

UNDERSTANDING TEACHER BURNOUT IN
UNDERPRIVILEGED GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS:
EXPLORING CAUSES AND COPING STRATEGIES

By

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A thesis submitted to the BRAC Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education in Educational Leadership & School Improvement

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing a degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethical Statement

This research was carried out with strict adherence to ethical standards, ensuring the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants. The study, titled “Understanding Teacher Burnout in Underprivileged Government Secondary Schools: Exploring Causes and Coping Strategies,” involved only interviews and surveys as methods of data collection.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement. Each participant was clearly informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, their right to withdraw at any point without consequence, and the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity.

All data collected through interviews and surveys have been handled with the utmost care to protect participants' privacy. No personally identifiable information has been disclosed, and responses have been used solely for academic purposes.

Abstract

Burnout among high school teachers is a critical issue that affects their professional well-being, teaching efficacy, and the overall quality of education. This study investigates the prevalence and contributing factors of burnout among high school teachers in government underprivileged schools in Dhaka. Employing a mixed-method approach, quantitative data were collected using the Maslach Educators Burnout Tool from 50 teachers, of an underprivileged school in Mirpur Dhaka while qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews.

The quantitative findings reveal that female teachers aged 34–40 exhibit high levels of emotional exhaustion, while those aged 40–48 report low burnout in personal accomplishment. Male teachers, on the other hand, show average emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, but high burnout in personal accomplishment, particularly in the 30–57 age group. The qualitative data further uncover systemic challenges contributing to burnout, including **autocratic leadership**, **Poor organizational structure**, **lack of effective training and development opportunities**, and **low salaries**. Teachers expressed feelings of disempowerment, fear of raising concerns, and a lack of coping mechanisms to manage stress.

The study highlights the urgent need for systemic reforms in the education sector.

Recommendations include establishing Leadership and Training Departments in schools to provide continuous professional development, technical skill-building, mental health support, and recreational activities for teachers. Additionally, policies should prioritize participatory leadership to address autocratic practices and ensure that teachers' voices are heard in decision-making processes.

This research underscores the importance of addressing teacher burnout to enhance their well-being and improve the quality of education. Future research should explore the impact of these recommendations and examine the cultural and historical roots of systemic challenges in the education system.

Keywords: Teacher burnout, emotional exhaustion, government schools, underprivileged education, participatory leadership, professional development.

Dedication:

This thesis is dedicated to all my students who inspire me to work for them. Their love and support led me to work for teachers' mental health as its directly connected to students' mental wellbeing.

Acknowledgement:

I am deeply grateful to the Almighty for guiding me throughout this journey. My heartfelt thanks go to my husband, whose constant support helped me maintain balance in both my personal and professional life. His encouragement and thoughtful input, especially in data analysis and discussions, were truly invaluable.

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1.1 Introduction

Working as a secondary grade teacher in an underprivileged government high school for two years made me highly burnout & take the ownership of addressing the underlying issues happening inside the schools and take the empathy to work for my students like children who are impacted the most. Research conducted in 12 different nations has demonstrated that teacher burnout is a worldwide occurrence (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). The study states that teaching is one of the less attractive professions in Bangladesh (Rahman, M. Rahman, & Shahriar, 2011). Compared to other government sectors, the classroom teaching profession has a significantly higher prevalence of burnout. (Gabriel, 2013; Jacobson, 2016) In a research done among the secondary school teachers of Dhaka city, the result states that teachers' involvement in extra teaching assignments, working hours, teaching experiences are the contributing factors leading burnout. Hossain, Saira & Sultana, Nazmin. (2021). Statistics also shows that the most burnout profession in US is teaching profession (Teacher Burnout Statistics: Why Teachers Quit in 2024 | Devlin Peck, n.d.) There are many significant reasons behind this burnout. One of the major causes found in 2024 statistics is most of the teachers plan to leave teaching job is due to "low compensation". (Teacher Burnout Statistics: Why Teachers Quit in 2024 | Devlin Peck, n.d.) Second highlighting factor contribute to this burnout is workload. With 8,000 National Education Union members there has been a survey done where 41% of teachers stated that their workload is unmanageable. Additionally, it has been reported that the major causes are Government driven. 64% of teachers highlighted that lack of inspection, 58% of teachers shared that insufficient staff levels are causing this burnout (State of Education: Workload and Wellbeing | National Education Union, 2024) Another study result indicated that lack of innovation, professional growth and recreation influences teacher burnout. (Hossain & Sultana, 2022) In the latest report

of CAMPE 2023, 69% of the students expressed that they need more classrooms which reflects lack of resources in the Bangladeshi education sector. Also teachers reported that after COVID 19 lack of training in blended learning approach, multimedia resources, resource constraints, school support are hindering their teaching responsibilities. (Campe, n.d.)

1.2 Research Topic: The Prevalence of Teachers' Burnout in Underprivileged Government Schools

Burnout among teachers in underprivileged government schools is a pressing issue that impacts not only the well-being of educators but also the quality of education delivered to students. This research explores the prevalence of burnout among secondary-grade teachers in these schools, focusing on its dimensions—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Teachers in underprivileged schools often face unique challenges, including excessive workloads, limited resources, autocratic management, and insufficient training opportunities, all of which contribute to burnout. By investigating the prevalence and contributing factors, this study aims to shed light on the systemic issues affecting teachers and provide actionable insights for improving teacher well-being and the overall educational environment.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Burnout among teachers in underprivileged government schools is a significant problem characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. This issue arises from systemic challenges such as excessive workloads, lack of resources, autocratic administration, and insufficient training opportunities. These factors not

only affect teachers' mental and physical well-being but also hinder their ability to engage effectively in the teaching process.

Burnout negatively impacts the educational system by reducing teacher motivation and job satisfaction, leading to higher attrition rates and a less stable teaching workforce. As a result, students are directly affected, as teachers struggle to create an engaging and supportive learning environment. The lack of energy and enthusiasm among teachers often translates into less interactive and innovative classroom activities, diminishing students' ability to actively participate in the learning process.

Moreover, teachers experiencing burnout face challenges in addressing the diverse needs of students, particularly those requiring additional support. This gap in effective teaching exacerbates educational inequities, leaving many students unable to achieve their full potential. Collectively, these challenges create a ripple effect, undermining the overall quality of education in underprivileged schools and perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage for both teachers and students.

Teachers' burnout directly impacts students' performance. (Jacobson, 2016) When a teacher cannot manage her own emotions, it leads to a hostile atmosphere where students don't tend to engage. Also, when a teacher cannot connect with students, it hinders effective communication. It decreases the teaching quality, resulting in students' low exam scores, attendance rate, unwillingness to participate actively, and overall social-emotional competencies. As a result the

statistics of CAMPE 2023 shows that 92% of primary level students and 93% of secondary level students are depending on the guidebooks. Additionally, 63% of primary level and 69% of

secondary level students have expressed detailed explanations of lessons from the teachers. It has been suggested that one of the major negative factors affecting teachers' performance year after year that frequently goes untreated is burnout. (Ramberg et al., 2019) Students' academic performance, the mental health of teachers' coworkers, and the workplace atmosphere can all be negatively impacted by a burnt-out teacher who may not even be aware of their burnout. (Jacobson, 2016)

Burnout after studying multiple literature, it's been found that many researchers have studied the impact of burnout and the demographic factors contributing to it for teachers internationally. However, very little research has been done on the classroom in the Bangladeshi context. Also, most of the studies have been done using a quantitative method, so there is a gap in the in-depth study about the experience of the burnout teachers of government high schools in Dhaka. This study will highlight the specific issues that the current teachers of the particular school face, which result in burnout and negatively impact the students. So, the study will be contextualized to make the educators of Bangladeshi government schools aware and to take the necessary steps to alleviate burnout.

Hence, this research will focus on addressing this significant issue with the research questions below:

1.4 Research Questions:

1. What is the prevalence of burnout among teachers in the government secondary school in Dhaka?
2. What factors contribute to burnout among these teachers?

3. What common coping strategies are employed by government secondary school teachers in Dhaka to manage burnout?

1.5 Purpose of the study

This study aims to explore teacher burnout in government schools in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and identify the underlying causes of this phenomenon. By examining the prevalence and root causes of burnout among teachers, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the challenges and coping strategies adopted by educators in the government school system.

