and depersonalization ([Akdemir, 2019](#); [Habib, 2020](#); [Maslach & Leiter, 2017a](#)). It is often regarded as a product of poorly managed chronic stress ([Squillaci, 2020](#)). Often, the job demand and resource (JD-R)

theory is consulted to explain burnout as a mismatch between an individuals resources (capacities) and the job demands (workload, etc.) ([Al-Adwan & Al-Khayat, 2017](#); [Brouwers & Welko Tomic, 1999](#); [Maslach & Leiter, 2017a](#); [Roohani & Iravani, 2020](#)).

[Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter \(2001\)](#) have offered a three-dimensional model of burnout, which has emotional fatigue, cynicism, and lower individual success as the empirically related dimensions. Emotional exhaustion is the scarcity of emotional and psychological resources. It happens when teachers become emotionally drained out and think that they are unable to do up to the mark work, they become severely stressed and feel physical fatigue as well. Depersonalization is the impersonalized behaviour of other job-related people. When depersonalized, teachers exhibit negative emotions toward their colleagues and students, and they feel detachment from those being served (students). The last dimension or subscale is the reduction of personal accomplishment. RPA means reduced self-efficacy and feelings of incompetence about one's self. Teachers feel depersonalized when they consider themselves to be ineffectual and incapable of doing their duties. They lose their confidence and develops a negative image of themselves ([Iqbal, M. Atta, & Nawaz, 2020](#); [Prasojo et al., 2020](#); [Squillaci, 2020](#); [Teles, Valle, Rodríguez, Piñeiro, & Regueiro, 2020](#)).

This issue is common to the professionals who confront excessive workloads and higher job demands. The intensity of the phenomenon increases with prolonged stress exposure. Early signs may comprise physical and psychological problems leading to emotional fatigue, cynicism, and a lower sense of achievement. Consequently, the worker falls into the professional burnout zone and shows lessened work contentment and decreased efficiency ([Anastasiou & Belios, 2020](#)). [Maslach and Leiter \(2017a\)](#) say that burnout is especially concerned with the human-oriented jobs in which (a) services are being provided to other humans and can happen to be overly emotional and (b) the heart of the job lies in the relationship between receivers and service providers. Hence, teachers may develop burnout during their careers ([Makhdoom Irsa Fatima, Mohsin Atta, & Najma Iqbal Malik, 2019b](#); [Safari, 2021](#)). Burnout can adversely impact teachers' goal setting

and their environment owing to their professional context and work nature ([Li Shen et al., 2020a](#)).

For teachers to cope with burnout syndrome, it is imperative to know the reasons and exponents of burnout ([Akdemir, 2019](#)). The sources can be traced back to high zeal during the initial period of the job, which makes room for high stress, dismay, distress, passiveness, and reduced readiness for social interactions. Yet, there is a variety of opinions regarding behaviours owing to burnout. According to ([Atmaca, Rızaoğlu, Türkdoğan, and Yaylı 2020](#)), extensive human encounters, distress, and higher individual commitment can prompt exhaustion in educators. Individual aspects like one's anxiety level, poor self-esteem, conscientiousness, and sacrificial behaviour mark teachers are further susceptible to burnout. Poor working climate ([Blase, 1986](#)); students' induced stress, rigid timelines, meagre fiscal circumstances, and poor interpersonal relationships are testimonies of teachers' exhaustion ([Al-Adwan & Al-Khayat, 2017](#)). Burnout progression in an institute refers to several rudiments like social strains, overwork, role conflict, and role obscurity ([Ratanasiripong et al., 2021](#)); the size of class, demographics, and differences among students, student's abilities, and sociocultural credentials ([Safari, 2021](#)). Some other reasons include monetary problems and time management difficulties, the magnitude of the classroom, classroom strength, institute type, discipline glitches triggered by pupils, peripheral interference to teacher training, policy alterations, and support deficit for stress sources. Poor self-efficacy also results in higher stress and leads to burnout ([Atmaca et al., 2020](#); [Roohani & Irvani, 2020](#)). Amongst all the above-mentioned sources, stress is the primary cause of burnout ([Akdemir, 2019](#)).

