INVESTIGATING WHETHER A LACK OF PREPAREDNESS CONTRIBUTES TO TEACHER BURNOUT AMONG EARLY CAREER TEACHERS

by

© Collette Garland

A Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

May 2025

St. John's,

Newfoundland and Labrador

Abstract

Burnout has long been a recognized issue for teachers, and numerous studies have examined the factors contributing to burnout and its consequences for the teaching profession. This report presents the results of a study involving 132 current permanent or substitute teachers teaching during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. The research question asked whether a lack of preparedness contributed to burnout in early career teachers and to identify factors that likely contribute to compassion fatigue**.** Teachers completed an online survey addressing factors contributing to compassion fatigue, self-rated their competencies, and identified perceived stressors in the teaching profession. The study, conducted via Qualtrics, received ethics approval from the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). Additionally, six teachers working during the 2021-2022 school year participated in phone interviews.

An analysis of the qualitative data revealed several factors contributing to compassion fatigue and burnout, as reported by teachers during the 2021-2022 school year. Key contributing factors included unrealistic expectations (18.5%, n=28), lack of support (10.6%, n=16), time management and parental involvement (i.e. both with 7.3%, n=11). Another key contributing factor was the need for more counsellors (6.6%, n=10) and smaller class sizes (6.6%, n=10). All phone interview participants (n=6) confirmed they had experienced burnout and had witnessed colleagues experience burnout. The themes that best represented early career teachers' responses were unrealistic

expectations (33.33%, n=2/6), extreme workload (33.33%, n=2/6), time management (33.33%, n=2/6) and lack of support (33.33%, n=2/6).

An analysis of the quantitative data showed that the primary stressors identified by participants were managing work-life balance (7.23/9, n=64), managing health and energy (6.89/9, n=64) and time management (6.21/9, n=63). Participants rated their competency levels in Part B as “excellent” in maintaining a professional disposition but only “good” in relation to practical classroom competencies, government expectations, technology and teaching theory and practice.

Study findings, particularly qualitative data, indicate that teachers believe a significant gap exists between teacher training and the challenging classroom realities new teachers face. Educators pointed to a lack of resources and administrative support, which they believe to be the cause of uncertainty and heightened stress. Teachers noted uncertainty about legal rights and how to negotiate the intense emotional and psychological burdens associated with their jobs. They also referred to the need for more effective practicums, mentorship, and practically orientated teacher training as ways to improve teacher preparedness.

The implications of these findings for Memorial University's teacher training program and professional development are discussed. Recommendations include further research into the contributors to teacher burnout, emphasizing practical solutions.

Keywords: Early career teacher, burnout, compassion fatigue, work-life balance, unrealistic expectations, teacher stressors, competency levels.

General Summary

Burnout has long been a recognized issue for teachers, and numerous studies have examined the factors contributing to burnout and its consequences for the teaching profession. This research study asked whether a lack of preparedness contributed to burnout in early career teachers and sought to identify relevant contributing factors and themes. This report presents the results of a study involving 132 current permanent or substitute teachers who taught during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. Participants were currently practising teachers who were asked to reflect on their professional experiences with compassion fatigue and their experiences in the early stages of their careers. Teachers completed an online survey and responded to factors contributing to compassion fatigue, self-rating competency scale, perceived stressors in the teaching profession and open-ended questions. Additionally, six teachers participated in phone interviews.

An analysis of this data revealed that key contributing factors included unrealistic expectations, lack of support, time management and parental involvement, the need for more counsellors, and smaller class sizes. The themes that best represented early career teachers' responses to factors contributing to compassion fatigue included unrealistic expectations, extreme workload, time management and lack of support. All six phone interview participants confirmed they had experienced burnout and had witnessed colleagues experience burnout. The primary stressors identified by participants were managing work-life balance, health and energy and time management. Participants rated their competency levels as "excellent" in maintaining a professional disposition and

"good" in classroom competencies, government expectations, technology and teaching theory and practice, with an average of 64.6 participants per competency section.