1.6 Significance of the Study:

Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems to alleviate burnout and enhance the well-being and effectiveness of teachers, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes for students. (Kamal et al., (2021).

Secondary-grade teachers experiencing high levels of burnout affect the whole educational system. Hossain, Saira & Sultana, Nazmin. (2021). Firstly, burnout among teachers can lead to increased absenteeism and turnover rates, resulting in instability within the teaching staff and potential disruptions to the continuity of education. (Salvagioni et al., 2022) This instability can undermine the overall effectiveness of the educational system and compromise the quality of instruction provided to students. Furthermore, burnout can impact learning by diminishing teachers' enthusiasm and effectiveness in the classroom, resulting in decreased student engagement and motivation. (Balow, 2022) This, in turn, can impede students' ability to participate fully in educational activities and hinder their academic progress. Research shows

burnout syndrome teachers suffer from being unable to maintain relationships with students and understand individual needs (Balow, 2022)

The research hopes to improve teachers' mental well-being, the relationship between teachers and students, and the overall educational experience in the area. (Hussein et al 2021)

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the prevalence and contributing factors of burnout among teachers, highlighting critical areas such as **emotional exhaustion**, **depersonalization**, and **low personal accomplishment**. These findings can be used to design targeted interventions, such as **Leadership and Training Departments**, to offer continuous professional development, mental health support, and skill-building opportunities. Furthermore, the recommendations from this study can guide schools in creating supportive environments where teachers feel empowered and valued.

At the policy level, the findings emphasize the urgent need for structural reforms in the education system. Policies addressing **autocratic leadership** and **teacher participation in decision-making** can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment. By implementing **mandatory training programs** and **feedback mechanisms**, policymakers can ensure that

teachers at the grassroots level contribute to shaping educational reforms. These measures would not only reduce burnout but also enhance job satisfaction and teaching efficacy.

This research generates new information by bridging the gap in understanding how systemic issues, such as the lack of coping mechanisms, inadequate training, and cultural remnants of autocratic practices, contribute to teacher burnout. While global studies have explored burnout,

this study adds a unique perspective by contextualizing it within the Bangladeshi education system, particularly in underprivileged government schools.

The findings of this study have the potential to significantly improve the educational situation in Bangladesh. By addressing teacher burnout, schools can create environments where teachers feel supported, motivated, and equipped to perform their roles effectively. This will not only improve teacher well-being but also enhance student learning outcomes, fostering a more equitable and efficient education system for future generations.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Literature review:

Burnout is a depressing psychological condition that someone goes through when they face extreme and prolonged job stress (Gabriel, 2013). According to the National Educational Association, they burn out when teachers have already used all the resources to maintain their job responsibilities. (“Addressing Teacher Burnout: Causes, Symptoms, and Strategies |

American University,” 2022) Numerous educators encounter burnout, reaching their breaking point in addressing the day-to-day obstacles at work. It happens after a period of poorly controlled social and emotional work stress. (“Addressing Teacher Burnout: Causes, Symptoms, and Strategies | American University,” 2022b)

A systematic review of 14 pieces of literature found that teachers' burnout is related to poor student performance and a lower quality of student motivation. (Madigan & Kim, 2020) The Proposical Classroom Model states that teachers who possess social and emotional intelligence set the tone for the classroom by building strong, supportive relationships with their students, creating lessons that capitalize on their strengths, and creating and enforcing behavioral rules that encourage motivation from within. Teacher actions are linked to attaining intended student outcomes and fostering the best possible social and emotional learning environment in the classroom. Low conflict, seamless transitions, acceptable emotional displays, courteous communication, task-focused behavior, and acceptance of individual variations are characteristics of an ideal environment. On the other hand, kids may perform worse and behave less appropriately when teachers are not equipped to handle social and emotional difficulties. For educators, this can result in a "burnout cascade" that manifests as a failing school environment, disruptive student conduct, and emotional tiredness. Teachers may use punitive and reactive methods in these circumstances, which might start a vicious cycle of disturbance in the classroom. (Madigan & Kim, 2020) According to research on Bangladeshi teachers, emotional exhaustion is the leading cause of burnout, with 32% of males and 18% of females suffering from it. The second highest burnout has come out as lack of personal accomplishment, which is 22%. (Hossain & Sultana, 2021)

Another survey consisting of 300 teachers shows that there are 3 contributing factors behind teacher burnout: innovation, professional growth, and recreation. (Hossain, S. & Sultana, N. 2022) Teacher burnout has far-reaching consequences for both teachers and their interactions with others. These effects encompass absenteeism, diminished job performance, feelings of

anger towards students, and reduced job motivation and commitment, ultimately impacting students' performance and contributing to teacher attrition. The overall result is a negative impact on the quality of education. (Jackobson, 2016) .

The pattern observed in the studied literature is that Social and demographic factors influence the prevalence of burnout and females are more burned out than man. Though most of the research on this topic has been done using a qualitative approach, there are very few articles on a qualitative approach. One qualitative study in USA found that lack of school support, excessive workload, accountability policies, managing disruptive behavior, and lack of resources are significant stressors for teachers. They mentioned that basic needs like toilet paper, soap in the washroom, and a photocopy machine for distributing student worksheets have become huge. Another highlighting factor shared by the teachers is they have very limited access to content specialists and mentors. Shernoff, Elisa & Mehta, Tara & Atkins, Marc & Torf, Raechel & Spencer, Jordan. (2011) Through this qualitative study with open-ended questions, the inner experience of the teachers has been revealed. The literature also emphasizes the importance of addressing burnout among teachers promptly. High prevalence rates of burnout among teachers underscore the urgent need for interventions and support systems. Studies have highlighted the impact of burnout on teachers' mental health and well-being, emphasizing the necessity of implementing strategies to mitigate burnout and promote teacher wellness (Ozoemena et al.,

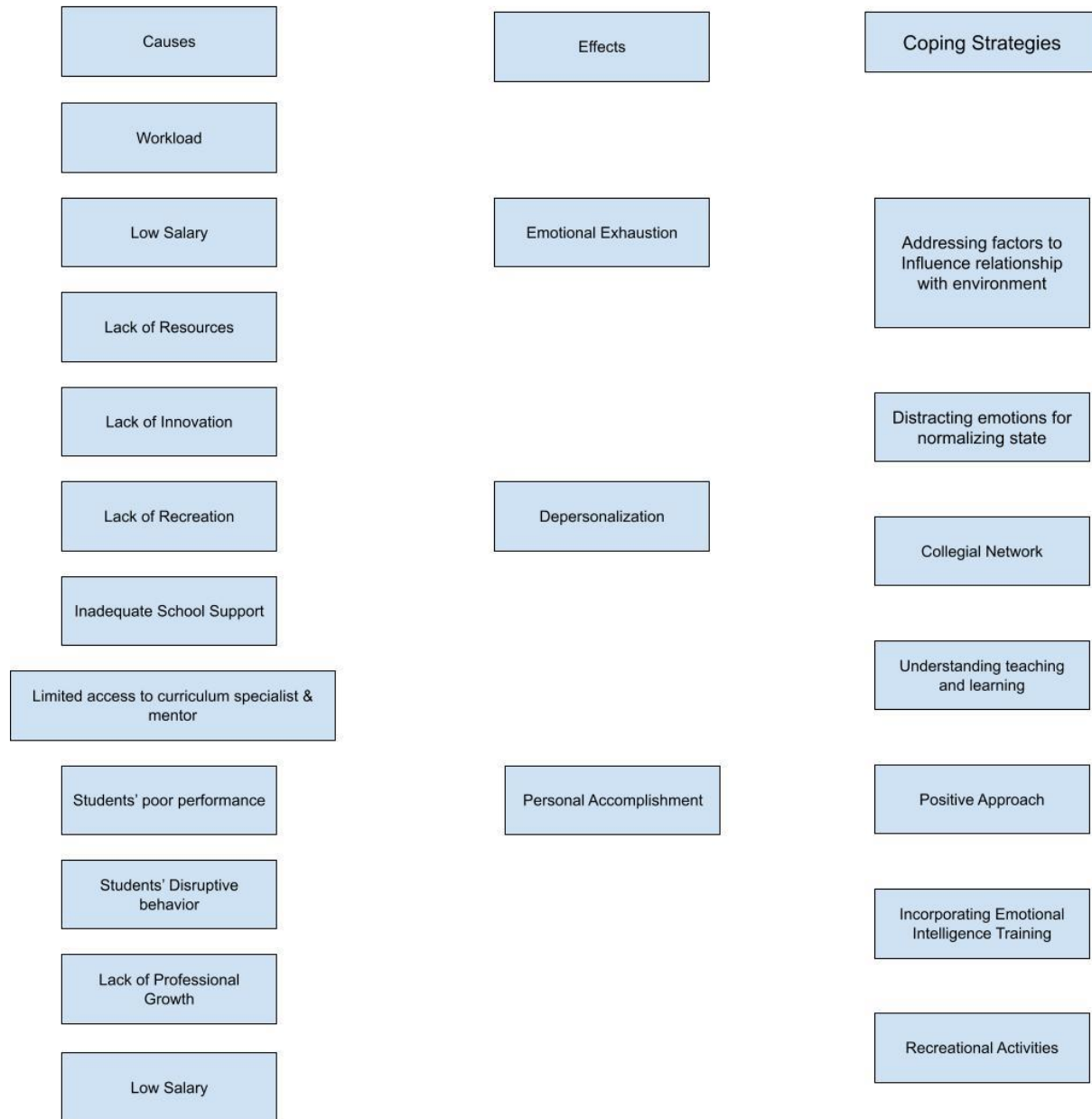
2021). Few interventions can alleviate the burnout issue are mentioned in literature like by providing professional development, districts may start assisting teachers in developing coping mechanisms and stress management techniques that will help them prepare for a long career and realize they are not alone (Rankin, 2017).

