

**BURNOUT AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT ON THE MENTAL WELLBEING  
OF PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS**

*Dissertation submitted to University of Kerala*

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of*

**Master of Science in Counselling Psychology**

By

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## CERTIFICATE



This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**Burnout and Perceived Social support on the Mental Wellbeing of private school teachers**” has been undertaken and completed by DEVIKA D P, Reg. No. 60423115009, under the supervision of Ms. Anila Daniel as part of the requirements for the fourth semester of the M.Sc. Counselling Psychology programme during the academic year 2023–2025 at Loyola College of Social Sciences, Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram.

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that this research work titled “**BURNOUT AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT ON THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS**” was carried out in the Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences, under the supervision of Ms. Anila Daniel, and submitted to the University of Kerala as a part of the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Postgraduate Degree in Counselling Psychology for the academic year 2023–2025.

This is a bonafide work and has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree, diploma, title, or recognition previously.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between teacher burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among private high school teachers, and explores the associations between these psychological variables. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 120 private school teachers, using the Teacher Burnout Scale (TBS), the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). Spearman's rho correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and mental well-being ( $\rho = .436, p < .01$ ), indicating that teachers with higher perceived support reported better psychological well-being. A significant negative correlation was found between burnout and mental well-being ( $\rho = -.232, p < .01$ ), suggesting that higher levels of burnout are associated with poorer mental health outcomes. The correlation between perceived social support and burnout was negative but not statistically significant ( $\rho = -.143, p > .05$ ), implying that while social support may help alleviate burnout, its effect was not strongly evident in this sample. These findings focus on the protective role of social support in enhancing teacher well-being and reducing psychological strain. The study recommends institutional interventions such as stress management programs and mental health initiatives. Future research may consider examining the mediating or moderating effects of perceived social support and include a more diverse sample across different school settings and regions.

**Keywords;** *Mental wellbeing, Teacher burnout, Perceived social support, Teacher Burnout Scale, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support*



## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

When a person imparts information or skills to another, it is common to describe the action as teaching. Teaching is regarded as both an art or science. As an art, it lays stress on the imaginative and artistic abilities of the teacher in creating a worthwhile situation in the classroom to enable students to learn. As a science, it sheds light on the logical, mechanical, or procedural steps to be followed to attain an effective achievement of goals. Different educationists hold different ideas regarding the concept of teaching. “Teaching is intimate contact between a more mature personality and a less mature one which designed to further the education of the latter”. Morrison (1934), Dewey (1934) expressed this concept of teaching by an equation. “Teaching is learning as selling is to buying”. In the words of John Brubacher (1939), “Teaching is arrangement and manipulation of a situation in which there are gaps or obstructions which an individual will seek to overcome and from which he will learn in the course of doing so”. B.O. Smith defined teaching as “Teaching is a system of actions intended to induce learning”. According to Gage (1963), “Teaching is a form interpersonal influence aimed at changing the behaviour potential another person”. Smith in 1963 further extended the definition of teaching. Teaching is a system of actions involving an agent, an end in view and a situation including two sets of factors those over which the agent has no control (class size, characteristics of pupils, physical facilities, etc.) and those which he can modify (such as techniques and strategies of teaching).

Edmund Amidon (1967) defined teaching as “an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk which takes place between teacher and pupil and occurs during certain definable activities”. Davis et al. (1962), Gagne et al. (1974) and Gage (1978) have contributed significantly to defining this concept, and their views could be summarized as follows: Teaching is a scientific process, and its major components are content, communication and feedback. The teaching strategy has a positive effect on student learning.

Teaching can be conceptualized as a form of problem-solving and decision making which has many properties in common with the work of physicians. This conceptualization has led to a body of research which has investigated the decision making of teaching focusing in particular on the information about pupils that teachers use to make decisions and the way they tailor instruction to individual pupil needs (Calderhead, 1995). “Unlike other professions where you make ‘machines’ work, this profession allows one to deal with the most complex phenomena on earth. Ranging from most studious to most mischievous students, the teachers need to maintain a balanced attitude and approach in transforming them to mature individuals” (Kishore, 2000). Professionalization of the teaching workforce is a major concern that needs to be addressed because it is a field of significant knowledge. The process of teaching can influence the lives of many students.

Teaching is recognised as one of the most emotionally demanding professions, requiring high levels of responsibility, constant interaction with students, and the pressure to meet academic standards. Being a teacher can be extremely stressful, exhausting, and emotionally draining, potentially leading to burnout or teacher burnout. A teacher's role has evolved dramatically over the years. Currently, some of them are in difficult situations such as a lack of resources, a loss of authority, conflicting students, and so on. All of these factors can leave the teacher feeling overwhelmed and disoriented. Even if the teacher begins their career motivated and excited, he or she will most likely become frustrated and unsettled after a few years. The fact that teachers can suffer from burnout syndrome can give children a vision of a hectic, complicated and difficult world, which is not the reality most parents want their kids to learn.

Burnout is a concept that originated in the mid-1970s in the USA and quickly became a widely used term to describe various social and personal problems affecting workers,

particularly those in helping professions (Freudenberger, 1974). It refers to a specific dysfunction believed to result from excessive demands placed on an individual's energy, strength, and resources. Although no single agreed-upon definition exists, burnout is generally characterized by emotional exhaustion, withdrawal from job demands, physical fatigue, cynicism, and decreased personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Symptoms often include psychosomatic illnesses, increased substance use, inappropriate anger, and depression. Recently, it has been observed that teachers also exhibit symptoms of burnout, which directly or indirectly impair their teaching performance (Shukla & Trivedi, 2008).

Though teaching is called as labour of love until now, the realities of classroom life have made teaching a stressful occupation. As a consequence, many teachers are finding that their feelings about themselves, their students and their profession are more negative than they were initially. These teachers are susceptible to developing chronic feelings of emotional exhaustion and fatigue, negative attitudes towards their students and a loss of feeling of accomplishment in the job. If this is the reality, then it is rather frightening to think that many teachers are wasting themselves, spending their lifetimes in doing something which has no meaning for them, which gives them no sense of satisfaction and personal worth. In psychological terms such type of teachers is called burnt out teachers. Freudenberger (1977) describes burnout as physical and emotional exhaustion resulting from excessive demands on energy, strength or resources. He says that when frustration, tension or anxiety persist or increase, stress develops into a syndrome labelled as burnout. He also noted that sometimes burnout people do not see themselves as cynical and depressed. They find fault with everything and everyone around them, complaining about the organization and reacting critically to whatever is suggested by others. Hindrickson (1979) points out that a burnt-out teacher is losing or has lost the energy and enthusiasm needed to teach children. Kahn (1986) has explained

burnout as “a syndrome of inappropriate attitudes towards clients and towards self often associated with uncomfortable physical and emotional symptoms as well as with deterioration of performance”. Capel (1991) explains burnout is a negative response to long-term.

Kasinath and Kailaslingam (1995) believe that Burnout is a syndrome of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion and reduced personal achievement that can occur among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind. Maslach (1984) defined burnout as the loss of concern for the people with whom one is working. Further, she explained burnout as the syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that results from interpersonal contact. She states that for the people who work continuously with other people, long term stress can be emotionally draining and can lead to burnout. They are usually required to work intensely and intimately with people on a large scale, continuous basis and become involved with their client’s psychological, social and physical problems. This type of professional interaction arouses strong feelings of emotional and physical stress that can be disruptive and incapacitating. This may lead to defence in the form of ‘detached concern’ of establishing some psychological distance from the client while still maintaining a concern for the person’s wellbeing. Inability to develop this attitude and a lack of preparation for coping may make him/her unable to maintain the enthusiasm, care and commitment he/she initially brought to the job and then the process of burnout begins. A subsequent part is, the development of negative, cynical and dehumanized perceptions of and feelings about one’s client and they are treated accordingly (depersonalization). Such negative reactions to clients however are not an inevitable consequence of emotional exhaustion, although they are quite prevalent. A third aspect of the burnout syndrome is the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly in regard to one’s work and clients. People in this dimension of burnout feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishments. Thus, burnout is seen as a syndrome

of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment. Burnout occurs at the individual level. It involves feelings, motives, attitudes and expectations. It is a negative feeling for the individual that leads to exhaustion (both physical and emotional), a feeling of lack of energy, a tendency to view the individuals in a disinterested manner (depersonalization) and the perception of a lack of personal achievement. The individual undergoing burnout may eat alone instead of taking his/her lunch with others, thereby avoiding mixing with others. The individual may even respond with cynicism to others. Maslach and Collins (1977) state that, “a worker becomes a petty bureaucrat, going strictly by the book and viewing clients as cases, rather than as people”. Teachers belong to a profession which involved working with students. Thus, they belong to the group of those who do ‘people work’ of some kind. Clouse and Whitekar (1981) point out three stages of teacher burnout:

#### Stage 1- Loss of Enthusiasm

Most teachers enter the profession with a sincere desire to help the students. Their energy levels may be high, ideals strong, value systems decent, sense of motivation high and they nurse an inner hope that something positive can be done about the students. However, when their expectations are not met, their enthusiasm falters.

