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Exploring the Issue of Teacher Burnout in Malaysian Educational Settings

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Abstract: In recent years, the issue of teacher burnout has become critical as many studies have reported its global rising cases. Although the studies provide coping strategies, management techniques and burnout scores, the implementation needs to be more specific and practical for diverse cases. Moreover, measuring the levels and identifying the causes will not resolve the problem, so it is crucial to address this issue urgently as it is now affecting teachers' mental health. However, the direction to address this issue is still unclear as cases are still rising. Therefore, this study aims to explore the issue of teacher burnout by narrowing the focus to Malaysia to discover a clearer direction to initiate effective interventions in managing and preventing teacher burnout. This study employs a narrative review method to analyse, synthesise, and evaluate critically some selected papers related to teacher burnout they affect teachers and the educational settings. It reveals the urgency to address the issue which is increasing and affecting teachers' emotional and mental wellbeing while causing teacher attrition. It also uncovers the insights of the issue to inspire burnout teachers, bring awareness of the urgency and the dire need to manage their burnout and improve their wellbeing as a catalyst to sustain in their teaching profession. Eventually, it supports the Malaysian Ministry of Education's initiative to empower teacher wellbeing and the National Philosophy of Education to attain personal wellbeing. Hence, it contributes to the efforts to prevent teacher burnout by revealing the highlighted symptoms and factors of teacher burnout and promoting the significance of teacher wellbeing for a sustainable effective education.

Keywords: Teacher Burnout, Teacher Wellbeing, Mental Health, Malaysian Educational Setting, Malaysian Teachers

Abstrak: Dalam beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini, isu lesu upaya dalam kalangan guru menjadi kritikal kerana banyak kajian telah melaporkan peningkatan kes di peringkat global. Walaupun kajian menyediakan strategi mengatasi, teknik pengurusan dan skor lesu upaya, pelaksanaannya perlu lebih spesifik dan praktikal untuk pelbagai kes. Tambahan pula, setakat mengukur tahap dan mengenal pasti punca tidak akan menyelesaikan masalah, jadi adalah penting untuk menangani isu ini dengan segera kerana ia kini menjejaskan kesihatan mental guru. Bagaimanapun, hala tuju untuk menangani isu ini masih tidak jelas kerana kes lesu upaya masih meningkat. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka isu lesu upaya dalam kalangan guru dengan memberi tumpuan kepada Malaysia untuk mencari hala tuju yang lebih jelas untuk memulakan intervensi yang berkesan dalam mengurus dan mencegah lesu upaya guru. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah semakan naratif untuk menganalisis, mensintesis dan menilai secara kritis beberapa kertas kerja terpilih yang berkaitan dengan lesu upaya kerana ia mempengaruhi guru dan bidang pendidikan. kajian ini mendedahkan keperluan mendesak untuk menangani isu yang semakin meningkat dan menjejaskan kesejahteraan emosi dan mental guru. Di samping itu, kajian ini dapat memberi inspirasi kepada guru-guru lesu upaya, memberi kesedaran tentang keperluan mendesak dan keperluan yang amat penting untuk menguruskan masalah lesu upaya mereka dan meningkatkan kesejahteraan mereka sebagai pemangkin untuk mengekalkan profesion perguruan mereka. Akhirnya, ini menyokong inisiatif Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia untuk memperkasakan kesejahteraan guru dan Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan untuk mencapai kesejahteraan diri. Oleh itu, ia menyumbang kepada usaha untuk mencegah masalah lesu upaya guru dengan mendedahkan gejala dan faktor yang diketengahkan dan menggalakkan kepentingan kesejahteraan guru untuk pendidikan berkesan yang mampan.

Kata kunci: Lesu Upaya Guru, Kesejahteraan Guru, Kesihatan Mental, Suasana Pendidikan Malaysia, Guru

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1. Introduction

Teacher burnout has been a prolonged, and pressing worldwide issue as teaching is regarded among the professions that have the highest level of burnout (Akdemir, 2019) that affects teacher wellbeing (Atmaca et al., 2020; Supervía & Bordás, 2020). World Health Organization (WHO) has characterized burnout as a syndrome caused by exhaustion, detachment, and ineffectiveness due to chronic workplace stress (WHO, 2019). According to Agyapong et al. (2022), burnout due to workload, student behaviour, work environment, and a lack of administrative assistance can lead to mental health problems, including anxiety and depression. Their study also revealed a higher rate of depressive disorders among teachers as this global crisis continues to have a major impact on teachers' physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. Moreover, they emphasize that managing the issues is vital to enhance teacher wellbeing and preserve the quality of education. Teacher burnout is a rising issue, but studies from the Asian context specifically in Malaysia are limited (Aeria et al., 2018). The problem of teacher burnout is a critical and alarming global issue and Malaysia is also included in the rising phenomenon. Besides, the issue of mental health in Malaysia is increasing, and urgent measures are needed to manage it (Yeo, 2021). Thus, to prevent the emergence of mental health problems, it is critical to address the issue of teacher burnout which can be considered as the accelerating root cause.