Coping strategies of burnout

The literature surrounding teacher burnout has shed light on the coping mechanisms utilized by educators. Pogere et al. (2019) identified two distinct types of strategies employed by teachers: problem-focused and emotion-focused. Problem-focused techniques involve actively addressing factors that influence the relationship between an individual and their environment. And emotion focused techniques are coping mechanism in which individuals distract themselves or deny their emotions in order to normalize their emotional state. This is commonly known as self-distraction or denial coping. (Hussein et el 2021) However, some research founders found that incorporating emotional intelligence training can minimize burnout. The capacity to recognize, utilize, and regulate one's own emotions in order to reduce stress, communicate clearly, sympathize with others, overcome obstacles, and diffuse conflict is known as emotional intelligence. (Brackett, Marc & Rivers, Susan & Salovey, Peter. 2011) So when teachers are able to manage their emotions, they also better manage the students' emotions.

Creating a work environment with strong resources to support teachers' work-life balance, promote their well-being, and prevent teacher attrition can significantly benefit school management. By providing teachers with the necessary support, schools can reduce burnout and improve teacher retention, leading to a more positive and productive school atmosphere. Marie, Nilsson., Marie, Nilsson., Kerstin, Blomqvist., Ingemar, Andersson. (2017)

2.2 Conceptual Framework:



Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a **explanatory sequential mixed-method research approach** to investigate the prevalence, causes, and coping strategies of teacher burnout in underprivileged government high schools. The mixed-method approach combines both **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

The **quantitative method** was used to determine the **prevalence of burnout** among teachers, as it allows for analyzing data from a larger group of participants. This approach provided numerical insights into the levels of burnout across different dimensions such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

The **qualitative method**, using in-depth interviews, was chosen to explore the **causes of burnout** and **coping strategies** employed by teachers. This approach allowed for capturing detailed, personal experiences and perspectives, offering a deeper understanding of the systemic and individual factors contributing to burnout.

The explanatory sequential mixed-method approach was selected because it aligns with the study's purpose of providing both breadth and depth. Quantitative data highlights trends and prevalence, while qualitative data enriches these findings by uncovering underlying causes and lived experiences. Together, these methods provide a holistic view of the burnout phenomenon,

making the approach highly suitable for addressing the research questions comprehensively.

(*LibGuides: Qualitative Research: Mixed Methods Research*, n.d.)

3.2 Research Site

The research was conducted at an underprivileged government high school in Mirpur Shewrapara, established in 1992. The school is surrounded by an old airport area and a serene lake. The school is within walking distance of the metro rail station, which is used by many students who come to the school. The school has 2 buildings; one is 3 stories tall, and the other is 5 stories tall, which is under construction.

3.3 Research Participants

The research participants were school teachers who are 30 to 57 years old. The ratio of male and female teachers is 1:2. Almost 80% have a master's degree and have received professional training from the government. I taught in this school as a Math and science teacher of grades 6 and seven from 2022-2024. The purpose of selecting this school was to do convenience sampling and address the crucial need for addressing the problem of teacher burnout, which results in student outcomes.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

This study employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative sampling methods to gather comprehensive insights into the prevalence and contributing factors of teacher burnout in underprivileged government schools.

Quantitative Sampling

The target population for the quantitative part of the study consisted of 50 high school teachers from a selected government school in Mirpur, Dhaka. A total population sampling technique was used, where all 50 teachers participated in the survey. This approach ensured that the entire teaching staff was represented, providing a complete and statistically valid understanding of burnout prevalence across different age groups and genders.

Qualitative Sampling

For the qualitative part, purposive sampling was employed to select participants for in-depth interviews. Based on the results of the burnout survey, four teachers (two male and two female) with the highest levels of burnout were chosen. The selection was made to ensure diversity in gender representation and to capture varied perspectives on the factors contributing to burnout and coping mechanisms.

3.5 Data Collection Method

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method to collect data, utilizing both a survey and in-depth interviews to comprehensively address the research questions. (*LibGuides: Qualitative Research: Mixed Methods Research*, n.d.) The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) survey tool, translated into Bangla by Shimul, was used to measure the prevalence of burnout among teachers. This tool was selected for its reliability and ability to assess burnout across the three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The survey was conducted using “purposive sampling” targeting all the teachers of a specific

government school to learn about their burning prevalence and the reasons behind it. A paper-based format was used during school hours to ensure ease of participation. The quantitative survey results provided a statistical understanding of burnout prevalence and informed the selection of participants for the qualitative phase of the study.

In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the causes of burnout and the coping strategies adopted by teachers and thematic analysis was used to find the patterns. Based on the survey findings, four teachers (two male and two female) with the highest levels of burnout were selected for the interviews to ensure diversity in gender and experiences using purposive sampling method. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and was conducted face-to-face in a private setting to encourage openness. A semi-structured interview guide was used to delve into topics such as work overload, lack of training opportunities, autocratic leadership, and emotional coping mechanisms. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed for analysis.

The survey provided a broad understanding of burnout prevalence, while the interviews offered in-depth insights into personal experiences and systemic challenges. This integration of methods allowed the study to comprehensively address its research questions, making the findings both statistically valid and contextually rich.

Justification for Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Method Research Design

This study employs an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, where a quantitative approach was conducted first, followed by a qualitative approach to further explain the findings. The quantitative phase involved surveying teachers using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

to measure burnout prevalence. Based on these results, the qualitative phase involved in-depth interviews with selected participants to explore the underlying causes and coping mechanisms of burnout. This two-phase approach ensures that the statistical patterns identified in the quantitative phase are enriched with deeper insights from the qualitative data, making the research more comprehensive and meaningful. Othman, Shwikar & Steen, Mary & Fleet, Julie. (2020).

3.6 Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, I played several roles throughout the process. However, most importantly, I kept myself out of the current teacher's position when I started the research because I think the research process requires that. While collecting data I worked as a teacher trainer who is currently working in a private school working for the development of the teaching-learning process. Secondly, I worked as a data collector while taking paper-based surveys. Thirdly, I will act as an interviewer ensuring a safe space where the interviewee can share his or her experiences. Fourthly, I will work as a data analyst to analyze and interpret the data. Lastly, I will consolidate the findings and present it from an overview of an educator who is working on behalf of education to address a burning issue of teachers' burnout and create awareness for the educators, policy makers, and school improvement sector to come up with necessary resources to alleviate it.

3.7 Data Analysis

For the survey, I did descriptive analysis to answer the survey questions. I have used the Maslach Burnout, Inventory educator tool to make my survey questions. (Maslach Burnout

Toolkit for Educators - Mind Garden, n.d.) to answer my research questions. Lastly, I'll consolidate the analysis and present my research findings through graphical representation.

Thematic analysis has been done for the qualitative data. I transcribed the transcript of the audio recording. Then, I did coding with the script highlighting the words and lines and labeled them. Afterwards I made a table organizing the data according to label and grouped them into themes.