#### Stage 2- Frustration

Frustration is one of the earliest signs of burnout. Lowered teacher morale at this point increases the frustration and burnout level.

#### Stage 3- Alienation

Alienation of the professional from the work environment may be viewed as a response or result of powerlessness, frustration and loss of meaning in one’s work. Alienation is

associated with detachment, withdrawal and isolation within the work environment. A teacher at this stage may view students as impersonal objects, may not be available when the students need help or even refuse to help them. Thus, a teacher who is undergoing burnout would perceive a lack of enthusiasm, lowered sense of morale and high levels of frustration, a sense of detachment and would withdraw from work. Teacher burnout has an additional impact on the society, in that the teacher's state of mental health has a direct influence on the educational process. How the teacher instructs has more relevance than what is taught. A teacher who is low on morale, high on frustration and is detached from the students obviously is not able to be effective in the classroom. Burnout is not a trivial problem but an important barometer of a major social dysfunction in the work place (Shukla & Trivedi, 2008).

Burnout not only affects teachers' professional effectiveness but also significantly impacts their mental well-being. Mental well-being refers to a positive state of emotional, psychological, and social health, characterized by a sense of contentment, resilience, and the ability to effectively cope with life's challenges. It encompasses positive emotions, a sense of purpose, and the capacity to engage in fulfilling relationships and activities. Mental well-being is a key component of overall quality of life (QoL), as positive mental health contributes significantly to an individual's perception of their life's value and fulfilment.

Mental wellbeing is “a dynamic state in which individuals are able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community” (Huppert, 2009). It refers to a positive state of emotional, psychological, and social health. It is characterized by resilience, contentment, and the ability to cope effectively with life's challenges. Mental well-being involves emotional health, which includes experiencing positive emotions like joy and gratitude while managing stress and negative feelings constructively

Wellbeing is about more than coping with negative situations it also includes ideas about what it means to live a good life. Perspectives on wellbeing are often divided in their approach. For example, subjective wellbeing encompasses ideas such as life satisfaction and the presence of positive emotion more frequently than negative emotion, while psychological wellbeing is concerned with ideas such as purpose in life and positive relationships with others. The understanding of wellbeing is further complicated by the fact that terms such life satisfaction are sometimes used synonymously with wellbeing in the research. There is no single agreed-upon definition of wellbeing in the literature, but most definitions agree that wellbeing is multidimensional, comprising physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects. This resource defines wellbeing in terms of the broad concept of ‘feeling good and functioning well: in other words, a state where teachers perceive job satisfaction, experience positive emotions more frequently than negative emotions, and function well both as a teacher and in their other roles in life (as a parent, spouse, family member, friend). Functioning well includes supportive professional relationships, professional growth and a feeling of self-efficacy. Mental well-being encompasses both emotional and psychological dimensions of health, including the ability to manage stress, maintain fulfilling relationships, and contribute meaningfully to one’s environment (Tennant et al., 2007). For educators, sustaining positive mental well-being is crucial, as it directly influences their teaching quality and relationships with students.

One factor that has consistently shown a protective effect against psychological distress is perceived social support the belief that one is cared for and has assistance available from others (Zimet et al., 1988). Support from family, friends, and significant others can buffer the negative effects of burnout and enhance mental well-being, particularly in emotionally taxing professions like teaching. Perceived social support, according to Zimet et al. (1988), refers to the subjective feeling that one is cared for, respected, and that their social needs are being



met. It's essentially the individual's cognitive appraisal of the availability of a supportive network.

Perceived social support is the idea that people view their friends, family, and other people as resources who will support them and aid them when they need it. Young adulthood is a stage of life when a person transitions from their adolescent years into adulthood. The period of life where perceived social support is most important is when people enter adult roles like marriage, parenthood, and full-time employment. It is also a developmental stage with significant long-term effects. Injury, mental health disorders, substance abuse, and sexual/reproductive health concerns are relatively common in young adults. The period of time when one's physical and sensory abilities are frequently at their top. Interpersonal relationships here then play a huge role, as to provide them a feeling of constant support, comfort and are indispensable in helping young adults cope with stressors, acting as social support sources that protect them from psychological distress.

It's Important to have more of positive perceived social support rather than received social support to help them have a good concept of self, higher self-esteem and more confidence to deal with the new difficulties and distress they are going to face in this new stage, becoming more resilient to overcome the problems and get back to the pre-crisis situation little bit faster. According to Mattanah et al. (2010), Individuals who sense social support are better able to deal with challenges and handle stressful situations (Chi et al., 2011). For maintaining good physical and mental health, perceived social support is crucial. Overall, it seems that having high-quality positive perceived social support can improve stress tolerance, help prevent the emergence of trauma-related psychopathology, lessen the functional repercussions of trauma-induced disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and lower medical morbidity and mortality (Ozbay, F; et al). While perceived social support is crucial for fostering resilience,

self-esteem is also strongly influenced by it. Perceived social support fosters the development of positive self-concept, which has a direct and indirect effect on mental health through elevating self-esteem.

The term "perceived social support" describes how people view their friends, family members, and other people as sources of practical, emotional, and all-around help when they are in need. Because perceived levels of caring, love, and support can lead to satisfying experiences, perceived social support has repeatedly been linked to wellbeing (Siedlecki et al., 2014). A person reaches this point when they feel that their internal personal relationships provide them with enough support and fulfilment. Compared to actual social support, perceived social support is more advantageous. It is the cognitive assessment of being consistently linked to others in times of need (Barrera 1986). According to a review, improved physical and mental health outcomes are also associated with increased perceived social support. It has a good relationship with resilience, self-concept, self-esteem, fewer symptoms of depression, life satisfaction.

Teachers often face a lot of stressors, including heavy workloads, student behavioural challenges, and the constant need for adaptation to evolving educational landscapes. Social support, encompassing emotional, instrumental, and informational dimensions, serves as a potential buffer against the strains of teaching. Social support is a provision of assistance or comfort to others, typically to help them cope with biological, psychological, and social stressors. Support may arise from any interpersonal relationship in an individual's social network, involving family members, friends, neighbours, religious institutions and a colleague. It may take the form of practical help (e.g., doing chores, offering advice), tangible support that involves giving money or other direct material assistance, emotional support from colleagues, administrators, family, and friends can offer solace during challenging times, reducing feelings

of isolation and burnout and also allows the individual to feel valued and accepted. Instrumental support, such as practical assistance with lesson planning or sharing resources, contributes to a teacher's sense of efficacy. Informational support, including guidance and professional development opportunities, fosters a continuous learning environment and career satisfaction. The role of social support for teachers is crucial in fostering a positive work environment, promoting wellbeing, and ultimately enhancing the quality of education. When teachers feel supported, valued, and respected by their peers and administrators, job satisfaction increases. A teacher who experiences social support is more likely to create a positive and supportive classroom environment, fostering positive relationships with students, in turn influences student learning outcomes. Social support can manifest in various forms, including emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and appraisal support. Supportive relationships help teachers build resilience, enabling them to bounce back from setbacks and challenges in their professional lives. Thus, social support plays a multifaceted role in the professional lives of teachers. It contributes to their emotional well-being, professional growth, job satisfaction, and ability to cope with challenges. Recognizing and enhancing social support structures for teachers is essential for creating a positive and sustainable educational environment that benefits both educators and students alike

Teaching is one of the challenging jobs that is highly interactive and encompasses interpersonal work. To get the best student outcomes, teachers have to guide and lead students. Working only with students doesn't complete teacher's job but they are also working with principals, other colleagues, and parents. Generally, teachers work five or more days per week. Teaching requires intense work that demands multiple skills, from the content taught to the educational process to teaching children social skills. Additionally, teachers are perceived as role models and mentors; students may ask them any question across the day from the very

academic to the very personal. Teachers have to be always ready to answer and satisfy queries and questions by their students. With such varied range of tasks, the wellbeing of teachers is always at risk, and yet also always has the opportunity of being strong or improved.