Based on a search by Universiti Putra Malaysia, 71.1% of respondents in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur are experiencing stress while research by the Department of Psychology and Counselling, Ministry of Education (MoE) in Malaysia reported 4.4% of 48,258 respondents are experiencing high-stress levels (Makhbul, 2018). They found several reasons that lead to the urgency and although there are numerous practical strategies to reduce and prevent burnout, the issue is still rising. Moreover, according to the researchers at University Utara Malaysia, there is a decline in teachers' enthusiasm for their jobs as a result of increasing teacher complaints about excessive workloads and burnout which is leading to early retirement (Kushairi & Bukhari, 2023). The cases of teachers retiring early were already highlighted through the National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP). NUTP reported that there were approximately 10,000 applications for early retirement each year; however, MoE confirmed that 4,360 applications for optional retirement from teachers were submitted starting from January 2021 (Sarban Singh, 2022). According to the report, teachers lose job satisfaction because of workload, which affects their wellbeing. In addition, there is a high attrition rate among teachers (Kushairi & Bukhari, 2023). Rusdi et al. (2021) also discuss the relationship between teacher stress and mental health issues in Malaysia; teacher stress is highlighted as a serious issue with high-stress levels as a threat to their mental and physical wellbeing. According to the study, hazardous working conditions, and an insecure and hostile organizational climate, can increase teachers' stress levels, and cause negative reactions and attrition which can eventually affect teacher wellbeing.

Therefore, teacher burnout is an alarming crisis and a critical issue across the globe, even in the state of Malaysia, and needs immediate deliberation as it leaves an adverse effect on the health and quality education, in general. The purpose of this review is specifically to analyze key empirical studies to: 1) identify the salient aspects leading to teacher burnout in Malaysian schools, 2) recognize the negative health and work-related outcomes of teacher burnout, and 3) evaluate potential programs and initiatives that are effective to enhance teacher well-being and at the same time prevent teacher burnout. Thus, this paper explores the severity of teacher burnout issue in Malaysia that is becoming prominent and alarming as it focuses on factors causing burnout, implications of burnout, efforts to support wellness and prevent burnout. As teacher burnout needs to be addressed urgently because it affects teacher wellbeing and can lead to mental disorders, this review highlights the insights of the phenomena through selected empirical findings. It narrows the focus to Malaysian educational settings to provide a better and clearer direction to treat and prevent teacher burnout and increase the practice of teacher wellbeing.

2. Methodology

Based on Onwuegbuzie (2016), there are four basic forms of narrative reviews which are general, methodological, theoretical, and historical. This review paper applies the general review form which emphasizes the most significant aspects of the highlighted issues. The objectives, argumentation, and key aspects of the issue are critically analyzed, synthesized, and evaluated to establish an understanding of the whole view. The purpose of narrative review is to identify, summarize, and look for unaddressed issues in previously published content. When there is a lack of consensus on an issue, narrative reviews are essential because they can help clarify the existing state of knowledge and identify areas that require additional studies. There are no standardized guidelines. therefore, it is more adaptable in its approach and may be tailored to the specific needs of the researcher. By carefully choosing, examining, synthesizing, and assessing the existing literature on a topic, as well as outlining the important results and conclusions concisely, the quality of the review can be ensured. It can help in directing ongoing studies and professional practice in a particular area for further research (Derish & Annesley, 2011; Grant & Booth., 2009; Cronin et al., 2008). There is still no consensus on the standard format for a narrative review (Ferrari, 2015). However, a narrative review can be arranged chronologically when distinct trends emerge (Randolph., 2018; Green et al., 2006). Thus, this narrative review is constructed by highlighting the most prominent aspects of the earliest studies and progressing to the most current ones. This review analyses, synthesizes and evaluates selected and related research papers on the issue of teacher burnout by searching the keywords related to the issue in Scopus and Google Scholar.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Burning Issue of Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout has been researched since the last decade. However, the issue has been increasing and affecting the teachers and their teaching profession. Studies on teacher burnout in Malaysia highlight the need for further research, more evidence, and the need to explore the root causes (Hamid & Sukir, 2022; Zarin et al., 2021; Amzat et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2021; Teoh & Kee, 2020; Daud et al., 2020; Aeria et al., 2018; Subon & Sigie, 2016; Mousavy et al., 2012; Thomas et al., 2012; Naing et al., 2009). These are among the studies that reveal the urgency of the issue, however, more studies are needed to delve into the specific strategies which are needed to address the diverse cases of teacher burnout in different educational settings due to the diversity in the environment, management, policies, personal care and culture. Teacher burnout occurs for many reasons and one of the reasons is curricular changes which result in shortages of teachers that lead to ineffective teaching and learning as there are increases in class size (Aeria et al., 2018).