Educators are testified to encounter numerous physical and mental harms caused by burnout. It influences each facet of a person's life: family, job, and societal life. It can decrease the general work efficiency and productivity and initiate a sense of weakness, uselessness, pessimism, and resentment ([Akdemir, 2019](#)). In the latest research, it was established that the majority of the educators experience signs of exhaustion such as recurrent headaches or muscular soreness, alteration in eating or sleeping routines, disappointment and lacking energy, a sense of being imprisoned, being lost and

showing pessimism, having little gratification or achievement, being alone, withdrawing job duties, anger, avoiding work and being late to work. ([Sneha & Maheswari, 2020](#)). [Ratanasiripong et al. \(2021\)](#) reported that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization have a high relationship with despair, apprehension, tension, body weakness, and mental lethargy. The intensity of being incapable (reduced personal accomplishment) may be described through high burnout level, which not only influences one's psychological fitness but correspondingly the capacity of teachers to manage work-related obligations successfully. Further penalties of occupational burnout contain uselessness, bad temper, depersonalization, absence from work, intolerance, grumpiness, and less acceptance for others ([Makhdoom et al., 2019b](#)). If it remains untreated, burnout may result in ignoring or abandoning an occupation, dropping interest in teaching, and having glitches with coworkers, friends, pupils, or family members ([Akdemir, 2019](#)).

An analysis of outcomes of research conducted in the Pakistani context discovered that Public school teachers are satisfied with their job circumstances in comparison to their private school counterparts ([Chughati Farah Deeba & Uzma Perveen, 2013](#)). [Majeed, Zia-ur-Rehman, and Rashid \(2011\)](#) found contradictory results as they discovered that public school teachers and village school teachers are more stressed in comparison to their counterparts. ([Ayub, Hussain, and Ghulamullah 2018](#)), in their research study about the teaching experience of women in the elite and non-elite schools of Pakistan, found that Female teachers in both elite and non-elite schools encountered numerous constraints. The major issues highlighted by the teachers included low wages, lack of support from administration, disrespectful behaviour from students, and job dissatisfaction.

It has been testified that there exists a complicated relationship between occupational requirements, work-related capitals, and teachers' burnout and that there is an arbitrating impact of job control on the correlation between emotional exhaustion and task load at the workplace ([Khan, F, Ahmad, Sufyan, Naz, & Rasli, 2020](#)). [Shaheen and Mahmood \(2015\)](#) informed that the existence of burnout at varied levels had been confirmed through the results of the study. Also, gender, years of

experience, the status of the job was significant and marital status and age were non-significant predictors of burnout. One research conducted in Dera Ismail Khan by [Iqbal M. J. and Rehman \(2020\)](#) concluded that teachers had lower levels of burnout. Another study showing somewhat contradictory results concluded that decreased personal accomplishment and increased depersonalization were indicators for burnout, and emotional exhaustion stood as a noteworthy cause of teacher exploitation.

Methods and Materials

The current study used a hermeneutic phenomenology research design. The research study was conducted in a Lahore-based school. The concerned school is an elite private school.

This research study utilized a criterion sampling technique. The following criteria were used to decide the inclusion of participants in this study: The participant was a female teacher of primary students (grade: 1-5), had 16-year education or more, and had more than one year of experience working in an elite school

In the current study, semi-structured interviews were carried out to gather information. Interviews were semi-structured in format, and participants were individually interviewed at the school during their preferred time. Two digital audio recording devices were used to record the interviews. In addition, the interview guide was used to take notes whenever it was deemed necessary. All interview recordings were transcribed and translated into the English language.

Thematic data analysis was done using a six-phase approach ([Braun & Clarke, 2012](#)).

Findings

The analysis required comparisons across multiple cases (participants) in order to develop a better understanding of elite school teachers beliefs regarding stress and burnout. Here, various themes are presented in the form of master themes and subordinate themes.