Researchers have long been interested in the different sources of teachers' job dissatisfaction, job-related stress and burnout (a condition characterized by prolonged stress at work). Most teachers find their job challenging, which makes them vulnerable to stress and burnout. Compared to other professional occupations, professionals in the teaching community rate their wellbeing lower. Empirical studies depict that teaching has unique stressors such as the socio-emotional demands of dealing with quite a lot of students simultaneously. Understanding burnout among teachers is important because it can have multifaceted detrimental effects on teachers, students and schools. Teacher burnout affects teachers' ability to manage the classroom and deal with students' disruptive behaviour. Burnout in teaching can negatively affect students' wellbeing and achievement.

A number of contributors to teacher burnout are well-recognized. McCallum et al. found that a wide range of studies have emphasized on the challenges of teaching, for instance work overload, or obligation to respond to constant change. Work-related and institutional stress factors eventually cause job burnout among teachers. McCallum et al. identified student misbehaviour, problematic behaviour by students' parents, and poor support from colleagues and management as relational factors which inhibit teachers' wellbeing.

Teachers' mental wellbeing is an important resource for education systems and schools which deserves serious attention. Numerous studies on teacher's mental wellbeing have been increasing over the past one and half decades, with a rapid increase in recent years. Thus, to keep up with the growing literature, it is important to assess the factors reported on teacher wellbeing previously and update our evidence-based understanding with findings from recent articles.

The wellbeing of teachers has an important impact on teaching practices and learning of students. Insight into the factors fostering teacher wellbeing can be helpful to improve schools and better understand teachers' attitudes toward school reforms. Teachers who do well across multiple wellbeing domains show better commitment to school and have more satisfaction with their life, health and occupation.

Teaching, while often considered a noble profession, is increasingly recognized as one of the most psychologically demanding occupations in the modern world. In the context of private educational institutions, particularly in regions like Kerala where educational standards are high and competitive pressures are intense, teachers are frequently subjected to overwhelming workloads, role conflicts, and emotional strain. These stressors can culminate in burnout, a state of chronic physical and emotional exhaustion often accompanied by feelings of cynicism and reduced professional efficacy. Burnout not only affects the professional performance of teachers but also poses a serious risk to their mental well-being, which encompasses emotional resilience, life satisfaction, and the capacity to function effectively in daily life. Amid these challenges, perceived social support—the subjective perception of being cared for and having assistance available from family, friends, or significant others—emerges as a potentially protective factor. This study aims to explore the intricate interplay between burnout, social support, and mental well-being among private school teachers in Kerala, a demographic increasingly burdened by systemic expectations and limited institutional support. It seeks to investigate whether higher levels of perceived social support are associated with improved mental well-being and whether such support can buffer the adverse effects of burnout. By focusing on private school teachers, especially high school teachers, the study emphasizes a population that is often underrepresented in psychological research despite being particularly vulnerable to occupational stress. The research gains importance in the context,

where shifting educational norms, growing student expectations, and systemic accountability have heightened emotional and professional demands on educators. Through this inquiry, the study aims to contribute to the development of culturally and contextually relevant psychological support systems and intervention strategies that can enhance teacher well-being, promote retention, and foster healthier educational environments. Insights from this study can aid educational psychologists, mental health professionals, school administrators, and policymakers in understanding how burnout and social resources collectively shape the psychological health of teachers, thereby reinforcing the urgent need for comprehensive mental health frameworks within the education sector.

The objectives of this study include understanding how teacher's burnout and perceived social support influence the mental well-being of teachers. Specifically, the study seeks to assess the level of burnout experienced by high teachers in private institutions, explore the level and sources of perceived social support, examine the relationship between burnout and mental well-being and perceived social support. Additionally, the study will analyse how different domains of social support namely support from family, friends, and significant others uniquely contribute to mental well-being.

The present research is situated in the context of private educational institutions in Kerala, a state known for its high literacy rates and rapidly evolving socio educational expectations. Despite the progressive educational setting, teachers in private schools face distinct challenges such as unstable employment, limited job benefits, and excessive workloads. These factors necessitate a deeper exploration of how these professionals manage occupational stress and maintain their psychological health. The study focuses on private school teachers because they are often underrepresented in educational mental health research despite their increasing numbers and pivotal role in the academic system.

This study holds significant relevance for the fields of educational psychology, mental health, and organizational behaviour. By exploring the interplay between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being, the research provides valuable insights into the psychological needs of educators in private schools. These insights can inform school administrators, mental health professionals, and policymakers in developing interventions that support teacher wellness, promote resilience, and reduce the risk of burnout. Moreover, findings from this study can contribute to evidence-based strategies for creating mentally healthy school environments where educators are empowered, supported, and better able to fulfil their professional responsibilities.

This research seeks to contribute to a growing body of knowledge aimed at improving the working conditions, emotional resilience, and mental well-being of teachers. In doing so, it underscores the importance of mental health support systems and workplace reforms in enhancing the quality of life for teachers and the quality of education for students.

Despite the critical importance of teacher's mental well-being, research focusing on the interplay between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being especially within the context of private educational institutions in Kerala remains limited. Given the unique organizational culture and job demands in private schools, it is vital to explore how these factors influence the psychological health of teachers. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among teachers working in private institutions.

By understanding these dynamics, the research aims to inform the development of targeted interventions and institutional policies that can enhance teacher well-being and reduce burnout. The findings may have practical implications for educational administrators, mental

health professionals, and policymakers invested in supporting the psychological resilience of educators in today's competitive academic environment.

### **Need and Significance**

The teaching profession, particularly in private institutions, is increasingly characterized by high demands, limited resources, and elevated expectations, often leading to substantial occupational stress. Teachers are expected to not only impart academic knowledge but also fulfil administrative duties, engage in extracurricular activities, and cater to students' psychosocial needs. In such a high-pressure environment, teachers are particularly vulnerable to burnout, a psychological condition marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal achievement (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Despite their central role in shaping young minds and contributing to national development, teachers in private schools often lack job security, have insufficient institutional support, and operate under conditions that are more performance-driven than supportive, amplifying their risk of burnout.

The need for this study arises from the growing evidence that burnout among teachers not only affects their mental health and job satisfaction but also undermines teaching quality, student outcomes, and the overall educational climate. When teachers experience persistent emotional fatigue and disengagement, it impairs their ability to maintain classroom effectiveness, form supportive student relationships, and deliver high-quality instruction. Consequently, addressing teacher burnout is essential not only for the well-being of educators themselves but also for the overall efficacy of educational systems.

Mental well-being, as conceptualized in positive psychology, is not merely the absence of illness but the presence of psychological flourishing characterized by life satisfaction, emotional resilience, meaningful relationships, and a sense of purpose (Keyes, 2002). Teachers



with strong mental well-being are more motivated, effective, and committed. However, high levels of stress and burnout can significantly diminish their mental wellness.. Social support from family, friends, and significant others can buffer the effects of burnout, enhance emotional coping, and provide a sense of belonging and validation, which are crucial for sustaining psychological health.

Although the role of social support in reducing stress is well-documented, there is a notable lack of research examining how specific sources of social support (i.e., family, friends, significant others) interact with burnout to influence mental well-being, especially among teachers in private educational institutions. Much of the existing literature has focused on government or public-school teachers, while the unique challenges and vulnerabilities faced by private high school educators in the Indian context, particularly in Kerala, remain underexplored. This gap emphasizes the necessity for a focused inquiry into how burnout and perceived social support influence the mental well-being of this population.

Kerala, known for its high literacy rates and progressive educational policies, presents a distinctive context in which to examine these dynamics. Teachers in private schools in Kerala operate in a paradox within a state that values education but in institutions that may not always reflect systemic support or professional recognition. Therefore, exploring their psychological experiences can provide regionally relevant insights and contribute to culturally sensitive interventions.

### **Statement of the problem**

Private school teachers often face high levels of stress due to workload, job insecurity, and limited support, leading to psychological burnout. Burnout can negatively impact their mental well-being and teaching effectiveness. While perceived social support is known to help

reduce stress and promote well-being, limited research has explored its role alongside burnout in the context of private institutions, especially in Kerala. This study aims to examine the direct relationship between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among private school teachers to help inform better support systems and mental health interventions

### **Objectives of the study**

- To investigate the relationship between burnout and mental well-being among private school teachers.
- To investigate the relationship between perceived social support and mental well-being among private school teachers.
- To investigate the relationship between burnout and perceived social support among private school teachers.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

- Ho1; There is no significant relationship between perceived social support and mental well-being among private school teachers.
- Ho2; There is no significant relationship between teacher burnout and perceived social support among private school teachers.
- Ho3; There is no significant relationship between teacher burnout and mental well-being among private school teachers.