3.8 Ethical Issues and Concerns

During my study, I encountered several ethical considerations that I had to address carefully to ensure the research adhered to ethical standards. First, I sought informed consent from all participants before collecting any data. I provided them with clear information about the study's purpose, methods, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Consent forms were signed, and in some cases, verbal consent was recorded to ensure participants fully understood their involvement. Maintaining confidentiality was another critical aspect of the research. I anonymized the data by using code numbers rather than participants' names and ensured that all personal and sensitive information was securely stored, accessible only to me. I also shared data with others, such as supervisors, in a way that protected the participants' identities. In terms of bias, I acknowledged that my personal beliefs and background inevitably influenced how I selected the topic and interpreted the data. As a qualitative researcher, I accepted my biases as part of the process and regularly reflected on them to ensure they did not unduly shape the findings. I took care to be transparent about my own perspectives while analyzing the data. Finally, respecting the rights of human subjects was paramount throughout the research. I ensured participants had full autonomy over their involvement and communicated

their right to withdraw from the study at any point. I made every effort to avoid any form of harm, psychological or physical, and to ensure participants' dignity was respected, particularly in sensitive situations. Overall, I was committed to upholding ethical principles throughout the study to protect the rights and well-being of the participants.

3.9 Credibility and Rigor

In terms of credibility and rigor, my background in education and teacher training has provided me with a strong foundation to conduct this study. I have been working as a teacher trainer at a prominent private school in Bangladesh, where I focus on classroom management, students' behavior, stress management, growth mindset, and similar topics. This experience has given me a deep understanding of the dynamics within educational settings, which directly relates to the research topic. Additionally, my previous role as a teacher in a government underprivileged school under Teach for Bangladesh for 2.5 years provided me with invaluable insights into the challenges faced by both students and teachers in resource-limited environments.

To develop this study, I followed a systematic process, beginning with the development of a research matrix, followed by a detailed research outline and proposal. This structured approach allowed me to clearly define the research scope and ensure the study remained focused and relevant to my field of expertise.

As a researcher, I recognize that my personal and professional characteristics may influence the data collection, analysis, and interpretation process. My experience in teacher training and working in diverse educational settings gives me a well-rounded perspective on the issues explored in the study. However, I am also mindful of my biases and ensure that I approach the

data with a commitment to objectivity, while acknowledging the role my background and beliefs play in shaping my interpretations.

3.10 Limitations of the study

This study has several limitations that should be considered. One major limitation was that a few teachers were uncomfortable sharing their personal feelings authentically, which I observed during the survey. This reluctance may stem from a broader pattern found during the interviews, where teachers expressed that their opinions are not valued, as the authority only executes what they feel is right. As a result, some participants might not have shared authentic information in either the interviews or the survey, knowing no action would be taken. Additionally, while the target population for this study is all government schools in Dhaka, the research was conducted with all teachers in one specific school. This means the findings may not encompass all the contributing factors and coping mechanisms experienced by teachers across all government schools.

Other than these limitations, the research achieved an in-depth understanding of the problem due to the rapport I had already built with the teachers. This rapport created a space where participants felt comfortable enough to share sensitive issues during the interviews. The study successfully explored patterns of burnout from various angles, providing comprehensive insights into the prevalence, contributing factors, and coping mechanisms of burnout among teachers in underprivileged government schools.

4.1 Results

The quantitative data from the survey of 50 high school teachers in underprivileged schools in Mirpur, Dhaka, revealed distinct patterns of burnout across gender and age groups and the three dimensions of burnout: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). The analysis highlights gender and age-specific trends, offering valuable insights into burnout among this population. The data were organized and presented using tables and charts to facilitate interpretation and visualization of the results. Tables were used to display the distribution of burnout levels among the surveyed teachers, categorized by gender and age groups.

Dimension	Gender	Age Group	Burnout Level
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Female	34–40 years	High
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Male	34–47 years	Average
Depersonalization (DP)	Female	34–48 years	Low
Depersonalization (DP)	Male	45–47 years	Average
Personal Accomplishment (PA)	Female	40–48 years	Low
Personal Accomplishment (PA)	Male	30–57 years	High

The analysis of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment reveals notable gender and age-related differences among teachers. In the emotional exhaustion dimension, females aged 34–40 years exhibited high levels, suggesting that middle-aged female teachers are particularly vulnerable to the pressures of their roles, likely influenced by factors such as workload, family responsibilities, and limited support systems. In contrast, males in the

30–47 years age group displayed average levels of emotional exhaustion, indicating moderate stress, which may be linked to poor organizational structures in their work environments. This suggests that female teachers in middle age are disproportionately affected by emotional exhaustion, necessitating gender-sensitive interventions, while male teachers may benefit from targeted support strategies to prevent further escalation of stress.

Regarding depersonalization, females aged 34–48 years showed low levels, indicating that, despite their emotional exhaustion, they remain emotionally engaged with their students. This could reflect their dedication and personal connection to teaching, even in challenging circumstances. In contrast, males aged 45–47 years exhibited average levels of depersonalization, suggesting a moderate tendency toward emotional detachment, possibly as a coping mechanism for prolonged exposure to stress. This pattern suggests that female teachers maintain greater emotional engagement with students, while older male teachers may distance themselves emotionally, potentially as a way to manage sustained stress.

When examining personal accomplishment, females aged 40–48 years demonstrated low burnout, indicating a sense of achievement and competence in their roles, likely due to their experience and emotional investment in teaching. In contrast, males across a broader age range (30–57 years) experienced high levels of burnout in this dimension, reflecting feelings of inadequacy or a lack of success. This high burnout in personal accomplishment among male teachers points to systemic challenges such as limited professional recognition, role ambiguity, or a lack of career growth opportunities. The stark contrast in personal accomplishment between

male and female teachers highlight gendered differences in perceived effectiveness, with male teachers facing more barriers to job satisfaction.

Synthesis of the findings reveals that female teachers experience higher emotional exhaustion but maintain low depersonalization and high personal accomplishment, demonstrating resilience and commitment. Male teachers, however, show moderate emotional exhaustion, average depersonalization, and high burnout in personal accomplishment, suggesting that systemic barriers are impacting their job satisfaction. Age-related trends indicate that emotional exhaustion peaks among middle-aged females, depersonalization increases in older males, and personal accomplishment decreases significantly in older males. Additionally, contextual factors, such as the challenges of teaching in under-resourced schools in Mirpur, Dhaka—a densely populated and underprivileged area—likely exacerbate burnout levels for both male and female teachers.

From 50 teachers, 4 teachers were interviewed for qualitative data analysis. The qualitative data analysis shows that the factors contributing to the burnout of government high school teachers are low socioeconomic background, poor organizational structure, lack of collective leadership practices, ineffective resource management structure, and ineffective recruitment. These five themes were developed from the four in-depth interviews of the teachers. The interviews also revealed the coping mechanisms high school teachers have adopted to mitigate burnout. The coping mechanisms are Stress Spillover into Personal Life, Recreational activities, Collegial support, and Outsourcing.

Now discuss the themes with citations of the teachers.

For better understanding I will attach the citations of the teachers' below. The pseudonyms of the teachers are listed in the table.

Participant 1 - Mr Tanvir
Participant 2- Mr Sharif
Participant 3 - Ms Sayeda Shifa
Participant 4 - Ms Jerin

Theme: Low Socioeconomic Background

Sub-theme 1: Financial Crisis

Teachers highlighted that **financial struggles** among students and their families significantly impacted attendance and performance, contributing to teacher burnout. Mr Tanvir (pseudonym) shared an incident where a student, forced to work as a laborer, struggled to attend school despite efforts to support them financially. "A child used to work as a laborer. I personally paid for their SSC exam registration. However, even after that, the child continues to work at a garage and doesn't have the time to attend school. This situation feels truly heartbreaking."

(Personal communication: Interview# 1, 08.09.24).

Such financial difficulties often force students to prioritize work over education, leaving teachers helpless despite their dedication. Teachers expressed frustration over their inability to provide consistent support and achieve the desired academic outcomes due to these systemic barriers.

Sub-theme 2: Student Absenteeism

Irregular attendance among students emerged as another key factor contributing to burnout. Teachers reported that many students come from low-income households where irregular attendance is common, leading to significant disruptions in teaching and learning. Mr Tanvir explained:

"Most of the students come from underprivileged backgrounds, and many of them are highly irregular in attending school. As a math teacher, when I try to teach a chapter, many students cannot understand it midway because they missed previous lessons. As a result, I cannot deliver what I aim to, and the expected outcomes are not achieved. It feels very disheartening that, despite my best intentions, I am unable to give my best."