Teachers Beliefs About Job Stress

Teachers give different meanings to stress. To some, it is the pressure of unhandled thoughts, sleepless

nights, and tension. On the other hand, some consider it to be the gap between expectations and reality "We face stress when the situation at hand is not at par with what we are expected of and our own inability to handle our reactions" (Participant 13). Data analysis revealed that almost all the elite school teachers face stress at school. The intensity of stress varies with their experience at a job as a few teachers having more than five years of experience exclaimed of being all happy and satisfied with the workplace. Some teachers feel a high level of stress, and some feel moderate to low levels of stress. They associate their anxiety and tension with the excessive workload and rigid deadlines. All participants agreed that there is a humongous amount of work on the teachers' part, and the timeline is strict. Teachers have described other stressors such as issues with administration, students' behaviours, issues with colleagues, making results, handling parent-teacher meetings, long duty hours for event preparations, and rudeness of principal and coordinator. "I always feel frustrated, tensed and anxious at my workplace. It is majorly due to the administrative issues" (Participant 1).

Parent-teacher meetings, project making, and result preparation times were declared as the most hectic and tiresome by teachers. According to some teachers, only a few events, as mentioned above, initiate frustration and anxiety, and the job is not stressful apart from that.

Luckily, I dont experience stress that often. The workload during result preparation and Parents Teachers Conferences (PTCs) causes me stress; otherwise, I usually get along with the routine just fine. (Participant 8)

Besides all the problems, 75% of the teachers think that some sort of stress is inevitable for the work to be done. The rest of 25% of teachers wish to eliminate the stress completely. Teachers also consider the fact that their stress is backed by their personal and domestic issues. All the teachers agreed that domestic issues cause continuous stress.

Teachers Beliefs About Burnout In the Workplace

The second research question dealt with the three dimensions of burnout as presented by [Maslach and Leiter \(2017b\)](#). For the first dimension, i.e.,

exhaustion (teachers mental and physical tiredness and fatigue), teachers were asked questions about their emotional and physical tiredness, health deterioration, and energy depletion during work at school. It was found that all the participants felt tired at times. Some get physically tired, and some emotionally. A few of them experience both kinds. Teachers get muscle pain, headaches, and backaches as a result of this exhaustion. Due to this physical fatigue, many of them are observing health loss and constant fear of termination accompanies them as well.

I seldom am stressed out, but when I am, I usually feel headaches and cramps. My fellow colleagues have, however, been complaining to be suffered both physically and emotionally. Worst-case scenarios have ended in teachers suffering psychologically as well. (Participant 14)

On the other hand, some participants claimed not to feel any health loss or threat of termination. Apart from one case, all of the participants felt depleted at the end of the working day. I would rather say yes. I feel exhausted. Conducting continuous classes, handling the administrative tasks usually leaves me drained to the extent that fetching a glass of water feels like a heavy burden (Participant 13).

Depersonalization is the second dimension of burnout. Teachers were asked about their treatment and reaction to students during stress. They were asked if they felt a loss of connection due to the overwhelming pressure. Referring to the rules of the school and their own goodwill, most teachers don't show any harsh attitude to their students. However, there are some exceptions, as some teachers become loud and aggressive when they are frustrated. The teacher explained that there is a continuous loop of action and reaction. The teacher is stressed due to the student, and he/ she acts rudely. In response to that, the student will misbehave again, and it will continue. Most of the teachers don't feel disassociated with their students irrespective of the scenario, but some teachers feel a loss of connection at some points. A participant reported,

I am patient with my students. I do get tired, feel drained and show physical exhaustion in class, but feeling depersonalization with my students would be the last thing I would feel. I am composed and calm, and I understand that routine life is subjected to

pressures, challenges and hurdles. One only needs intelligence and composure to get through with grace and decency. Outbursting on students or blaming them for being children is cruel. (Participant 9)

Non-achievement is the last dimension of burnout which is characterized by the feeling of being unsuccessful and useless. Participants were inquired about their emotional or physical tiredness during teaching. It was explored if they feel unworthy of being a teacher or if they want to quit the profession. Most teachers love their profession and don't want to quit. They do get emotionally and physically weary at times. However, they don't think of doing anything else other than teaching.

I never intended to be a teacher, but when I started it, I got drenched into such a comfort zone that I never had the second thought of doing anything else after that. Individuals are having patience and passion for teachers usually become good teachers. I believe I have these qualities. (Participant 10)

On the other hand, some teachers disclosed that they were teachers by chance and would quit as soon as they got a better option. They felt being lacked important skills needed for teaching.