## **CHAPTER – II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## **Theoretical review**

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, developed by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984), provides a framework for understanding how individuals perceive and respond to stressors in their environment. The model suggests that stress emerges not from events themselves but from the transactional interaction between individuals and their surroundings. Stress occurs when the demands of a situation exceed the individual's perceived resources to cope with those demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The appraisal process is at the centre of this model. While secondary evaluation evaluates the person's coping mechanisms and choices for handling the stressor, primary assessment determines whether an event is dangerous, threatening, or difficult. The situation may be viewed as manageable when people believe they have sufficient coping resources; when resources appear to be lacking, the event is perceived as stressful (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987).

Perceived social support serves as a crucial coping resource. Supportive relationships whether from family, friends, colleagues, or significant others can positively influence secondary appraisal by enhancing an individual's sense of capability in dealing with stress. Perceiving that emotional, informational, or instrumental support is available not only reduces the perceived threat of a situation but also fosters adaptive coping strategies, thereby buffering the psychological impact of stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

For teachers, this model is particularly relevant. Teaching is a profession marked by high emotional and workload demands, where stress often arises from classroom management challenges, administrative pressures, and societal expectations. Perceived social support from colleagues, administrators, and personal networks can significantly mitigate stress by

reinforcing teachers' sense of competence and providing emotional and practical assistance. Thus, the transactional model underscores that teachers who perceive strong social support are more likely to appraise work-related stressors as manageable, thereby protecting their mental well-being and reducing the risk of burnout.

The Stress-Buffering Hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985) proposes that perceived social support reduces the harmful effects of stress on mental and physical health. It emphasizes that support does not prevent stressful events from occurring but instead helps individuals reinterpret and cope with stressors more effectively. When people believe that help is available, they tend to appraise stressful situations as less threatening and feel more capable of managing them.

There are multiple ways that this buffering effect works. Reassurance and empathy are examples of emotional support that aids in controlling emotional pain. Decision-making and problem-solving are facilitated by informational support, such as counsel or direction. The burden of managing stressors is lessened by instrumental support, such as real resources or helpful advice. When combined, these types of assistance improve a person's ability to cope and reduce the detrimental emotional and physical effects of stress.

Teachers frequently face heavy workloads, classroom management difficulties, and accountability pressures. When they perceive strong support from colleagues, school administrators, family, or friends, these stressors are more likely to be appraised as manageable challenges rather than overwhelming threats. Social support buffers teachers from emotional exhaustion, reduces stress responses, and helps prevent burnout.

Attachment Theory, proposed by Bowlby (1988), emphasizes the significance of early ties between children and their primary carers in influencing people's expectations and

behaviours in subsequent social relationships. This idea states that when carers deliver consistent, responsive care, secure attachment forms and internal working models of safety and trust are created. These internal models have an impact on how people view and look for social support during the course of their lives.

According to attachment theory, people who have a stable attachment style are more likely to view the assistance that is available to them favourably and make good use of it when they are under stress. On the other hand, insecure attachment patterns might make it harder to identify or accept help, which makes people more susceptible to stress and worse mental health consequences.

Attachment theory is a useful tool for educators. In order to create supportive environments that increase resilience, teachers with secure attachment histories may be better able to establish trustworthy relationships with parents, students, and coworkers. Knowing attachment patterns can help guide programs meant to strengthen teacher's social support systems and lower their risk of stress and burnout.

Mental well-being is often conceptualized through two complementary perspectives such as the Hedonic and Eudaimonic models. The hedonic model focuses on subjective well-being, which includes experiencing pleasure, positive emotions, and life satisfaction while minimizing pain and distress. Diener (1984) described subjective well-being as an individual's self-reported happiness and overall satisfaction with life.

The eudaimonic model emphasizes psychological well-being related to meaning, personal growth, and self-realization rather than just pleasure. Ryff (1989) proposed six core dimensions of psychological well-being: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. This model argues that

true well-being comes from living in accordance with one's true self and values, leading to fulfilment beyond momentary happiness.

The hedonic model highlights the emotional and evaluative aspects of well-being, while the eudaimonic model focuses on functioning and meaningfulness. Together, they provide a comprehensive understanding of mental well-being that informs research and interventions aimed at enhancing quality of life.

The PERMA model, developed by Seligman (2011), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding mental well-being through five essential elements, Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. Positive emotions include feelings such as joy, gratitude, and hope, which contribute to an overall sense of happiness. Engagement refers to being fully absorbed in activities, often experiencing a state of flow. Relationships highlight the importance of supportive and meaningful social connections. Meaning involves pursuing a purposeful life aligned with personal values. Accomplishment relates to achieving goals and mastery, which fosters a sense of competence and pride.

The PERMA model provides useful insights into improving teacher well-being and lowering burnout in the educational context. Joy and fulfilment in teaching are more likely to be experienced by educators who feel good about themselves and are actively involved in their work. Strong bonds with coworkers, students, and administrators promote a feeling of community and social support, all of which are essential for coping with work-related stress. Teachers' motivation and dedication are strengthened when they find purpose in their work, and their self-efficacy is raised when they achieve their professional objectives. Schools can establish settings that support teachers' mental health and reduce the likelihood of burnout by

fostering certain PERMA components. The PERMA model has been widely applied in positive psychology to design interventions that promote psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) conceptualized burnout as a psychological syndrome consisting of three key dimensions, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Reduced Personal Accomplishment. Feelings of being emotionally overextended and depleted of one's emotional resources are referred to as emotional tiredness. Depersonalisation entails becoming emotionally detached and cynical towards coworkers and students. A decrease in feelings of competence and successful achievement at work are indicators of reduced personal accomplishment.

This model has been widely used to understand burnout in the teaching profession. Teachers experiencing emotional exhaustion may feel overwhelmed by their workload and emotional demands. Depersonalization can lead to distancing themselves from students, which negatively affects teacher-student relationships. Reduced personal accomplishment diminishes motivation and self-efficacy, further impacting teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), explains burnout as the result of an imbalance between job demands and job resources. Job demands are the physical, psychological, or social aspects of a job that require sustained effort and are therefore associated with physiological and psychological costs (e.g., workload, emotional strain). Job resources refer to physical, psychological, social, or organizational factors that help achieve work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth (e.g., social support, autonomy, feedback).

According to this model, high job demands combined with insufficient job resources lead to burnout, whereas adequate resources can buffer the negative impact of demands and



promote engagement. In teaching, high demands such as large class sizes, administrative tasks, and emotional labour can overwhelm teachers if not balanced with resources like supportive leadership, collaboration, and professional development opportunities.

### **Empirical Review**

Avola et al., (2025) conducted a scoping review titled “Interventions to Teacher Well-Being and Burnout: A Scoping Review” to explore various intervention strategies aimed at improving teacher well-being and reducing burnout. The review analysed 46 studies from 15 countries involving 7,369 participants, covering diverse educational settings and intervention types. Interventions primarily targeted individual well-being through methods such as physical activity, mindfulness, meditation, therapy-based techniques, gratitude practices, and professional development, with few focusing on communal or group-based activities. The review applied the PERMA-H positive psychology model, highlighting engagement, positive emotions, relationships, and health as key intervention areas. Findings revealed that most interventions positively contributed to teacher well-being. The study also noted variability in intervention duration, methods, and cultural contexts, emphasizing the need for more community-focused and culturally valid approaches in future research Avola et al., (2025).

Cao et al., (2024) conducted a systematic literature review titled “The Impact of Social Support on Burnout among Lecturers” to explore the role of social support in reducing burnout among college lecturers. Using data from 20 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2024 and sourced from major academic databases (Web of Science, Scopus, APA PsycINFO, PubMed, and ERIC), the review identified individual and occupational factors contributing to burnout. Burnout was commonly assessed using tools like the Maslach Burnout Inventory and its variations, while social support was measured using the Multidimensional

Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) surveys. The findings indicated a strong association between higher levels of social support and reduced burnout symptoms. The study concluded that strengthening institutional support systems and enhancing emotional support can significantly mitigate burnout among lecturers, highlighting the protective and multifaceted role of social support in academic settings Cao et al., (2024).