Participants noted feelings of overwhelm experienced in the early stages of their careers when faced with expectations that far exceeded their ability to perform in a system that is increasingly under stress and that provides little support for new teachers. Teachers highlighted the importance of mentorship, practical teacher training and professional development, and the importance of learning strategies to cope with the intense emotional demands of the profession. Recommendations and implications for teacher education are explored.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my deepest gratitude to the individuals and institutions that supported me throughout the completion of this thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. John Hoben, for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and patience throughout this research journey. Their insights and expertise were instrumental in shaping the direction of this work and helping me navigate challenges along the way. I will be forever grateful.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the faculty and staff of the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland for providing an enriching academic environment and the resources necessary to complete my research.

I want to acknowledge the unwavering support of my husband, Stephen, and my family and friends, who provided encouragement and understanding throughout this process. Their belief in my abilities has been a constant source of motivation.

Lastly, I want to thank the participants and all the teachers who go to work every day and seek to positively impact the younger generation who will grow up to lead our world.

This work would not have been possible without these individuals and organizations' contributions, inspiration, and support. Thank you for being part of my academic journey.

Table of Contents

Appendices

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

According to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), in collaboration with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association (NLTA), burnout is defined as "a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. Burnout during employment can make one feel emotionally drained and unable to function in the context of work and other aspects of life" (Gov. NL, 2024, p. 8). Statistics from a survey of over 6,000 teachers in NL indicate that 86.7% of respondents have experienced burnout (Gov. NL, 2024). Burnout in the teaching profession negatively impacts the system as a whole. This study explored factors contributing to burnout and compassion fatigue among teachers in the early stages of their careers. Specifically, teacher preparedness factors were analyzed using a survey and phone interviews to provide a deeper understanding of these issues and help build a framework for addressing them. A growing body of literature explores teacher attrition rates within the first 5 years of teaching; this study will help investigate those reasons for attrition by asking practicing teachers to reflect on their early career experiences, teacher training, and experiences with compassion fatigue.

1.1 Purpose Statement

This study evaluates the relationship between a lack of preparedness and compassion fatigue or burnout among early career teachers. Previous research has documented the prevalence of compassion fatigue in teaching, particularly among early career teachers (Naibaho et al., 2021; Strang, 1995; Taylor et al., 2019). Research has shown several contributing factors to compassion fatigue, including a lack of social support, ineffective coping strategies (Taylor et al., 2017), low self-efficacy (Senler, 2016), and underdeveloped soft skills (Naibaho et al., 2021).

As a researcher, my motivation to explore this topic has been fueled by my experiences as an early career teacher. A lack of social support and unrealistic demands quickly stifled my intrinsic desire to educate young minds. I became acutely aware that I lacked the soft skills and coping strategies necessary to manage these challenges appropriately. I witnessed other early career teachers face similar situations, while more senior teachers advised me to leave the profession, painting a bleak picture of the education profession. This lack of support contributed to my feelings of struggle and disillusionment.

For example, during my time as a substitute teacher, a vice principal requested that I work for two days without pay in exchange for a paid third day. When I raised the issue with the principal, I was told I should accept the offer or risk not receiving further substitute assignments. As a young professional, I needed to figure out where to find help and felt dismayed by these unrealistic demands, severe lack of administrative support and administrative sabotage. The administration I turned to for support created an unethical situation. I then had the choice of following the status quo and adhering to the unethical situation or following my intuition and finding a better solution. I found a better solution by quietly gathering colleague support, approaching my union and being validated in my intuition; I turned down the offer for the unethical opportunity. I was not looked upon favourably by the administration afterward. I felt the emotional impacts of a culture of intimidation and the financial impacts of a drop in teaching assignments awarded to me.

After this experience, I observed my colleagues more closely, noticing a pervasive culture of fear and overwhelm, particularly among early career teachers who lacked effective mentorship. A few experienced colleagues were willing to be a guiding light for those early

career teachers who had many of the same questions. My early career experiences suggested a pattern that motivated me to analyze the research behind this problem.