Teachers' Beliefs About Classroom Management and Students Behavior

Undisciplined and irresponsible students consume more time to settle, and it renders lesson planning and other teaching-learning tasks. On the other hand, a few participants denied the connection between teacher stress and the classroom environment. They argued that the teacher is the master of the class and she can manipulate the environment as per her liking.

Concerning the most annoying student behaviour, teachers listed acts like being disrespectful, disobeying, irresponsible, non-attentive, talkative and attention-seeking, etc. The majority of teachers agreed that teachers' behaviour has an influence on students' behaviour and that students' do reflect teachers' behaviour. "Students' behaviours are usually the reflection of an intricate commingling of classroom environment, teachers' reaction to the classroom events and parents' response (Participant 15). Contrary to that, a few negated the statement and explained that students carry their very own nature and that their families are raising them to be disrespectful and disobeying.

Participants came up with different ideas for improvement. A majority of participants proposed that they would try to be friendly and develop a bond between students and themselves. They explained that they could motivate a child by finding his/her interests and working on those points. However, there were teachers who, during the interview process, went through a critical self-evaluation process and concluded that they need to work on their teaching strategies to further improve their craft. Well, to be honest, I have never thought it this way. I certainly need to re-evaluate my practices in order to improve my management skills by working on the motivation of my students (Participant 10).

Influence of the Organizational Environment On Their Own Job Stress

When asked about the student policy and how it adds to their stress, almost all the participants agreed that the school has an extremely lenient student policy, and it is adding to their anxiety and tension. They explained that students feel autonomy in every aspect, which is annoying for teachers too. Students always know that they have the administration and their parents to support them in the back end. Due to this, students feel superior even to a teacher. They further added that the student-favoured policies of the school are making students disrespectful and ill-mannered. They explained it to be really stressful. A participant reported,

Teachers are accountable for each and every action. Students, on the other hand, are dealt with a soft hand. Teachers, if they are not empowered, usually feel stressed. Providing 100% autonomy is neither desired nor needed and is true in either case. (Participant 2)

On the contrary, only one teacher disagreed and explained that students' disruptive behaviour is nurtured in their homes. She explained that students are disruptive because they are made like this in their homes. The policy doesn't have to do anything with it, and however, the policy is doing somewhat injustice to them.

Teachers were inquired if they consider elite schools as the main cause of their stress. The majority of the teachers agreed that they are stressed because they are working in an elite school. They described that sometimes the administration considers

teachers to be all-rounders and expects teachers to be serving as custodians and accountants apart from being teachers. Some participants disagreed and said that they were not stressed due to working in an elite school only. They argued that elite schools are at a certain standard, so they are easy to work with. However, the normal calibre private schools are always striving to achieve the standard of an elite school which makes them hard to work with.

Most of the teachers, when asked about the autonomy of work, said that they have moderate to high levels of liberty. They said that they are free to do things their way; however, they are answerable. Only a few denied and exposed that they didn't have any freedom at all. They exposed that they have to take permission for every single action and that the coordinator and principal have all the rights to interfere in their classes at any time.

Coping with Stress and Burnout

Teachers, when it comes to coping skills, differ from each other. They shared multiple strategies and suggestions. Some participants said that they talk to their colleagues and friends and have a cup of tea to handle their anxiety. Some teachers said that optimism is the key to handling your stress. They said that prioritization of work and learning from mistakes helps a great deal in coping with stress and prevents burnout. Some teachers believed ignoring the situation and taking a break to be the best remedy for coping with job stress.