Collie, R. J. (2025) conducted a study titled “Teachers’ Perceived Social-Emotional Competence: A Personal Resource Linked with Well-Being and Turnover Intentions” to examine the relationship between teachers’ perceived social-emotional competence (PSEC), their well-being, and intentions to leave the profession. The study involved 492 Australian teachers, measuring PSEC at the beginning of the school term and assessing well-being dimensions subjective vitality, behavioural engagement, and professional growth striving at the end of the term. The results indicated that higher PSEC was associated with greater well-being across all dimensions. PSEC and subjective vitality were negatively correlated with turnover intentions, whereas professional growth striving was linked to increased turnover intentions. The study also highlighted the influence of personality traits such as openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and emotional instability on PSEC, well-being, and turnover intentions. These findings emphasize the significance of enhancing social-emotional competence in teachers to improve their well-being and reduce the likelihood of turnover

Pandey, S. & Sayed, S. (2024) conducted a literature review titled “Burnout Among School Teachers in India: A Review of the Literature” to explore the extent, causes, consequences, and management strategies related to teacher burnout in India. Analysing 50

relevant studies, the review found that burnout among Indian school teachers is marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. Key contributing factors include excessive workload, limited autonomy, poor working conditions, unrealistic expectations, and insufficient pay and benefits. Burnout in teachers is linked with mental health issues like depression, physical ailments such as fatigue, decreased productivity, and high turnover intentions. The review advocates for evidence-based interventions such as workload management, decision-making participation, school culture enhancement, and professional development. It emphasizes the urgent need for systemic reforms to safeguard teacher well-being and the quality of education in India.

Menon et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review titled “Factors of Burnout among Teachers: A Systematic Review” to explore and synthesize the primary contributors to teacher burnout across diverse educational contexts. Utilizing the PRISMA methodology, the authors reviewed 12 peer-reviewed studies drawn from databases like Scopus and ScienceDirect, covering settings such as primary and secondary schools, universities, colleges, and special education. Most studies employed quantitative self-report methods, with one incorporating interviews. The review identified emotional regulation, perceived well-being, self-efficacy, and the nature of school environments (supportive vs. stressful) as key factors influencing burnout. Emotional intelligence and work engagement were noted as protective elements, whereas poor school climate, low professional support, and high job demands were linked to increased burnout. The authors recommended evidence-based interventions, including emotional intelligence training, school-wide well-being programs, and policies aimed at cultivating supportive work environments. The study emphasized that understanding and addressing personal, job-related, and social factors is essential to effectively reduce burnout and enhance teacher well-being Menon et al., (2024).

Einav et al., (2024). “Teachers’ burnout; The role of social support, gratitude, hope, entitlement and loneliness”. conducted a cross-sectional study examining the relationship between burnout and relational/personal variables among 248 Israeli teachers (85.1% in typical educational settings, 52.4% in high schools). Using self-report questionnaires measuring teacher burnout, perceived social support, gratitude, hope, active entitlement, and loneliness, results showed that burnout was negatively correlated with social support, gratitude, and hope, and positively correlated with loneliness. Serial multiple mediation analysis revealed that social support and hope were associated with lower burnout, while loneliness and sense of entitlement predicted higher burnout. Gender differences emerged, with female teachers showing less hope and higher burnout levels compared to males. The study highlights the complex interplay of social and psychological factors influencing teacher burnout, suggesting avenues for future research and intervention development Einav et al., (2024).

Masa et al., (2024). “Mental health and social support of teachers in Szeged, Hungary” This descriptive cross-sectional quantitative study examined mental health, social support, and their interrelationships among 200 secondary school teachers in Szeged, Hungary. Using validated international questionnaires, the study found that while social support levels were relatively weak, teachers demonstrated stronger mental health outcomes overall. Social support was notably higher among teachers from smaller settlements. Stronger social support correlated with lower levels of depression and a higher sense of coherence. The research highlights the importance of social support in enhancing teachers’ mental health and suggests implications for the mental well-being of their students and their role in health education Masa et al., (2024).

Asfari et al. (2023) conducted a quantitative study titled “The Role of Social Support as a Predictor of Teacher's Subjective Well-being” to examine how social support influences subjective well-being (SWB) among teachers. The sample included 138 teachers in Indonesia

(37 male and 101 females; 31 civil servants and 107 private/honorary teachers). SWB was assessed using the Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences (SPANE) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), while perceived social support was measured using the R-MSPSS, capturing support from principals, colleagues, family, and friends. Descriptive analysis revealed that most teachers reported a moderate level of SWB overall and across its dimensions. Regression analysis showed that social support significantly predicted teacher SWB ( $R = 0.199$ ;  $R^2 = 0.0395$ ;  $F = 5.59$ ;  $p = 0.019$ ). Dimension-wise analysis indicated that only family support significantly predicted SWB ( $p = 0.002$ ), suggesting that familial support may play a particularly important role for female teachers in balancing work-related stress and dual-role conflicts.

Macy, A. (2023). “The relationship between years of experience, perceived social support and burnout among classroom teachers”. This study explored how years of teaching experience and two types of perceived social support—organizational support (from administration and colleagues) and personal support—relate to burnout levels among 91 licensed classroom teachers in California. Using quantitative methods, the findings revealed a significant negative relationship between organizational support and teacher burnout, with higher perceived organizational support linked to lower burnout. Organizational support was identified as the strongest predictor of burnout, overshadowing personal support. The study concluded that strengthening organizational support mechanisms within schools could be a key strategy to reduce burnout among teachers, improving their professional well-being and positively impacting student outcomes. These results emphasize the role of school administrations and colleagues in providing support to mitigate burnout risk

Khan et al. (2023) conducted a quantitative correlational study titled “Career Barriers, Perceived Professional Social Support and Hopelessness Level: A Correlational Study of

Private and Public School Teachers of Lahore” to examine the relationships between career barriers, perceived professional social support, and hopelessness levels among female secondary school teachers in Lahore. Using an adapted 45-item questionnaire, data were collected from 100 teachers 50 from public schools and 50 from private schools through convenience sampling. Parametric and non-parametric analyses revealed that, among private school teachers, there was no correlation between career barriers and hopelessness, but a strong relationship existed between career barriers and professional social support. Conversely, among public school teachers, no significant correlations were found between career barriers, professional social support, and hopelessness levels. Comparisons between the two groups showed significant differences in career barriers but no significant differences in professional social support or hopelessness levels. The study recommended organizing workshops, training sessions, and seminars to help teachers overcome career barriers and strengthen their professional support systems.

Fiorilli et al. (2023) investigated “The role of trait emotional intelligence (EI) and social support in teachers” burnout among 318 Italian in-service teachers. Using structural equation modelling, the study found that higher trait EI was strongly and directly associated with lower burnout levels. Both internal social support (from colleagues and supervisors) and external social support (from family and friends) were negatively related to burnout, with internal support exerting a stronger effect. Although social support partially mediated the relationship between trait EI and burnout, this mediating effect was minimal, indicating that emotional intelligence primarily influences burnout directly. These findings highlight the importance of teachers’ emotional competence and workplace social support in mitigating burnout and promoting teacher wellbeing.

Song et al. (2023) conducted a study titled “The Impact of Job Stress on Burnout in Chinese Teachers: The Mediating Roles of Social Support and Psychological Empowerment” to examine how job stress contributes to teacher burnout and the mediating roles of social support and psychological empowerment. The sample comprised 502 primary and secondary school teachers in China, with a mean age of 35.51 years. Data were collected using validated instruments, including the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Occupational Stress Scale, Social Support Scale, and the Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire. Structural equation modelling (SEM) revealed that various sources of job stress differentially influenced the dimensions of burnout, while both social support and psychological empowerment significantly mediated the relationship between job stress and burnout. These findings highlight the critical role of social and psychological resources in mitigating the negative effects of occupational stress and provide a foundation for developing targeted interventions to reduce teacher burnout.

Turner et al. (2022) conducted a phenomenological study titled “Teacher Wellbeing and Social Support” to explore how teachers experience providing social support to colleagues and the effects on their wellbeing and teaching. Using the positive psychology PERMA framework, five Australian teachers with no prior experience in positive psychology strategies consciously practiced providing social support over 15 working days. Data were collected through in-depth interviews at three points and daily written reflections, then analysed thematically. The study identified core themes of eudaimonia and altruism, friendship, and impacts on pedagogical practice and professional development. Teachers reported that providing social support enhanced their own wellbeing, strengthened collegial relationships, and positively influenced teaching practices and school operations. The study emphasizes the significance of teacher-to-

teacher social support as a resource for wellbeing and professional growth, suggesting implications for future research and supportive pedagogical strategies.