The following are some of the causes of teacher burnout based on Amzat et al. (2021): student mis-behaviour, inadequate communication with parents, high workloads, role uncertainty, low benefits, and salary, job stress in the educational setting, negative emotions which include discouragement, depressive symptoms, and disappointment. Besides, more demanding tasks at work, peer pressure, inadequate rest, large class sizes, and limited involvement in decision-making are also among the factors. Early retirement is also becoming more common among teachers despite incentives and advancements made to discourage it and to understand the factors that lead teachers to make this choice, so it is crucial to look into the underlying causes (Mustapha et al., 2023). According to them, to prevent the issue of early retirement from recurring, authorities must take immediate measures, and full execution of continuous improvement and practical measures. They also identified several other factors, including workload, organizational conflict, and health that affect senior teachers' decisions to retire early. Due to the interconnectedness and complexity of these factors, a comprehensive strategy involving numerous stakeholders is required to achieve a resolution.

However, the direct link between teacher burnout and mental health issues is not addressed in their context. Saad et al. (2022) study analyzed the factors affecting turnover intention among teachers and the results showed that job stress and the nature of work had the greatest impact. Thus, the researchers recommended that to ensure the wellbeing of teachers, it is important to provide support as well as implement a proactive stress management and wellness program. However, the researchers did not specifically state that stress and burnout among teachers contribute to mental health problems. Where else, stress in the workplace is connected to staff's mental health and results from an imbalance between professional expectations and their level of control (Makhbul, 2018). Besides, according to Zarin et al. (2021), the factors that lead to burnout in teachers include heavy workload, lack of motivation from supervisors and colleagues, challenges with discipline and student mis-behaviour, paperwork, administrative tasks, lower pay and benefits, and imbalance between work and life.

Furthermore, the causes of teacher burnout, according to Ibrahim et al. (2021) are an increase in job demands, such as a high number of students, teaching responsibilities, and administrative constraints, sustaining workload and high-profile academic performance, teaching and unrelated teaching workload, and interpersonal conflicts at work. Their study states that these factors can cause teachers to experience health issues like anxiety, depression, and stress. Chen et al. (2020) found that the most stressful symptom of job burnout is emotional exhaustion as it contributes to academic burnout. The other signs include extreme pressure to meet multiple goals and a lack of dedication to one's profession. These factors may cause academics to demonstrate fewer behavioural characteristics related to organization, increase academic staff members' professional commitment and be unaware of the critical stage to manage job burnout.

Genoud and Waroux (2021) revealed that negative affectivity is one of the factors that lead to the progress of burnout as anxious teachers have higher emotional exhaustion, whereas teachers who are depressive have difficulties in increasing a strong sense of personal accomplishment. The consistent tendency to feel negative emotions is termed as negative affectivity which is a broad personality trait (Watson & Clark, 1984). They defined negative affectivity as aversive mood states which include feeling guilty, angry, fearful, and nervous and they affect self-concept, cognition, and worldview. The level of negative affectivity in personality traits varies in individuals; some are inclined to feel more negative emotions even without the presence of an external stressor. Thus, personality traits should not be minimized in burnout studies (Genoud & Waroux, 2021).