(Personal communication: Interview# 1, 08.09.24).

This inconsistency in attendance often leaves teachers feeling demotivated as they struggle to balance covering new material while reteaching old content to help absent students catch up.

Sub-theme 3: Unaware Parents

Another contributing factor to burnout stems from **parental unawareness and lack of involvement**. Teachers reported that many parents, preoccupied with work, especially in garment factories, fail to monitor their children's attendance and performance. Mr Tanvir (pseudonym) emphasized:

"I have called the parents, but their children do not come to school, and they are unaware of it because both parents work in garment factories." *(Personal communication: Interview# 1,*

08.09.24).

Relating to this matter, Miss Jerin (psudonym) shared that-

"Even after preparing the same exam questions, parents cannot be reached when called. Even if asked to come, they do not show up. Most parents do not care about what their children are doing."

(Personal communication: Interview# 2, 27.11.24).

This lack of parental involvement adds to teachers' responsibilities, forcing them to go beyond their academic roles and take on parental duties, which further amplifies stress and burnout.

The insights shared by teachers underscore the role of **low socioeconomic background** as a key factor contributing to burnout among high school teachers. Financial instability within families often leads to absenteeism and lack of parental engagement, leading teachers to undertake additional responsibilities beyond teaching. These challenges create emotional distress, frustration, and a sense of helplessness, ultimately leading to burnout.

This thematic analysis reveals how socioeconomic factors not only affect students but also place a significant burden on teachers, making it harder for them to achieve academic goals and maintain personal well-being.

Secondly, discussing the theme- **"Poor Organizational Structure"** it is seen that the school teachers feel a lack of training opportunities.

Sub-theme 1: Lack of Training Opportunities

Teachers highlighted a lack of adequate training opportunities as a significant factor contributing to burnout. They expressed frustration over insufficient professional development programs, which left them unprepared to handle the evolving demands of teaching and supporting new teachers.

Miss Syeda Shifa (pseudonym) shared her struggle with mentoring inexperienced teachers, emphasizing the need for structured training programs:

"Certainly not, the challenges we face while teaching here are significant. Especially with the new teachers under my supervision, many things have to be taught to them step by step, which we, as coordinators, do not have the time for. There should be proper training opportunities for them."*(Personal communication: Interview# 3, 27.11.24)*

This lack of structured support often forces senior teachers to take on additional responsibilities, leading to work overload and emotional exhaustion.

Similarly, Mr Tanvir highlighted the limited availability of formal training programs, stating:

"I have received only three training sessions from the government in five years. As for other learning opportunities, they come from self-study through books or searching the internet. The school operates within a fixed framework, leaving very limited opportunities for learning."

(Personal communication: Interview# 3, 27.11.24)

The absence of continuous professional development opportunities not only restricts teachers' growth but also compels them to rely on self-directed learning, adding to their workload and

stress. Teachers reported feeling inadequately supported, which contributed to feelings of frustration, incompetence, and, ultimately, burnout.

The lack of training opportunities within the organizational structure emerged as a contributing factor to burnout among high school teachers. The absence of structured professional development and mentoring systems forced experienced teachers to compensate for gaps, resulting in role overload and stress. This highlights the need for schools to implement regular training programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills and reduce burnout.

Sub-theme 2: Autocracy in Administration

Another significant factor contributing to teacher burnout identified under the theme of Poor Organizational Structure is autocracy in administration. Teachers expressed frustration over hierarchical decision-making processes that ignored their feedback and suggestions, leaving them feeling undervalued and disempowered.

Miss Syeda Shifa shared her dissatisfaction with the administrative approach, stating:

"There is no use in saying anything because, good or bad, the administration believes whatever they think is right. Even when something is clearly wrong, no one calls it out. Sometimes they ask for feedback or opinions, but they only act on the suggestions that align with their own perspective. The rest are not implemented at all."

(Personal communication: Interview# 3, 27.11.24)

This illustrates a lack of inclusiveness in decision-making, where teachers' insights are either overlooked or selectively implemented. Such practices foster disengagement and feelings of helplessness, leading to burnout as teachers perceive their efforts and ideas as undervalued.

Similarly, Mr. Sayem described how administrative decisions were solely dictated by the school leadership, without genuine consideration for teachers' perspectives:

"The management only executes what the principal or the head of the committee decides."

(Personal communication: Interview# 4, 27.11.24)

This top-down approach not only limits teachers' autonomy but also creates an environment where they feel powerless to address pressing issues, further exacerbating stress and dissatisfaction.

The autocratic administrative structure emerged as a contributing factor to burnout among teachers by creating an environment where teachers' voices are suppressed and decisions are imposed without adequate consultation. The lack of shared leadership and collaborative decision-making undermines teacher morale, leaving them feeling unsupported and disconnected from the school's vision and goals.

This hierarchical approach forces teachers to comply with decisions they may disagree with, leading to emotional exhaustion, low motivation, and a sense of professional stagnation, all of which are significant contributors to burnout.

Sub-theme 3: Work Overload

Another critical factor contributing to teacher burnout under the theme of Poor Organizational Structure is work overload. Teachers reported excessive workloads, including extended working hours, after-school meetings, and additional responsibilities that spill over into their personal time, leaving little room for rest or family commitments.

Mr. Sayem highlighted the burden of unnecessary meetings held after school hours, stating:

"There are many unnecessary meetings after school hours."

These meetings not only extend the workday but also disrupt teachers' ability to maintain a work-life balance, causing mental and physical exhaustion over time.

Similarly, Miss Jerin shared how weekends were consumed by school-related tasks, limiting her ability to attend to household responsibilities or personal well-being:

"Most of the time, we have to come to school on Saturdays for various tasks, leaving no time for household work."

This highlights how work demands encroach upon personal time, leaving teachers feeling overburdened and unable to recharge, further contributing to burnout.

Work overload emerged as a significant organizational factor contributing to burnout by creating imbalances between work and personal life. Teachers are expected to sacrifice personal time to fulfill professional demands, often without adequate compensation or acknowledgment.

The additional workload also reduces their job satisfaction, increases stress levels, and diminishes their ability to perform effectively in the classroom, leading to emotional exhaustion and decreased motivation—key indicators of burnout.

Sub-theme 4: Lack of Personal Time

Under the theme of Poor Organizational Structure, another contributing factor to teacher burnout is the lack of personal time caused by extended working hours and after-school commitments. Teachers shared how their work obligations frequently intrude on personal space, leaving them with little to no time for self-care or family.

Miss Jerin emphasized how overwhelming workloads even affect basic self-care routines, stating:

"I haven't had time to do my hair for 3 days, what else can I say?"

This highlights the extent of exhaustion teachers experience, where even fundamental self-care tasks become difficult to manage. Such neglect of personal well-being leads to physical fatigue and mental stress, exacerbating burnout.

Mr. Tanvir further expressed frustration over the inability to balance work and family responsibilities:

"I can't give time to my family, how can I give time to myself?"

This statement illustrates how the lack of personal time not only affects teachers individually but also strains family relationships, adding to emotional distress. The inability to set boundaries

between work and personal life creates a sense of imbalance, leaving teachers feeling unfulfilled and overwhelmed.

Theme: Lack of Collective Leadership Practices

Another prominent factor contributing to teacher burnout is the lack of collective leadership practices within schools. Teachers expressed feelings of disempowerment and isolation, stemming from a lack of collaboration and collective decision-making. This absence of shared leadership prevents teachers from voicing concerns or initiating collective actions to address challenges, further intensifying stress and frustration.

Mr. Tanvir highlighted the reluctance among teachers to speak up due to fear of repercussions, stating:

"As teachers, we sit quietly without protesting. Even if I speak up, others stay silent, or they engage in flattery. This way, things won't actually change."

This statement reflects a culture of silence within the school environment, where teachers feel unsupported in addressing issues. The fear of being labeled or facing administrative backlash discourages collective efforts, leaving teachers isolated and overwhelmed by unresolved problems.

Similarly, Miss Syeda Shifa described her experiences of being one of the few teachers to raise her voice, only to witness others remaining silent out of fear:

"I haven't been able to take any collective steps. Since I came here, I've only seen myself raising my voice, and I can say very few teachers rarely speak up. Many, even when trying to take action, become silent due to fear of losing their jobs or missing out on increments."