Sohail et al. (2022) conducted a scoping review titled “Factors Influencing Teacher Wellbeing and Burnout in Schools” to identify the key contributors to both wellbeing and burnout among school teachers. The review analysed 102 relevant studies selected from an initial pool of 934 research articles published between 2016 and 2020. Findings highlighted that positive factors such as emotional regulation, teacher self-efficacy, and a supportive workplace environment significantly promote teacher wellbeing. In contrast, burnout was associated with a negative school climate, unresolved emotional distress, and experiences of marginalization or bullying by colleagues. The study emphasized the necessity of fostering a respectful, inclusive, and supportive workplace culture to enhance teacher mental health and professional fulfilment.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) conducted a longitudinal study titled “Teacher burnout: Relations between dimensions of burnout, perceived school context, job satisfaction and motivation for teaching” to examine how job demands and resources in the school environment relate to teacher burnout, depressed mood, job satisfaction, and motivation to leave the profession. The study involved 262 Norwegian high school teachers from ten senior high schools, with data collected at two time points over a school year. Teachers’ perceptions of job demands (time pressure, low student motivation, and dissonant value context) and job resources (autonomy and supervisory support) were measured in September, while dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and self-perceived accomplishment), depressed mood, job satisfaction, and motivation to quit were measured in April. Data were analysed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. Findings revealed that time pressure strongly predicted emotional exhaustion, while low student motivation and



dissonant value context were the strongest predictors of cynicism. Autonomy was positively associated with self-perceived accomplishment, whereas low student motivation was negatively associated with it. The study emphasized that different job demands and resources uniquely influence the dimensions of burnout, which in turn are differently associated with job satisfaction, depressed mood, and motivation to leave the profession, highlighting the complex interplay between school context, burnout, and teacher well-being.

### **Research gap**

Few studies have quantitatively investigated how perceived social support specifically correlates with mental well-being among high school teachers experiencing burnout, despite prior research establishing links between teacher burnout, social support, and psychological wellbeing. Many of the research that are currently available either focus on elementary or secondary school instructors without separating out the particular difficulties that high school educators face, or it mix all teacher levels together. Additionally, research on the mediating or buffering function of social support continues to be vague, emphasising the need for more precise data on the relationship between burnout and mental health in this population and perceived social support.

A number of studies concentrate on social support and psychological distress or burnout independently, but they don't thoroughly investigate how perceived social support affects teachers who are experiencing burnout in terms of their overall mental well-being, which encompasses more than just the absence of illness. Additionally, a large portion of the literature is based on cross-sectional data from Western cultures, which restricts its generalisability. Therefore, by offering actual data on the direction and strength of connections between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being, a targeted quantitative

correlational study addressing these interactions among high school teachers in varied settings can close this gap.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

**Aim**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between burnout and perceived social support on the mental well-being of teachers in private institutions.

**Variables Under Study**

Burnout

Perceived Social Support

Mental Well-being

**Operational definition of variables**

Burn out is referred as physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitudes toward oneself and others. It results from performing at a high level until stress and tension, especially from extreme and prolonged physical or mental exertion or an overburdening workload (Maslach & Jackson, 1981)

Mental wellbeing is “a dynamic state in which individuals are able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community” (Huppert, 2009).

Perceived Social Support is the cognitive appraisal of feeling connected and supported by others, characterized by the subjective belief that one is cared for, respected, and has their social needs met. It is commonly measured by assessing the perceived availability and adequacy of supportive relationships, as well as the satisfaction with support received. (Zimet et al., 1988)

## **Research Design**

In order to evaluate the relationship between teacher burnout, mental wellbeing and perceived social support, the study employ a correlational - cross sectional approach. By using standardized questionnaires, quantitative analysis will be used in the research.

## **Participants**

The participants will be high school teachers who works in private institution, selected through purposive sampling.

### ***Inclusion Criteria***

- Currently employed as a high school teacher
- Have at least 1 year of teaching experience.

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

- Are on extended leave or have not actively taught in the past 6 months.

## **Tools Used for The Data Collection**

### **Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)**

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), developed by Zimet et al. (1988), is a 12-item self-report scale designed to assess an individual's perceived social support from three specific sources: family, friends, and a significant other. Each item is rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “*Very strongly disagree*” (1) to “*Very strongly agree*” (7), with higher scores indicating greater perceived support. The scale comprises three

subscales: Significant Other (Items 1, 2, 5, 10), Family (Items 3, 4, 8, 11), and Friends (Items 6, 7, 9, 12), each consisting of four items.

The MSPSS demonstrates strong psychometric properties, with internal consistency reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of .91 for the Significant Other subscale, .87 for the Family subscale, and .85 for the Friends subscale. The overall scale has an alpha of .88, indicating high internal reliability. Test-retest reliability over a 2- to 3-month interval yielded values ranging from .72 to .85 for the subscales and .85 for the total scale, demonstrating good temporal stability.

In terms of construct validity, the MSPSS has shown significant negative correlations with depression and anxiety subscales of the Hopkins Symptom Checklist, supporting its inverse association with psychological distress. For instance, perceived support from family correlated negatively with depression ( $r = -.24, p < .01$ ) and anxiety ( $r = -.18, p < .01$ ). Similarly, friend support was inversely related to depression ( $r = -.24, p < .01$ ), and overall perceived support was linked to lower levels of depression and anxiety.

The MSPSS is widely used across clinical and non-clinical populations and is valued for its brevity, ease of administration, and cross-cultural applicability. Its robust reliability and validity make it a suitable tool for assessing perceived social support in various psychological and health-related research contexts.

### **Teacher Burnout Scale**

Teachers' Burnout Scale which was developed by Richmond, et al., (2001). It is a 20-item scale which measures the emotional exhaustions, cynicism, and the feelings of reduced professional ability among teachers. Burnout can lead to very aberrant behaviour on teachers

which includes resignation, emotional outbursts, and other irrational behaviours. It has 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. It has 80 possible points. Scores are interpreted as: 20-35 means you have few burnout feelings; 36-55 means you have some strong feelings of burnout; 56-70 means you have substantial burnout feelings; and 71-80 means you are experiencing burnout. Analysis of its reliability using the actual data of the study yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .953 and its face validity is proved to be high enough to be used as a valid tool (Richmond et al., 2001).

### **Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)**

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) is a 14-item self-report instrument developed by researchers at the Universities of Warwick and Edinburgh to assess positive mental health in individuals aged 16 and above. Each item is positively worded and rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "None of the time" to 5 = "All of the time"), yielding total scores ranging from 14 to 70, with higher scores indicating greater mental well-being. WEMWBS captures both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being, including optimism, energy, personal development, and positive interpersonal relationships. Psychometric evaluations have demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha > 0.89) and strong test-retest reliability. Construct validity has been supported through confirmatory factor analysis affirming a one-factor structure, with fit indices such as RMSEA < 0.06 and CFI > 0.90. Criterion validity was established through significant correlations with measures like WHO-5 and GHQ-12, showing strong associations with well-being and moderate relationships with mental health status. Item-total correlations fell within the acceptable range ( $\geq 0.2$  and < 0.8), and the scale showed minimal floor and ceiling effects. WEMWBS has proven effective for use in general population and student samples and is widely applied in public health and psychological research as a robust tool for monitoring mental well-being.

### **Procedure of Data Collection**

The data were collected through offline survey using validated instruments such as Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), Teachers' Burnout Scale, The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). The entire study procedure was conducted with strict adherence to ethical principles. Each questionnaire included an informed consent form that explained the study's goal, the voluntary nature of participation, and the steps taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the data.

### **Ethical consideration**

This study was conducted in strict adherence to ethical standards to protect the dignity, rights, and well-being of all participants. The relevant Institutional Ethics Committee's ethical approval was acquired before any data is collected. An information booklet explaining the study's nature, goals, methods, and possible outcomes was provided to each participant. Prior to participation, each participant provided written informed consent. Study participation was completely voluntary.

Standardised psychological questionnaires were used in the study to evaluate high school teachers employed by private institutions. The freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without incurring any penalties was made abundantly evident to participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained during the research process because no personally identifiable information was gathered.

The collected data were used solely for academic purposes and presented in aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual participants. Efforts were made to create a non-threatening and comfortable environment for data collection.