Besides, these researchers also found that burnout can lead to issues related to mental health which include depression and anxiety. Anxiety disorders can also develop as a result of the constant stress and emotional stress caused by burnout. They recommended that sustaining a positive work environment can assist in maintaining mental health. Managing burnout can also help to cultivate resilience and healthy coping strategies, which may prevent the emergence of mental health issues. Seeking appropriate assistance and interventions can stop the escalation of mental health concerns by identifying early signs and symptoms of burnout. Thus, as burnout and mental health issues are interrelated, they suggest more specific interventions for teacher's mental wellbeing. Moreover, NUTP reported that serious cases of teacher depression have been linked to fatal cases due to excessive workload and disclosed that the MoE needs to provide counselling for teachers after considering the current challenges (NUTP, 2018a). Besides, according to NUTP, the issue of teaching is no longer a passion as it has become a burden because of stress-inducing factors which include excessive paperwork, pressure to ensure students pass exams, instances of teachers being compelled to teach subjects outside of

their areas of expertise, in charge of maintaining the school's reputation, and parents' high expectations as among the highlighted factors (NUTP, 2018).

In addition, between 30 and 50 cases of stressed teachers are reported to NUTP each month, and in some cases, teachers have been prescribed medicine for depression caused by stress. To support these teachers, NUTP recommends that they consult with psychiatrists. Thus, it signifies that teacher burnout is now shifting from non-clinical to clinical cases which is indeed alarming, and the urgency of the issue needs to be highly taken into consideration.

Thus, the symptoms and factors of teacher burnout vary based on teachers' perceptions, and how they respond to stressful situations and it also varies from different educational settings based on the environment, administration, and management. Although continuous efforts are taken to improve the wellbeing of teachers, the existing cases of teacher burnout which are growing need to be acknowledged and measures taken need to be highly considered. Therefore, improving teacher wellbeing can be a solution to reduce and prevent teacher burnout as it can build teachers' inner strength to respond as well as manage burnout issues through resilience.

3.2 Initiatives for Teacher Well-being

Alzahari et al. (2022) highlight the need to address teachers' mental wellness issues to solve the challenges they are experiencing and suggest that future research should go deeper into this area to better understand the specific mental health needs and concerns of teachers. By addressing mental health problems including stress, anxiety, and depression, the education system may provide focused treatments and support networks to enhance teacher wellbeing. Their study emphasizes the need for policies and programs which provide teachers' mental health care top priority while fostering an atmosphere that makes it possible to design interventions that are specifically tailored to their needs and support networks that enhance their overall wellbeing.

Furthermore, the Malaysian MoE has announced "*Guru Insani Pemangkin Generasi Madani*" as the theme for Malaysia's Teacher Day in 2023 (Sinar Daily, 2023). The theme can be translated into English as "Humanistic Teachers as Catalysts for Civilized Generations" (The Star, 2023). This theme aims to enhance social services, decrease teacher workload, decrease living expenses, strengthen the national economy, and raise teachers' quality of life. Teachers who exemplify positive character traits such as patience, empathy, and compassion for their students are referred to as "*Guru Insani*" as an addition to their academic abilities and expertise. The phrase "*Pemangkin Generasi Madani*" on the other hand identifies teachers as professionals who encourage and facilitate the growth of a young and vibrant generation that is productive, ethical, and responsible. In this context, the term "*Madani*" indicates the excellent moral and character traits that are highly valued in society (The Star, 2023).

The theme is extremely significant to how education is evolving currently and where the government is heading. Teachers must have excellent subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical expertise, and positive character traits like kindness, compassion, and affection for the students. In the effort to support the growth of passionate teachers, the theme encourages teachers to be enthusiastic about their work and to preserve high ethical norms. Teachers serve as catalysts for change by exhibiting a significant impact on students' ability to learn in a secure and supportive environment through their expertise, personality traits, and attitude. Based on the "*Madani"* concept which highlights the values of sustainability, success, creativity, respect, trust, and compassion, teachers are highly valued in today's society. The concept reveals the need to produce balanced individuals who have positive attitudes, creative abilities, knowledgeable, good interpersonal skills, and values (The Star, 2023). This notion aligns with the niche of Malaysian's National Education Philosophy (NEP) formed in 1988 which is as follows:

> "Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort towards further developing individual potential in a comprehensive and integrated way to create a balanced and harmonious person intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically, based on faith and obedience to God. This effort is to produce Malaysian citizens with knowledge, skills, noble character, responsibility and the ability to achieve personal wellbeing, as well as contribute to the harmony and prosperity of the family, society and country"
>
> (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2023).