This highlights a lack of organizational support for open communication and shared responsibility. Teachers are hesitant to advocate for change due to job insecurity and fear of losing promotions or increments, further deepening their sense of helplessness and emotional exhaustion.

Theme: Ineffective Structure of Resources Management

Sub-theme 1: Loads of Proxy Classes

One of the contributing factors to teacher burnout identified under the theme of Ineffective Structure of Resources Management is the excessive load of proxy classes. Teachers reported that the frequent and unplanned assignment of proxy classes caused stress, disorganization, and compromised teaching quality.

Miss Jerin expressed her frustration about being assigned proxy classes without preparation, stating: *"When conducting proxy classes, we should definitely benefit from it. If we can't attend, we should say so. On the other hand, when proxy classes are being conducted, entering a class*

without any preparation becomes very stressful. Sending an English teacher to teach a Math class without a lesson plan is not only confusing for the students but also painful for the teacher."

This highlights the lack of planning and resource management, where teachers are often required to substitute for subjects outside their expertise without prior preparation. Such unsystematic practices not only create stress but also undermine teaching effectiveness, leaving teachers feeling incompetent and frustrated.

The mismatch of skills and assignments further impacts the learning experience of students, adding to teachers' sense of inadequacy and burnout as they struggle to meet expectations without adequate resources or support.

Another factor contributing to teacher burnout under the theme of Ineffective Structure of Resources Management is ineffective teacher management practices. Teachers reported frequent and abrupt changes in subject assignments, which created stress, emotional instability, and a sense of professional insecurity.

Miss Jerin shared her frustration about being reassigned to different subjects without prior consultation or preparation:

"When they change the subject for teachers to take over a class on a whim. After managing to cope with one subject, they change it. For example, I was initially an English teacher, and then suddenly I was assigned to teach Science. I went into depression and couldn't eat for 3 days."

This highlights how arbitrary subject reassignments disrupt teachers' sense of stability and professional identity. Constant changes require teachers to re-learn subject material, adapt to new curriculums, and redesign lesson plans—all within a limited time frame, leading to stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion.

Miss Jerin's experience of emotional distress, including not eating for three days due to depression, further illustrates how such administrative decisions directly impact teachers' mental health and contribute to burnout.

Under the theme of Ineffective Structure of Resources Management, another contributing factor to teacher burnout is ineffective recruitment practices. Teachers expressed concerns about the quality of recruitment processes and skill gaps among newly hired teachers, which added to their workload and stress levels.

Miss Syeda Shifa highlighted the lack of technical skills among new recruits, stating:

"I thought this generation would be much better in technical skills, but what I see is that there is a huge gap in their knowledge. They don't even know how to use Excel or MS Word properly."

This points to a skill deficiency in fundamental tools and technologies required for teaching and administrative tasks. Teachers often had to train their colleagues on basic technical skills, diverting their focus from teaching responsibilities and adding to their workload and emotional exhaustion.

She further criticized the teacher recruitment process, emphasizing the focus on low-budget hiring over quality qualifications:

"I have a complaint about teacher recruitment, looking at how it's being done. Hiring teachers on a low budget is a good idea, but basic knowledge is essential, and in that regard, I feel there is a gap."

This reflects a compromise in quality due to budget constraints, resulting in the hiring of teachers with limited subject knowledge and technical expertise. As a consequence, experienced teachers face additional pressures to train and guide new recruits, leading to role overload and burnout.

Sub-theme 4: Low Salary

Another significant factor contributing to teacher burnout under the theme of Ineffective Recruitment is low salary. Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their salaries, describing how inadequate pay forced them to seek secondary sources of income, leading to work overload and emotional exhaustion.

Mr. Tanvir highlighted the financial struggles teachers face due to low wages, stating:

"You know that in this school, the salary is such that a teacher cannot manage with it. Even during my student life, I earned more than this. That's why I have to give tuitions after school."

This emphasizes how teachers are compelled to take on additional jobs, such as private tutoring, to meet financial needs, leaving them with little personal time and increasing their stress levels.

Mr. Sharif also shared the challenges of maintaining a household with a low salary:

"Managing a family with four children on this salary is impossible. That's why, more or less, everyone has a side business."

This statement underscores the economic pressure faced by teachers, forcing many to engage in side businesses to supplement their income. These extra responsibilities create mental strain and physical exhaustion, which contribute directly to burnout.

The low salary structure emerged as a key organizational factor contributing to burnout.

Teachers are required to work beyond regular hours or pursue additional income sources to survive, resulting in work-life imbalances, stress, and mental fatigue.

The financial insecurity caused by low pay also affects job satisfaction and motivation, making teachers feel undervalued and unappreciated, which further exacerbates burnout.

Theme: Coping Mechanisms to Mitigate Burnout

Sub theme 1: No Mechanism

One of the coping mechanisms identified among teachers to mitigate burnout is the absence of structured coping strategies, leading to acceptance of stress as an unavoidable part of the job. Teachers expressed feelings of helplessness and a lack of proactive solutions to address their emotional and physical exhaustion.

Mr. Tanvir described his approach to managing stress as merely trying to endure and accept it, stating:

"All the stress cannot be released, but I try as much as possible to solve it myself. If I can't, there's nothing else to do but accept it."

This highlights a passive coping approach, where teachers attempt to internalize stress rather than actively addressing it. The absence of effective coping mechanisms leaves teachers vulnerable to emotional exhaustion and long-term burnout as they feel unsupported and isolated in managing their struggles.

Sub-theme 2: Stress Spillover into Personal Life

Another coping mechanism identified is the spillover of professional stress into personal life, where teachers unintentionally project workplace frustrations onto their families. This phenomenon reflects the emotional toll of burnout, as unresolved stress at work manifests in strained personal relationships.

Miss Jerin candidly shared how her work-related stress affects interactions with her children:

"When I go home, I end up shouting at the kids, and what can I do, miss? They end up being the victims, I understand."

This statement highlights the emotional exhaustion teachers experience, which blurs the boundaries between professional and personal spaces. Teachers, unable to release stress

constructively, often redirect frustrations toward family members, further deepening their sense of guilt and emotional fatigue.

Sub Theme 3: Collegial Support

One prominent coping mechanism identified by participants was collegial support, particularly through sharing stress with colleagues and engaging in light-hearted conversations. Miss Jerin, one of the participants, emphasized the value of discussing stress with peers, stating:

"Everyone talks about stress, shares it, and has fun conversations, but it never really works."

This statement highlights the dual nature of collegial support as a coping mechanism. On the one hand, the opportunity to share experiences and have informal, fun conversations with colleagues provides a temporary sense of relief, creating an environment of mutual understanding and empathy. However, as Miss Jerin notes, this approach does not always lead to lasting stress relief or effectively mitigate burnout.

While collegial support offers immediate emotional comfort, it was clear from the discussions that it should be seen as a supplementary mechanism rather than a comprehensive solution. Participants emphasized that, while supportive colleagues and informal conversations are important, they need to be paired with more structured approaches to address the underlying causes of burnout. These include professional development opportunities, better workload management, and access to mental health resources, which were also identified as crucial in promoting long-term well-being for teachers.

Sub-Theme 3: Recreational Activities as a means of coping with stress

Another key theme that emerged in the interviews was the use of recreational activities as a means of coping with stress and burnout. Teachers indicated that engaging in activities outside of work helped them refresh both mentally and physically. The activities mentioned included going outside, shopping, and watching movies.

Several participants shared that spending time outdoors, away from the pressures of their professional lives, provided a much-needed mental break. Additionally, watching movies was cited as a popular form of relaxation. Participants noted that immersing themselves in a good movie provided an emotional and mental diversion, allowing them to relax and unwind. Miss

Jerin remarked:

"Mainly, I take my kids outside. Whatever happens, I always do that. Another thing I do is, we all watch a movie together. Although it becomes tough, I try to do that."

Shopping was also mentioned as a favored activity for stress relief. Teachers noted that shopping, whether for necessities or leisure, gave them an opportunity to disconnect from work-related stressors and focus on personal enjoyment. Miss Syeda Shifa explained:

"I feel good shopping for the kids. I enjoy giving gifts, and I also enjoy going on trips."