Following the rules set out by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and the American Psychological Association (APA), the study adhered to the moral principles of beneficence, justice, and respect for persons.

### **Data Analysis**

Statistical analysis is essential in quantitative research for identifying patterns and relationships within the data (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2016). The current study used statistical tools to investigate the association between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among high school teachers working in private schools. The analysis focused on these core variables, while demographic data were used only for descriptive purposes and were not included in the main inferential analysis.

Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were computed to summarize the overall scores of burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being. These measures provided an overview of the trends and distribution of the data (Field, 2018).

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine the normality of the data distribution. Because the data failed to meet the normality assumption, non-parametric methods were used (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965).

To examine the relationships between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was employed. This non-parametric test is appropriate for non-normally distributed data and measures the strength and direction of association between continuous variables (Pallant, 2020).

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1***Shapiro-Wilk test of normality of sample*

Variables	Shapiro-Wilk test	
	Statistics	P- value
PSS	.888	.000
Significant Other Subscale	.848	.000
Family Subscale	.859	.000
Friends Subscale	.882	.000
MWBS	.978	.050
TBS	.934	.000

*Note;* (PSS) Perceived Social Support, (MWBS) Mental well-being, and (TBS) Teacher burnout.

Using the Shapiro-Wilk test, Table 1 presents the normality testing results for the study variables. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the Perceived Social Support (PSS) variable was not normally distributed,  $W(120) = 0.888, p < .001$ . Similarly, the three subscales of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) Significant Other,  $W(120) = 0.848, p < .001$ ; Family,  $W(120) = 0.859, p < .001$ ; and Friends,  $W(120) = 0.882, p < .001$ —also demonstrated significant departures from normality. The Teacher Burnout Scale (TBS) was not normally distributed as well,  $W(120) = 0.934, p < .001$ . However, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) demonstrated approximate normality with  $W(120) = 0.978, p = .050$ , which is at the conventional threshold for significance. Given that most variables violated the assumption of normality, non-parametric statistical methods were used for subsequent analyses.

**Table 2**

*Spearman's rho Correlation of teacher burnout, perceived social support and mental wellbeing of private school teachers n=120*

variables	PSS	significant			WEMWBS	TBS
		others	family	friend's		
		subscale	subscale	subscale		
PSS	--	--	--	--	--	--
Significant	.667*	--	--	--	--	--
others						
Family	.735**	.641*	--	--	--	--
subscale						
Friend's	.749**	.583**	.751**	--	--	--
subscale						
MWBS	.436**	.344**	.365**	.376**	--	--
TBS	-.143	-.100	-.188*	-.227*	-.232*	--

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

*Note;* (PSS) Perceived Social Support, (MWBS) Mental well-being, and (TBS) Teacher burnout.

Table 2 presents the Spearman's rho correlation coefficients between Perceived Social Support (PSS), Mental well-being (MWBS), and Teacher burnout (TBS). PSS was significantly positively correlated with mental well-being ( $r = 0.436$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that individuals

with higher perceived social support tend to report better mental well-being, therefore hypothesis 1 is rejected. PSS correlation with burnout was negative but not statistically significant ( $r = -0.143$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), therefore hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Among the subscales of PSS, the family subscale has a small but significant negative correlation with burnout ( $r = -0.188$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) also friends' subscale was negatively correlated with burnout ( $r = -0.227$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Mental well-being was significantly negatively correlated with burnout ( $r = -0.232$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that higher well-being is linked to reduced burnout, therefore hypothesis 3 is rejected.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the study is finding the relationship between burnout and perceived social support on mental wellbeing of private school teachers. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), Teacher burnout scale, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) are used to gather data from a total of 120 private school teachers who are teaching in high school in different schools. Burn out is referred as physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitudes toward oneself and others. It results from performing at a high level until stress and tension, especially from extreme and prolonged physical or mental exertion or an overburdening workload. "Teacher burnout" can be defined, more specifically, as a negative pattern of responding to stressful teaching events, to students, and to teaching as a career as well as perception that there is a lack of administrative support. Mental well-being refers to a positive state of emotional, psychological, and social health. It is characterized by resilience, contentment, and the ability to cope effectively with life's challenges. Mental well-being involves emotional health, which includes experiencing positive emotions like joy and

gratitude while managing stress and negative feelings constructively. Perceived Social Support is the cognitive appraisal of feeling connected and supported by others, characterized by the subjective belief that one is cared for, respected, and has their social needs met. It is commonly measured by assessing the perceived availability and adequacy of supportive relationships, as well as the satisfaction with support received. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) measure an individual's perceived social support from three specific sources: family, friends, and a significant other. Teachers' Burnout Scale measures the emotional exhaustions, cynicism, and the feelings of reduced professional ability among teachers. Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale used to assess positive mental health in individuals aged 16 and above.

To determine whether the study variables were normal, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used. The findings showed that the majority of variables did not follow a normal distribution, including the Teacher Burnout Scale (TBS), Perceived Social Support (PSS), and its subscales (Family, Friends, and Significant Other). The only scale with a relatively normal distribution was the Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). Non-parametric statistical techniques were used for additional analysis because most variables violated the assumption of normality.

Spearman's rho correlation coefficients were used to calculate the correlation (Table 2), and the results showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between mental well-being and perceived social support ( $r = 0.436$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), according to which there is no meaningful connection between private school teachers' mental health and their perception of social support, is disproved. This positive correlation implies that teachers who feel more social and emotional support from others are more likely to be psychologically healthy.

Further analysis also showed a significant negative correlation ( $r = -0.232, p < 0.05$ ) between burnout and mental wellbeing. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_{o3}$ ), which stated that there is no significant relationship between private school teachers' mental wellbeing and burnout, is also rejected. The idea that emotional exhaustion and constant pressure can affect teachers' psychological functioning and life satisfaction is supported by the negative correlation, which suggests that higher levels of burnout are linked to lower mental well-being.

Further results showed no significant correlation between overall perceived social support and burnout ( $r = -0.143, p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_{o2}$ ), which states that there is no significant relationship between burnout and perceived social support among private school teachers, is accepted. Although the total perceived support score did not demonstrate a statistically significant association with burnout, further examination of the subscales indicated that support from family ( $r = -0.188, p < 0.05$ ) and friends ( $r = -0.227, p < 0.05$ ) did have significant negative correlations with burnout. This suggests that while overall support may not directly buffer against professional exhaustion, specific sources such as family and peer support play a vital role in reducing stress and enhancing emotional resilience.

The study emphasises how crucial multidimensional social support is for fostering mental wellness and reducing teacher burnout. Friends and family support was found to be especially beneficial, perhaps because of their ability to offer both practical help in daily life and emotional warmth. Programs designed to enhance teacher's mental wellbeing ought to take into account methods that promote peer networks, improve family communication, and provide opportunities for social interaction outside of the workplace. Promoting comprehensive and steady support from a variety of sources could be an essential tool for teachers to maintain their mental health in a demanding learning setting.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**



The present study was conducted to explore the relationship between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among private school teachers. It also aimed to examine how different sources of social support namely support from family, friends, and significant others are associated with levels of burnout and psychological well-being. The intention was to understand how these psychosocial variables interact within the teaching profession, which is known to be emotionally demanding.

"Teacher burnout" can be defined, more specifically, as a negative pattern of responding to stressful teaching events, to students, and to teaching as a career as well as perception that there is a lack of administrative support. Perceived social support refers to an individual's belief that they are cared for and have assistance available from their social network (Zimet et al., 1988), while mental well-being involves positive affect, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose (Tennant et al., 2007). It was assumed that higher social support would be linked with lower burnout and better mental well-being, whereas higher burnout might be related to lower well-being.

A correlational research design was adopted for the study. Data were collected from private school teachers using standardized tools: the Teacher Burnout Scale (TBS) to measure burnout, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) to assess social support from different sources, and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) to assess overall mental well-being. Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships among the three core variables.

This study was carried out in response to the growing concerns about teacher stress, emotional fatigue, and lack of support in private educational settings, particularly in the Indian

context. While burnout and well-being have been studied separately, limited research has examined how perceived social support interacts with both variables in a school setting.

By addressing this gap, the current study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how burnout, social support, and well-being are interrelated. These insights may be useful in designing targeted interventions, staff development programs, and wellness strategies aimed at improving teachers' mental health and professional satisfaction in private educational institutions.