Additionally, the Malaysian government launched ten initiatives to support teacher wellbeing prior to Teachers' Day 2023 (The Malaysian Insights, 2023). These initiatives include: increasing the number of teacher training projects, offering possibilities for teachers to attend activities to stay up-to-date on the most recent advances in education, strengthening the standard of living for teachers, raising subsidies, decreasing teachers' workloads and increasing their time for professional development, advising teachers to get involved with research and development tasks, give teachers the chance to collaborate with experts, raise the number of scholarships available for higher education, stimulate the use of technology in the classroom, and recognize and reward outstanding teachers. These initiatives are intended to support and improve teacher wellbeing, reduce their workload, and improve the quality of education in Malaysia (The Malaysian Insights, 2023). By acknowledging the value of teacher wellbeing, MoE has taken measures to promote it, however, based on the details provided by the Ministry, the majority of Malaysian teachers experience low to moderate levels of wellbeing (Zulkifli et al., 2022).

Researchers in Malaysia are aware of the significance of teacher wellbeing (Pau et al., 2022; Zulkifli et al., 2022). Thus, following the findings, MoE and other policy-making experts may develop focused intervention initiatives that support teachers in efficiently managing their wellness (Pau et al., 2022). Consequently, the Mental Health Handbook, which was created in collaboration with the Malaysian Psychiatric Association and the Malaysian Mental Health Association, are beneficial resources made available by the Ministry to enhance teacher wellbeing (Hazli & Guan, 2022). Apart from that, teach for Malaysia which is a partner of the MoE and the Global Education Network, collaborated with passionate teachers and mental health advocates to publish a self-help tool for teacher wellbeing (Poedjo et al., 2022). Moreover, according to NEP, it is of the utmost importance to nurture individuals who are academically, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and harmonious, grounded in a firm belief and devotion to God (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2023).

Thus, this philosophy aligns with the empowering teacher wellbeing notion because it attempts to nurture educated, capable, and responsible Malaysian teachers who can attain a high level of personal wellbeing and contribute to the wellbeing and progress of society and the nation as a whole. (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2023). However, more efforts and awareness are needed to implement specific strategies and guidelines using these self-help handbooks and tools for teacher wellbeing and more creative and exclusive innovations are required to customize the usage of these beneficial resources for the advancement of the teaching profession and the nation's education system.

3.3 Teacher Burnout to Teacher Wellbeing

As factors that cause teacher burnout can be acknowledged as a wake-up call, measures are taken to manage the burnout symptoms. A contributing factor to teacher burnout, according to NUTP, is administrative work, which has also caused many teachers to lose their focus while striving to perform their responsibilities effectively. To preserve the wellbeing of their staff, administrators in schools ought to avoid interrupting teachers during breaks. Administrative work and digital information filing are among the top administrative tasks that contribute to teachers clocking in long work hours (Riduan, 2023). Based on Amzat et al. (2021), several studies explore the coping strategies to manage teacher burnout. Teachers who practice self-care strategies which include exercise, relaxation techniques, and hobbies are better capable of dealing with stress and are less exposed to burnout. Teachers who prefer seeking support from others in the profession are more competent to cope with the demands of their jobs and are less vulnerable to burnout. Individual strength is also a coping strategy. Teachers who identify techniques for integrating their passions and strengths into their teaching report higher job satisfaction and reduced burnout levels.

Adopting an optimistic perspective can also reduce burnout and increase teacher wellbeing is regarded as a personal resource that can be used to achieve burnout resistance (Ngui & Lay, 2020). Teachers who maintain an optimistic perspective on their work, and emphasize the benefits and positive aspects of teaching, are significantly less likely to experience burnout. Knowledge of teaching and learning is also essential as teacher needs to be well-equipped when they start their profession. Teachers who possess an in-depth understanding of teaching and learning are more prepared to deal with the demands of their duties and are also less vulnerable to burnout.

Ibrahim et al. (2021) suggest a few practicable methods for protecting teacher wellbeing, such as designing productive workplaces with low demands, high control over work, and high social support, advising teachers to take breaks and engage in self-care activities, giving opportunities for professional development and growth, encouraging honest interaction and cooperation between teachers and administrators, and providing resources for teachers. To ensure that educators can give their students excellent learning opportunities, organizations and administrators need to set a priority on the wellbeing of educators. Time management, as well as work-related stresses, are two aspects that contribute to teacher burnout, according to the study. They emphasize that time management has the greatest impact on teachers' levels of occupational stress. It suggests that in order to control their stress levels, teachers ought to undergo time management training and motivational programs. Although all the research focuses on the factors that affect teachers' psychological wellbeing and how job control and social support affect the link between job demands and psychological wellbeing, it does not provide specific guidelines or coping strategies on how to care for teachers' mental health.