These recreational activities were consistently cited as crucial strategies for refreshing and rejuvenating teachers, providing them with an emotional reset and a brief respite from the demands of their profession. However, participants also acknowledged that while these activities were effective for short-term stress relief, they alone were not sufficient to address the long-term effects of burnout. As such, these activities should be considered part of a broader, multi-faceted approach to coping with teacher burnout.

Sub-Theme 4: Outsourcing as a Coping Mechanism to Address Financial Stress

A significant theme that emerged from the interviews was the reliance on outsourcing or side businesses as a coping mechanism to mitigate the financial stress experienced by teachers, particularly in light of low salaries. Many teachers reported taking up tutoring and engaging in other side businesses to support their personal and family needs.

Mr. Sharif, a participant in the study, shared the financial strain he faces and explained the necessity of side businesses:

"Managing a family with four children on this salary is impossible. That's why most of us have side businesses."

This statement reflects the broader issue of financial insecurity within the teaching profession, where salaries often do not align with the rising cost of living and family responsibilities. As a result, many teachers resort to supplementary income streams, such as private tutoring, to bridge the financial gap. In addition to tutoring, other side businesses were mentioned, with participants highlighting that these activities not only helped with financial stability but also provided a sense of control and independence.

While side businesses were recognized as essential for meeting immediate financial needs, participants also noted the impact these additional responsibilities had on their time and energy. Balancing full-time teaching duties with side businesses can exacerbate stress, leading to a

feeling of constant work without adequate downtime. Nevertheless, the necessity of these activities was clear, as they allowed teachers to better manage financial pressures that would otherwise add to their stress and burnout.

This section emphasizes how financial strain, exacerbated by low salaries, has led teachers to adopt side businesses as a coping mechanism while also acknowledging the added pressure these activities can place on their well-being.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the prevalence and contributing factors of burnout among high school teachers in government underprivileged schools in Bangladesh, with a focus on their

coping mechanisms. My firsthand experience working in such schools revealed the systemic challenges teachers face daily, including inadequate resources, excessive workloads, and a lack of voice in decision-making processes. While my initial assumption was that most teachers would report high levels of burnout, the findings from the surveys and interviews provided deeper insights into the underlying issues, including a disconnect between self-perception and reality.

The survey results, while highlighting varying levels of burnout across age and gender, do not fully reflect the depth of emotional, physical, and professional strain teachers endure. During the survey process, I noticed that many teachers completed the questionnaire hastily, often without reflecting deeply on their feelings or circumstances. This behavior aligns with a pattern observed

in interviews, where teachers described performing tasks out of obligation rather than engagement, a potential coping mechanism for dealing with overwhelming workloads.

The qualitative data provided a more vivid picture of the struggles teachers face. For example, many teachers reported having no structured coping mechanisms to deal with stress, fearing repercussions if they spoke out about their challenges. The lack of agency in their professional roles, combined with autocratic administrative practices, exacerbates burnout.

Another major issue identified in this study is the **lack of in-house training and development programs** for teachers. Participants revealed that they receive only **one or two government-led training sessions annually**, which are generic and lack follow-up mechanisms to ensure practical application. Teachers expressed frustration over how these training sessions fail to

address their **context-specific challenges**, leaving them feeling unsupported in adapting to modern educational demands. Moreover, teachers highlighted their **lack of technical skills**, including proficiency in basic tools like MS Word and Excel. This skill gap not only hinders their efficiency but also adds to their stress as they struggle to meet professional expectations.

Implications of Findings

These findings highlight critical issues in the Bangladeshi education system, particularly in underprivileged schools. The observed burnout, stemming from systemic inefficiencies such as **work overload, autocratic decision-making, insufficient training opportunities**, and

inadequate compensation, underscores the urgent need for structural reforms. Policymakers must recognize that teachers are at the forefront of the education system and must be actively involved in discussions and decisions affecting their roles.

The absence of regular training and development programs further compounds the problem. Teachers who face unique classroom challenges and rapidly changing educational technologies are left without the tools or knowledge to adapt. This gap is particularly significant as it directly impacts their teaching efficacy and self-confidence, contributing to feelings of inadequacy and burnout.

Furthermore, the lack of coping mechanisms among teachers raises concerns about their long-term mental health and job satisfaction. Without proper support systems, teachers may become disengaged, which could negatively impact student outcomes and the overall quality of education.

Comparison with Existing Literature

The findings of this study align with global research on teacher burnout, which identifies workload, lack of support, and insufficient recognition as major contributing factors. However, this study uniquely highlights the impact of **limited training opportunities** and **autocratic management practices** in the context of Bangladeshi government schools. Unlike studies from countries with more participatory decision-making systems and robust teacher development programs, this research underscores the need for systemic changes to empower and support teachers in Bangladesh.

Unexpected Observations

An unexpected finding was the teachers' lack of engagement with the survey itself. This indifference reflects a deeper cultural pattern of disengagement, where tasks are completed perfunctorily rather than thoughtfully. It suggests a systemic devaluation of teacher input, where they feel their opinions and efforts do not lead to meaningful change.

Policy Implications and Future Research

The study highlights the following areas for immediate intervention and future research:

1. **Teacher Training and Development:** Implement **in-house, context-specific training programs** with regular follow-ups to address challenges and bridge the technical skill gap.

2. **Teacher Involvement in Decision-Making:** Schools need to create structures where teachers can actively participate in discussions that affect their workload and professional responsibilities.
3. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establishing a direct, anonymous feedback system between teachers and policymakers could help address grassroots-level challenges.
4. **Teachers' mental health concern:** Further research is needed to focus on teachers' mental health to build awareness of how it impacts society.
5. **Workload Compensation and low salary:** Investigating the impact of unpaid extra classes on teacher burnout and exploring compensation mechanisms could inform policy changes.

Conclusion

The study underscores the urgent need to reform the education system in government schools, particularly in addressing burnout among teachers. Policymakers must prioritize teachers' mental well-being by incorporating their voices into decision-making, ensuring inhouse school leadership and training departments in every school for continuous skill development, stress management programmes, compensation system for extra classes and salary increment. Future research should delve deeper into the mental health of the teachers and the available in house training opportunities, salary issue and organizational structure to explore sustainable solutions to improve teacher satisfaction and performance. By addressing these issues, Bangladesh can create a more equitable and effective education system that supports both teachers and students.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the results of this study and my personal observations, the following recommendations aim to address teacher burnout, improve the educational environment, and reform the systemic issues within the education sector:

- **Establish a Leadership and Training Department as a Support System:**

Each school should implement a dedicated Leadership and Training Department that serves as a comprehensive support system. This department should focus on continuous training for teachers, including recreational activities to help those experiencing emotional exhaustion release stress. It can also provide targeted programs to support teachers with high depersonalization and burnout in personal accomplishment, enabling them to develop personal skills, rebuild emotional attachment, and enhance their sense of achievement.

- **Address the Autocracy in Educational Institutions:**

The issue of autocratic administration, where teachers fear losing their jobs and feel voiceless in decision-making, needs immediate attention. Policymakers should prioritize reforming the structure of the education system to create an environment where teachers' opinions are valued. Decision-making processes must involve teachers at the root level, as they are the ones facing daily classroom struggles.

- **Encourage Participatory Leadership for Innovation:**

Teachers, particularly younger generations, should be encouraged to share innovative

ideas to improve teaching methods and move away from traditional approaches. This will not only empower teachers but also address their perception that their voices don't matter, as revealed in the study.

- **Study the Effectiveness of Leadership and Training Departments:**

Research should be conducted to evaluate how the introduction of leadership and training departments affects teachers' burnout levels, emotional attachment, and professional growth. This can provide insights into how these departments can be optimized to better serve teachers' needs.

- **Investigate Historical and Cultural Impacts on Teacher Autonomy:**

Since the study identified autocracy in administration as a deeply ingrained cultural

issue, future research should explore how historical practices, such as those rooted in British colonial rule, continue to shape teacher autonomy. Understanding this cultural legacy can guide effective strategies for reform.

- **Mandate Leadership and Training Departments in Schools:**

Policymakers should make the establishment of **Leadership and Training Departments** a mandatory part of every school's structure. These departments should be monitored periodically to ensure they address teacher burnout, foster skill development, and provide recreational opportunities.

- **Implement Teacher-Centric Policies for Systemic Reform:**

Reforms in the education sector should focus on **decentralizing decision-making** and giving teachers a platform to share their opinions without fear of repercussions. This will

ensure that those at the grassroots level contribute to policy and curriculum changes, fostering innovation and addressing classroom challenges effectively.