### **Major Findings of The Study**

The present study explored the relationship between burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being among private school teachers, especially high school teachers. Spearman's rho correlation analysis showed a statistically significant positive relationship between perceived social support and mental well-being. This suggests that teachers who perceive stronger support from their social networks such as family, friends, and significant others are more likely to experience higher levels of psychological well-being. Social support appears to play a buffering role, helping individuals manage the emotional demands of the teaching profession.

The results also indicated a significant negative correlation between burnout and mental well-being. Teachers who reported higher levels of burnout tended to report lower mental well-being. The inverse relationship highlights how chronic workplace stress can adversely affect mental health outcomes in educators.

While the correlation between burnout and total perceived social support was negative, it was not statistically significant. But, further examination of the subcomponents of social

support revealed more insights. Support from friends and family was significantly and negatively correlated with burnout. This implies that while general perceptions of support may not directly reduce burnout, the quality and source of support matter. Specifically, emotional and practical support from friends and family may play a critical role in buffering the negative effects of teaching-related stress and fatigue.

The findings present a consistent and meaningful pattern: higher perceived social support is linked with better mental well-being, and higher burnout is associated with poorer mental well-being. While not all aspects of social support directly reduce burnout, certain types especially family and peer support may serve as protective factors. These results underscore the importance of fostering supportive interpersonal relationships both within and outside the workplace to promote psychological health and prevent burnout among private school teachers.

The results show a clear and significant pattern: greater burnout is linked to worse mental health, and higher perceived social support is linked to better mental health. While some forms of social support, particularly peer and family support, may operate as protective factors, not all forms of social support directly lessen burnout. These findings highlight how crucial it is to build supportive interpersonal ties both inside and outside of the workplace in order to maintain psychological well-being for private school teachers from burnout.

### **Implications of the Study**

This study shows a clear link between teacher burnout and reduced mental well-being, while also highlighting the positive role of perceived social support in improving psychological health. The findings reveal that teachers who feel emotionally supported especially by friends and family tend to report lower burnout and better mental well-being. However, teachers

experiencing high levels of burnout often struggle with emotional exhaustion and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

Schools and mental health professionals can take early action by becoming aware of these links. It may be possible to detect emotional strain before it results in burnout by implementing stress management programs, support groups, and routine mental wellness check-ins for educators. A more encouraging school climate can be achieved by fostering open discussions about work-related stress and encouraging constructive coping mechanisms.

The study also recommends that teacher welfare policies should regularly include mental health support. In order to provide prompt interventions, school administrators, counsellors, and education boards should be informed about the effects of professional stress on teachers' emotional health. Increasing staff morale and job satisfaction can be achieved in large part by facilitating access to peer support networks and counselling services.

More awareness of the emotional strain that private school teachers face is required on a larger scale. Policymakers, teacher preparation programs, and educational institutions should recognise these issues and make long-term investments in teacher well-being a top priority. Well-being workshops and community-based teacher networks can also give educators a forum to discuss issues and get help.

The study serves as a reminder that the mental health of educators is essential to both their own personal wellbeing and the overall quality of education. Preventing burnout and encouraging a healthier, more sustainable teaching workforce can be greatly helped by early support, effective social networks, and adaptable school policies.

### **Limitations of The Study**

Despite the fact that this study provides valuable insights into the connection between private school teachers' mental health, perceived social support, and burnout, some limitations need to be taken into account.

The majority of the data were gathered over the course of vacations, when many teachers were either unavailable or less responsive. Because those who took part might have had different stress levels or support experiences than those who weren't available at the time, this probably limited the sample size and introduced sampling bias.

Job demands, administrative support, and resources may vary for teachers employed by the government or aided institutions, the study was restricted to private school teachers. This restricts the findings' applicability to the larger group of educators. The use of self-report questionnaires raises the risk of response bias. Due to personal convictions or professional worries about being judged, participants may have overestimated perceived social support or underreported burnout.

The study is cross-sectional, it only records a single moment in time and ignores variations or causal relationships between the variables. To evaluate the long-term effects of burnout and perceived support on well-being, longitudinal research would be more suitable. The study excluded moderating factors that might have affected the observed relationships, such as workload intensity, school environment, and personal coping styles.

### **Suggestions for future research**

The current study offers important new information about the connection between mental health, perceived social support, and teacher burnout. Future studies could examine

whether perceived social support mediates or modifies the relationship between burnout and mental health in order to expand on these findings. This would make it clearer whether social support influences general psychological health or serves as a protective barrier against burnout.

Examining the function of organisational elements like workload regulations, school leadership, and the availability of mental health resources is also crucial. Teachers' experiences of support and stress may be greatly impacted by these structural elements. Examining these factors can help direct changes at the policy level that support a healthier workplace for teachers.

It is recommended that intervention-based research be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of programs like wellness seminars, teacher support networks, and stress management training. Such studies might provide useful strategies to lessen burnout and enhance wellbeing in educational environments.

Mixed-method approaches, which combine quantitative methods with qualitative techniques like focus groups or interviews, might be helpful for future study. Deeper understanding of teachers' real-life experiences would result from this. To see how burnout, support, and well-being evolve over time and to identify protective characteristics that might foster resilience over time, longitudinal studies could also be carried out.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Informed consent**

Description of the study: The present research aims to study the significance of burnout and perceived social support on the mental well-being of private school teachers. A set of psychological questionnaires will be used to measure the study variables, including burnout, perceived social support, and mental well-being. You are participating in this study because you are a private school teacher actively engaged in teaching.

In order to participate in this research study, it is necessary that you give your informed consent. Signing this informed consent indicates that you understand the nature of the research and your role in the same. Please consider the following before signing:

- Participation in this psychological research involves an understanding that personal identity will not be linked to the collected data, ensuring confidentiality.
- Participants can expect to receive an explanation of the research after their involvement.
- Some aspects of the study may not be fully disclosed at the beginning, but the full details and purpose will be revealed upon completion.
- Participation is entirely voluntary, and individuals have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty

I ..... has read the above given instructions and give my consent to participate in this study.

**Signature of the participant**

**Name**

**Date**

## **SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET**

1. Name;
2. Age;
3. Gender;
4. Education;
5. Marital status; ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐ Other:
6. Name of the institution;
7. Years of experience;
8. Standard taught;
9. Working hour per day;
10. Type of employment; ☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary
11. Monthly income;

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL SCALE OF PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT

Instructions: We are interested in how you feel about the following statements. Read each statement carefully. Indicate how you feel about each statement.

1- Very Strongly Disagree

2- Strongly Disagree

3- Mildly Disagree

4- Neutral

5- Mildly Agree

6- Strongly Agree

7- Very Strongly Agree

1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need.
2. There is a special person with whom I can share joys and sorrows.
3. My family really tries to help me.
4. I get the emotional help & support I need from my family.
5. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.
6. My friends really try to help me.
7. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.
8. I can talk about my problems with my family.
9. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.
10. There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings.
11. My family is willing to help me make decisions.
12. I can talk about my problems with my friends.

## **THE WARWICK–EDINBURGH MENTAL WELL-BEING SCALE (WEMWBS)**

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks

1- None of the time

2- Rarely

3- Some of the time

4- Often

5- All of the time

1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future.
2. I've been feeling useful.
3. I've been feeling relaxed.
4. I've been feeling interested in other people.
5. I've had energy to spare.
6. I've been dealing with problems well.
7. I've been thinking clearly.
8. I've been feeling good about myself.
9. I've been feeling close to other people.
10. I've been feeling confident.
11. I've been able to make up my own mind about things.
12. I've been feeling loved.
13. I've been interested in new things.
14. I've been feeling cheerful.

## TEACHER BURNOUT SCALE

This measure is designed to determine how you currently feel about your job and its related aspects. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly and circle your first impression.

Statement Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Neutral (3)

Agree (4)

Strongly Agree (5)

1. I am bored with my job.
2. I am tired of my students.
3. I am weary with all of my job responsibilities.
4. My job doesn't excite me anymore.
5. I dislike going to my job.
6. I feel alienated at work.
7. I feel frustrated at work.
8. I avoid communication with students.
9. I avoid communication with my colleagues.
10. I communicate in a hostile manner at work.
11. I feel ill at work.
12. I think about calling my students ugly names.
13. I avoid looking at my students.
14. My students make me sick.
15. I feel sick to my stomach when I think about work.

16. I wish people would leave me alone at work.
17. I dread going to school.
18. I am apathetic about my job.
19. I feel stressed at work.
20. I have problems concentrating at work.