Researchers have proposed that psychological interventions and self-care initiatives could help support teachers to manage initial symptoms of burnout, despite the fact there is not much information on specific interventions being developed by MoE to promote teacher wellbeing (Pau et al. 2022). Furthermore, past research has identified several aspects that may promote teacher wellbeing, which include job satisfaction, resilience, emotional intelligence, and teacher empowerment (Zulkifli et al., 2022). Based on these factors, policymaking experts may develop focused intervention initiatives that can support teachers in successfully regulating their wellbeing (Pau et al., 2022). It is necessary to retrieve that the NEP sets an intense focus on nurturing individuals who are academically, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and pleasant, based on a firm belief and devotion to God. This philosophy aims to generate educated, competent, and accountable Malaysian teachers who can attain a high level of personal wellbeing and contribute to the wellbeing and advancement of society and the nation at large, thus promoting teacher wellbeing aligns with this philosophy (Yusoff & Tengku-Ariffin, 2020).

Developing targeted strategies for intervention becomes more challenging by the lack of research on the subject; teachers might be unaware of the significance of self-care; and they may be incapable of managing their wellbeing. These are just a few of the challenges that could delay interventions aimed at improving teachers' wellbeing from being

implemented in Malaysia. Some teachers could be reluctant to try novel interventions or approaches to regulating their well-being (Pau et al. 2022; Zulkifli et al. 2022). MoE has made The Mental Health Handbook one of the resources accessible for increasing teachers' health; but it may not be sufficient to support more complicated initiatives (Pau et al., 2022). Besides, social stigmas may cause some of the teachers to be reluctant to reveal their mental health concerns or seek treatment and this indicates that social factors might impact teacher wellbeing (Amzat et al., 2021b). Thus, it is essential to address these possible challenges to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of interventions that support teacher wellness.

In addition, since teachers are seen as essential contributors and change agents for any successful reform in education, policymakers and educators may collaborate to raise awareness, provide focused resources, and eliminate social barriers to ensure that teachers receive the support they need to effectively care for their wellbeing (Thien & Adams, 2021). Furthermore, it has been revealed that the quality of teachers and their teaching quality are among the most significant factors that contribute to students' success, satisfaction, and accomplishments (Blömeke et al., 2016; Jani et al., 2018). Several studies indicate that teachers' perceptions of their job satisfaction contribute an integral part in whether changes are successfully implemented. One of the most significant factors that need to be considered for teachers to be effective in their work and maintain the quality of the educational process is teacher wellbeing (Gov.UK, 2019; Schleicher, 2018). Thus, as the quality of teachers' teaching profession and their wellbeing matters, analyzing the implications of teacher burnout should be taken into high consideration.

3.4 Implications of Teacher Burnout

Based on this review, there is a need for the integration of individual and organizational interventions to deal with burnout in Malaysian teachers. While educational settings and schools have to reduce workload, give teachers training and support, and address concerns related to reforming the curriculum, teachers have to take care of themselves and seek support from others for their wellbeing. Amzat et al. (2021) argue that teacher burnout not only has a negative impact on their mental health but also the effectiveness of the classroom and the academic achievement of the students. The implications of burnout in teachers also include serious health issues as well as physical and mental exhaustion brought on by excessively hectic schedules. It has been observed that stress can lead to physical and psychological health issues such as depression, disorientation, migraines, difficulties relaxing, exhaustion, tension, and gastrointestinal disturbances. Stressing out also has an impact on one's physical health and psychological wellbeing. These effects include feelings of low self-esteem, despair, impatience, helplessness, anxiety, a lack of professional motivation, dissatisfaction, and job insecurity as well as ineffectiveness in overall teaching tasks. However, further studies are needed to validate and expand their findings using larger sample sizes and various demographics.