A couple of suggestions for controlling workplace stress were given by the participants. Some said to have an articulated teacher policy, and for teacher refreshment activities, some suggested pre-planning of tasks by the administration. Others recommended the work environment be comfortable and friendly. They explained that school heads should encourage open communication, try to understand the teacher's side of the story, and also give teachers paid leaves. They also proposed to give teachers liberty. Another teacher suggested that to reduce workplace stress; teachers should be given a voice; they should be heard. The administration needs to stop sudden class observations as it totally gets the teacher off track. They should encourage teacher gatherings and give them liberty. A participant reported,

Coping with stress is rather an art. We don't always have to go tough on ourselves. We should rather give ourselves a margin to make mistakes but to learn. Learn to vent your emotions positively at the right time and with the right person. Reach out for help. Talk about your problems and learn from the experience of your seniors. While we are trying to put our 200% per cent despite all the hurdles, the sense of achievement as a tradeoff is totally worth it. (Participant 14)

Discussion

The current study showed that most teachers experience stress on a daily basis. They characterize stress as undue pressure and excessive workload. It reduces teachers' performance. Teachers at elite schools experience stress due to excessive workload, high demands of administration, parents' expectations, colleagues' behaviour, student behaviour, lack of appreciation, and working environment (Ali A., Ranjha, & Bukhari, 2020). Out of all the other stressors, student misbehaviour or disruptive behaviour is the most annoying for teachers (Ayub et al., 2018). It causes emotional tiredness and professional distress to teachers and affects their work performance (Sneha & Maheswari, 2020). Teachers' class productivity exponentially reduces due to student misbehaviour. Out of the ten discovered stressors, organizational environment and student behaviour were rated as the most significant ones (Blase, 1986; Schäfer, Pels, von Haaren-Mack, & Kleinert, 2019). Similar results were found in a study conducted by Lanza (2020). He found that students' issues and depression outside the school cause teachers to be less effective in producing better outcomes inside the school setting.

Findings of this study revealed that a majority of teachers in elite schools fall on at least one of the three dimensions of professional burnout. Teachers have been found to be emotionally and physically exhausted due to high-intensity work and long duty hours. Teachers feel depersonalized at times due to student misconduct, administrative issues (Komal, Shah, & Naz, 2021), and classroom management problems. Some teachers were found at the non-accomplishment stage of burnout, and they regarded themselves as a misfit for teaching and did not intend to continue with the profession. The results indicated

that the teachers have uplifted levels of emotive collapse, moderate levels of reification and achievement (Al-Adwan & Al-Khayat, 2017), and moderate to high levels of psychological burnout are present (Al-Adwan & Al-Khayat, 2017). Teachers had higher levels of burnout due to learners' low efficiency, less assistance from the organization's management, learners' misconduct, and lack of attachment (Akbari & Roudi, 2020).

Findings of the study revealed that teachers regard the elite school environment (Shaheen & Mahmood, 2020) to be the cause of their stress and burnout. They consider the high-end lenient student policies as the reason of student misconduct and ill behaviour. It has been found that elite school teachers experience somewhat different stressors other than average private schools. They offer a high level of liberty to their student, which is mostly misused by the students and hence causes the teachers to experience burnout. In his study, Shen Li et al. (2020b) stated that the type of institute, revenue gratification, dejection, and observed stress were significantly associated with burnout. Participants explained that working in an elite school is tough, but the compensations and benefits are there.

An interesting finding of the study is the continuous loop of behaviours. It has been found that teachers used to be stressed due to student misbehaviour. With that stress, they sometimes become loud and harsh to students. As a consequence, students become more disruptive, and it causes teachers stress. It is an ongoing cycle of behaviour. The current study discovered that experienced teachers feel lower levels of stress and that they only feel stressed at some points like parent-teacher meetings, result preparation, and project making.

Conclusion of the Study

This qualitative study concludes that teachers at elite schools experience emotional and physical exhaustion due to excessive workload, administrative issues, collegial conflicts, high principal control, and lack of appreciation. Teachers feel highly depersonalized and non-accomplished due to disruptive student behaviour in the classroom. Students misuse the lenient school policy and hence cause continuous troubles for teachers. Through the

thematic cross-case analysis of semi-structured interviews, it is hoped that the participants' detailed descriptions in this study will guide policymakers, practitioners, and future researchers to improve. It will provide the policymakers with the necessary measures for teachers' health improvement and mental well-being. It will also benefit the practitioners in identifying the causes of stress and

rectifying them before they proceed to psychological burnout. Lastly, the study gives new directions to future research for further and in-depth study of elite school teachers. It encourages them to explore the connection of their domestic demographics with their stress and also to explore more gender-neutral aspects.

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