By implementing these recommendations, schools can address the root causes of burnout while empowering teachers to thrive personally and professionally. This approach not only enhances teacher well-being but also improves the quality of education for students.

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Appendices

For Qualitative data the survey has been used.

Appendix

Maslach Burnout Inventory

নিম্নলিখিত উক্তিগুলো মনোযোগ দিয়ে পড়ুন। প্রতিটি উক্তির পাশে ৬টি করে বিকল্প উত্তর রয়েছে। যেকোন একটি উত্তরে (✓) চিহ্ন দিয়ে চিহ্নিত করুন। এখানে সকল উক্তিই সঠিক তাই অনুগ্রহ করে প্রতিটি উক্তির ক্ষেত্রে আপনার মনোভাব প্রকাশ করুন। আপনার উত্তরের গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে এবং কেবল গবেষণার কাজে এ তথ্য ব্যবহার করা হবে।

ক্রমিক নং	উক্তি সমূহ	কখনই না	খুব কম	কম	মাঝে মাঝে	প্রায়ই	সব সময়
১	আমার কাজকে প্রায়ই প্রাণহীন মনে হয়।						
২	সারাদিন কাজ করার পর পরিশ্রান্ত হয়ে গিয়েছি বলে মনে হয়।						
৩	আমি যখন সকালে উঠি এবং কাজের জন্য আরও একটি দিনের মুখোমুখি হতে হবে এই ভেবে তখন ক্লান্তবোধ করি।						
৪	সারাদিন মানুষের সাথে কাজ করা আমার জন্য সত্যিই পীড়াদায়ক।						
৫	আমি আমার কাজের প্রতি অনীহা অনুভব করি।						
৬	আমি কর্মক্ষেত্রে খুব বেশি পরিশ্রম করছি বলে মনে হয়।						
৭	মানুষের সাথে কাজ করতে গিয়ে আমি প্রচণ্ড মানসিক চাপ অনুভব করি।						
৮	আমার কোন ঐর্ষ্য শক্তি নেই বলে মনে হয়।						
৯	আমি মনে করি সহকর্মীরা তাদের কিছু সমস্যার জন্য আমাকে দায়ী করে।						
১০	আমি আমার কিছু সহকর্মীদের অকেজো মনে করি।						
১১	চাকুরীটি গ্রহণ করার পর থেকে কখনো কখনো নিজেকে অন্যদের প্রতি অপেক্ষাকৃত কম অনুভূতিশীল বলে মনে করি।						
১২	আমি ভেবে উদ্বিগ্ন যে চাকুরীটি আমাকে মানসিকভাবে কঠিন কাজে তুলছে।						
১৩	আমার চাকুরী নিয়ে আমি একেবারেই হতাশ।						
১৪	সহকর্মীদের সাথে কি হয় তা নিয়ে আমি একেবারেই চিন্তিত নই।						
১৫	সহকর্মীরা আমাকে ভুল বুঝছে কিংবা প্রশংসা করছে তা আমি সহজেই বুঝতে পারি।						
১৬	আমি আমার সহকর্মীদের সাথে সম্পর্কযুক্ত সমস্যাগুলির সাথে খুব কার্যকরভাবে মোকাবিলা করি।						
১৭	আমি মনে করি আমার কাজ অন্যের জীবনে ইতিবাচক প্রভাব ফেলছে।						
১৮	আমি কর্মশক্তি অনুভব করি।						
১৯	আমি আমার সহকর্মীদের সাথে সহজেই একটি স্বাচ্ছন্দ্যময় পরিবেশ তৈরি করতে পারি।						
২০	আমার সহকর্মীদের সাথে কাজ করার পর আমি আনন্দ বোধ করি।						
২১	চাকুরীর মাধ্যমে আমি অনেক কিছু অর্জন করতে পেরেছি।						
২২	আমার কাজে আমি আবেগপূর্ণ সমস্যাগুলি খুব শান্তভাবেই মোকাবিলা করতে পারি।						

For Quantative data the semi-structure interview questions are given below:

১. কেমন আছেন?

২। আপনার কি শিক্ষকতা পেশায় ভালোলাগা থেকে আসা হয়েছে?

- আপনার শিক্ষকতা নিয়ে নিজস্ব কোন গোল/ লক্ষ্য আছে?
- আপনার এই লক্ষ্যে পৌঁছানোর জন্য কোন পরিকল্পনা আছে?
- আপনার এই লক্ষ্যের পিছনে কোন দিকটা সর্বদা মোটিভেশন হিসেবে কাজ করে?

৩। স্কুলের পরিবেশ এর কোন দিকগুলো আপনার কাজ করার জন্য পজিটিভ আর কোন দিক গুলো কাজের ব্যাঘাত ঘটচ্ছে বলে মনে হয়?

- এই রকম পরিস্থিতিতে আপনি বা আপনারা কি কি ব্যবস্থা গ্রহন করেন নিজেকে ঠিক রাখার জন্য বা সুস্থভাবে ক্লাস নেয়ার জন্য?

৪। স্কুলের পরিবেশ এ কোন পরিবর্তন আনার জন্য সহকর্মীদের নিয়ে দলবদ্ধভাবে কিছু করার ক্ষেত্রে কিরকম সহযোগীতা পান?

- এই সহযোগীতা না পাওয়ায় কি ধরনের মানসিক অবস্থার তৈরি হয়?
- ওই পরিস্থিতিতে কি করেন নিজেকে ঠিক করার জন্য?

৫। এই চাকরিতে আপনার শেখার সুযোগ কতটা পান বলে মনে হয়?

- আপনি কি নিজের উন্নয়নের সুযোগ একা একা ইন্টারনেটে খুঁজেন?
- যতটা খুঁজেন এই প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে সে তুলনায় কতটুকু পাচ্ছেন বলে মনে হয়?
- সহকর্মীদের কাছ থেকে কি আপনি শেখার সুযোগ পান?

৬। আপনার সৃজনশীলতার জন্য প্রতিষ্ঠান বা সহকর্মীদের কাছ থেকে কোন অনুপ্রেরণা বা পুরস্কার পেয়েছেন?

- স্টুডেন্টদের কাছ থেকে আশানুরূপ ফল পাওয়া না পেলে কিরকম মানসিক অবস্থা তৈরি হয়?
- সেটা থেকে নিজেকে পজিটিভ করতে কি করে থাকেন সাধারণত?

৭। ম্যানেজমেন্ট এ নিজের কথাগুলো কি বলতে পারেন?

- কোন সমস্যা সমাধানের ক্ষেত্রে আপনার মতামত কি নেয়া হয় বা নেয়া হলে কিভাবে নেয়া হয়?
- মতামত অনুযায়ী কতভাগ সময় পদক্ষেপ নেয়া হয়?

৮। আপনি এই চাকরি করার পর কি রকম সময় পান পরিবার ও নিজের জন্য?

- কাজ এবং নিজের জন্য সময় বের করার ব্যাপারটা ব্যালেন্স না করতে পারলে মানসিকভাবে ও শারিরিকভাবে কি কি প্রভাব পরে বলে আপনি মনে করেন?
- আপনার কাছে কি মনে হয় যে নিজের জন্য সময় বের করার প্রয়োজনটা কেন?
- আপনি শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে সুস্থ থাকার জন্য আপনি প্রতিদিন কি করছেন?
- আপনি কাজের পাশাপাশি কি করতে ভালবাসেন? বাগান করা, গল্পের বই পড়া, বা ঘুরতে যাওয়া এমন কিছ?
- এই ভালোলাগার জিনিসগুলোতে কিরকম সময় দেওয়া হয়?

৯। আপনি কি এই চাকরির করে আর্থিকভাবে সন্তুষ্ট?

- এর পাশাপাশি অন্য সেক্টরে চাকরী করার চেষ্টা করেছেন?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন লিঙ্গ এবং বয়সের জৈবিক কারণগুলি শিক্ষকের অস্বস্তিতে অবদান রাখতে পারে?

১২. শিক্ষকতা পেশায় যদি কগুলো আমাদেরকে মানসিকভাবে চাপ সৃষ্টি করছে সেই উৎসগুলোকে সমাধানের জন্য গুরুত্বের ক্রমানুসারে ১... ২ করে আপনি কিভাবে স্থান দেবেন?