According to Arbae et al. (2019) prolonged stress can result in major health issues, including mental disorders. Constant stress may result in burnout, which is a severe case of mental, bodily, and emotional exhaustion that, if disregarded, can lead to mental health issues. The research highlights the factors that affect academic staff stress levels while emphasizing the study of perceived stress among academicians in higher educational institutions in Malaysia. To reduce mental disorders among academic staff members, the researchers suggest implementing immediate action. However, the research does not provide comprehensive details concerning what can be done to address the issue of teacher stress that results in mental disorders. There are no particular interventions for teacher burnout suggested by the researchers, however, the study advocates the need for urgent action to prevent mental illness among academic staff. It can be achieved to reduce risks related to stress at work by identifying the stress sources. This implies that understanding the stressors and taking preventative action could therefore be viewed as interventions for teacher burnout. According to Ibrahim et al. (2021) there could be negative impacts on both teachers and students as the consequence of teacher burnout. Stress, anxiety, and despair are among the health issues that burnout teachers might experience. This could lead in lower productivity, higher absenteeism, and decrease in job satisfaction. Therefore, there may be a decline in the standard of education that students obtain. Preserving the well-being of teachers needs to be prioritized in order to allow them to provide outstanding educational experiences for their students. Thus, it's critical to prioritize mental health and seek professional help when needed to maintain overall wellbeing.

Chen et al. (2020) asserts that job burnout could result in a decrease of inspiration and enthusiasm to achieve better professional outcomes, which can have an adverse effect on academics' commitment to their profession. Persistent burnout may be destructive to mental health, but additional research is required to fully comprehend this issue. According to Pau et al. (2022), teacher burnout can negatively affect a teacher's social life, mental and physical health, and professional performance. It has been revealed that burnout is a risk factor for mental health issues, which includes a greater possibility of depressive symptoms. Teachers who are experiencing burnout are more likely to have the intention to leave their career as the teaching profession is known for being highly stressful. The teachers' growing exposure to an unsafe work environment, the increased demands of their duties, and the frequent requirement for overtime may be partly accountable for such a high-stress level. The researchers reveal the case of teacher burnout that results in disappointing mental health outcomes. They also suggest further psychological interventions and self-care programs are essential to support teachers in managing early burnout signs. The study additionally highlights the need for a more in-depth examination of the mental health condition of Malaysian teachers based on their self-reports of psychological symptoms. Ibrahim et al. (2021) found that teacher burnout could trigger both mental and physical problems. Early identification of

the signs and symptoms of stress or depression in teachers could assist them to avoid becoming depressed, which can make them aggressive and risk their lives. The study also states that, according to the MoE intervention process, teachers nationwide are experiencing mental health issues. Thus, the study argues that teacher burnout still exists and is leading to serious mental health issues. The implications of burnout among full-time teachers in Malaysian research universities are also discussed by Teoh and Kee (2020). Decreased work engagement, reduced job satisfaction, and a greater tendency to quit are among the impacts on teachers. Health risks like physical and mental exhaustion, depression, and anxiety can also result from burnout. Therefore, the study emphasizes that it is critical to address teacher burnout to enhance both their wellbeing and the quality of the education they provide. Moreover, various studies are stressing the issues of managing teacher burnout and stress. Rusdi et al. (2021) proposed stress management techniques for teachers and recommended future research on longitudinal studies to identify causes and effects, while Saad et al. (2022) highlighted the need for a proactive stress management and wellness program to be implemented to ensure the wellbeing of teachers and Mustapha et al. (2023) emphasized on the urgency to implement improvements and measures to prevent burnout from persisting. Although these studies have taken the initiative and critical stance on the issue of teacher burnout and stress, the cases still rising and becoming serious as they affect teacher's mental health and cause fatal incidents.

Furthermore, Zin et al. (2023) revealed the current scenario in Malaysian educational settings. They studied teacher resilience by analysing how they go through the pressures and professional demands as they sustain their psychological wellbeing which includes their mental and emotional health. The reason the researchers focus on it is that a teacher's overall wellbeing has a direct impact on their performance, work satisfaction, and overall quality of life. The researchers have discovered a substantial connection between wellbeing and resilience. Further research should take into consideration additional factors that could have a consequence on teacher wellbeing, such as support networks, job expectations, and school culture. They recommend initiatives to enhance the psychological wellbeing carrying out intervention programs, upholding a healthy work-life balance, and creating effective communication skills. In addition, they recommend that the MoE distribute adequate resources and support to enhance the wellbeing of teachers. Their findings suggest that there is a correlation between burnout and resilience among educators. Resilience is one of the factors that the study displayed having an impact on teacher wellbeing. The study revealed that teacher resilience is the most important factor, implying that a higher level of resilience could be associated with a decreased risk of burnout. The results indicate that teachers' psychological wellness and burnout may be decreased by strengthening their resilience. The researchers suggest that various approaches may increase resilience. These involve offering in-service training, establishing support networks with mentors or counsellors, encouraging positive school cultures that value interaction and a feeling of community, as well as promoting self-care behaviours like engaging in stress-relieving activities, practicing mindfulness, and sustaining a healthy work-life balance.

