

2 - 4 July 2026

Zurich , Switzerland

My Job Is Exhausting: Factors That Contribute to Burnout Among Female Primary School Teachers

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Abstract

Burnout is a significant and growing issue that affects teachers worldwide. It is characterised by physical, emotional and mental exhaustion due to prolonged stress. Educators are often predisposed to burnout because of, amongst others, inadequate support, high levels of responsibility and a heavy workload. Burnout affects teacher well-being, students and the quality of education they should offer. This paper aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to burnout among female teachers in primary schools. Female participants were selected due to the unique challenges they face compared to their male counterparts. The study adopted a qualitative approach. Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with nineteen female teachers from four primary schools. Focus-group interviews were followed up by individual interviews. Findings were analysed thematically and highlighted that educators are facing a significant burnout crisis. Several factors cause burnout among the participants such as a lack of adequate resources, ill-disciplined students and financial stress. The study concludes that burnout impacts the work performance and job satisfaction of teachers. Intervention strategies should be adopted to mitigate burnout among teachers.

Keywords: Emotional Exhaustion; Maslach Burnout Inventory; Social Support; Stress; Work Performance