Adi Badiozaman (2019) states that teacher wellbeing is essential in sustaining a teaching profession and reveals the importance of self-concept by exploring how teachers' inner strength is displayed through commitment and motivation for overall wellbeing in the teaching profession. Nalipay et al. (2021) assets that teacher engagement is essential for job satisfaction as it can reduce intentions to leave the position and reduce emotional exhaustion. Additionally, they highlighted that to enhance engagement and improve their well-being as teachers, it is essential to cultivate positive emotions and decrease negative ones. Positive emotions have an essential function in supporting higher job satisfaction and engagement, each of which contribute to teachers' well-being. The study additionally addressed how the research findings may be used to create interventions and programs that promote teachers' engagement and wellbeing in professional development. Besides, studies conducted by Abd Karim and Mashudi (2022) revealed that effective teaching requires a variety of positive personal traits, including readiness, subject-matter expertise, and the capacity to identify and comprehend the needs of students and their learning process. These elements promote teacher engagement and eventually lead to job satisfaction which can reduce teaching stress.

Therefore, this review fills the gap by providing a sense of direction by highlighting the insights of the teacher burnout issue and recommends that change needs to begin from the self as the mindset, perceptions, responses, and view of situations matter as well as managing thoughts and regulating emotions and self-stress management needs to be prioritized as a self-care strategy. Thus, to ensure teacher wellbeing, teacher burnout has to be addressed urgently. Time, effort, and expertise are needed to delve into the rising issue and it needs to be addressed precisely as it involves supportive guidelines, procedures, and initiatives to encourage self-care, a healthy work-life balance, healthy wellbeing, professional growth, effective educational system, and a conducive teaching and learning environment.

4. Conclusion

Conclusively, this narrative review brings a clear message to all authorities that teacher burnout is an emerging issue, that needs immediate attention in the Malaysia context. It reveals the detrimental nature of burnout on teachers' mental health, profession and wellbeing as well as the affect on the quality and continuity of the educational system. Based on these results, it is necessary to focus on specific interventions to prevent burnout and foster teacher wellbeing. Although there are various potential approaches to reduce distress such as stress management training, skills enhancement programs, supportive school environment, further evaluations on different strategies are crucial in the Malaysian educational setting. Future research analyzing the predictors as well as outcomes of teacher burnout should be strengthened by longitudinal and objective measures in Malaysia. Policy and educational leaders also need to recognize

that teacher wellness is significant, and adequate resources are needed to address this issue. Schools and teachers need to work proactively to build a culture of wellbeing as evidence-based approaches are needed to support teachers' mental health which involve enhancing professional development and stress management, facilitating collegial networks, and encouraging work-life balance. Teachers also need to make self-care a priority, and seek help when it is needed. Addressing teacher burnout involves everyone in the education community and collaboration is needed from the researchers, policymakers, school leaders, and teachers to develop and implement practical and effective interventions. Placing teacher wellbeing first can improve the professional quality of teachers, the educational outcomes of students and wider society. Eventually, this paper contributes to the body of knowledge on the urgency of teacher burnout issue and initiates awareness of the need to develop specific practical interventions to cultivate teacher wellbeing from the inner self through resilience. Prioritizing teachers' health first by self-care may lead to healthier lifestyles as teachers can be more productive personally and professionally. Maintaining teachers' mental wellbeing involves identifying, managing, and preventing teacher burnout. Educational institutions should set a top priority by offering supportive workplaces, and resources for stress management and motivating teachers to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Although it takes an integrated approach to address teacher burnout, which includes school officials, university administrators, teachers, and the larger educational community, teachers also need to make self-care a priority. Thus, this review initiates the need to produce self-care interventions to manage thoughts and regulate emotions exclusively for teachers by experts in educational psychology. This review also promotes the efforts of MoE to empower teacher wellbeing as well as the NPE to achieve personal wellbeing for the advancement of Malaysian educational settings. Eventually, the initiatives launched by the Malaysian government to support teacher wellbeing can be visualized and implemented for the betterment of the education system by reducing teacher burnout and increasing teacher wellbeing.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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