1.2 Rationale

This study hypothesizes that compassion fatigue significantly contributes to early-career teachers leaving the profession. While factors such as relocation, limited job availability, and financial constraints also play a role, this study focuses on evaluating whether better teacher training could address gaps in competencies among early-career teachers. The hope is that understanding shared competency deficits will help improve programming for teachers and help minimize compassion fatigue among professionals during the vulnerable early career stages.

Existing research supports this focus on teacher preparedness. Taylor, McLean, Bryce, Abry and Granger (2019) found that first-year teachers often feel like they did not learn the necessary classroom management techniques from their education programs and had to learn on the job through trial and error. This study explores how limited training in practical skills such as behaviour management, discipline, and classroom management can lower career optimism and lead to teacher attrition (Taylor et al., 2017).

Furthermore, research suggests that teacher well-being is connected to the well-being of the school system. Brown (2018) emphasizes the importance of creating a psychologically safe classroom for both students and teachers. Willcox (2017) found that when teachers create a psychologically safe environment for students, they are more likely to express themselves and build trusting relationships. Teachers who feel equipped to address social and emotional challenges within the school experience lower stress levels, and students reap the rewards. Nandamuri and Rao (2012) argue that empowering teachers ensures a functional education system. Willcox (2017), in the United States, further notes the benefit of a psychologically

secure classroom for students, noting that they “flourish socially with acceptance and belonging, emotionally without the anxiety of rejection” (p.12).

This research aims to identify key areas where teacher education programs can be strengthened to enhance teachers’ knowledge and skill levels. Improving teacher preparedness in critical areas aims to help teachers competently address the social-emotional challenges of the classroom, increasing confidence and leading to tremendous student success. According to Merz (2014), "high-functioning classrooms are built on a foundation of trust” (p. 20). Research shows that many early career teachers feel anxiety entering the teaching career; they begin with optimism, and by the time they enter the classroom, they feel disillusioned, leading to attrition (Taylor et al., 2019). Addressing workplace stressors among early career teachers could improve teacher retention and contribute to lower burnout rates, helping to create a psychologically safe classroom for all.

The data collected from this study will contribute to the growing literature on mental health in the teaching profession in Newfoundland and Labrador. Data was gathered through an online survey and a series of semi-structured interviews, providing teachers with added opportunities to discuss their concerns. The study also includes qualitative responses from a questionnaire and themes generated from survey and interview data. The Education Action Plan recommends "improved education for teachers and early childhood educators on mental health and wellness through initial teacher education and ongoing professional learning" (Government of NL, 2017). As of the 2021 update, this recommendation remains separate from the 80% of recommendations currently being implemented (Government of NL, 2021), indicating a potential lack of recognition of the situation's urgency.

1.3 Research Question

This study's central research question is whether a lack of preparedness contributes to compassion fatigue or burnout among early career teachers. Taylor et al. (2019) noted that early career teachers often enter the field with a high level of optimism, but Strang (1995) and (Carroll et al., 2020) found that teachers feel a high level of workplace stress, primarily due to a lack of preparedness. Preparedness can come from many sources: in-class instruction, on-the-job training, mentorship, professional development, and seminars, and with varying degrees of duration. While Gelatt (1989) argues that accepting the unpredictability of our lives will help reduce stress, an acceptable level of practical preparedness is needed to walk into a classroom of 20 to 30 expectant students and feel confident.

This study seeks to determine whether novice teachers possess the practical skills necessary to feel confident and competent as they enter the workplace. Burnout, since it has components of emotional exhaustion, can be reduced through positive coping strategies, interpersonal skills training, knowledge of the code of ethics, and union support (Taylor et al., 2019). However, research shows that the emotional aspects of teaching are underrepresented in teaching training (Day, 2008; Taylor et al., 2019). By making systemic changes that will ensure these practical skills are imparted, it is hoped that educators will be able to positively influence students' mental health and help them feel safe and secure enough to learn and grow rather than simply paying lip service to the idea of a socially and emotionally safe classroom.

1.4 Study Background and Significance

Teacher stress is a well-documented issue both nationally and internationally. However, the contributors to stress are complex and require further investigation. This exploratory mixed

methods study sought to understand teachers' perceptions of workplace stressors and investigate their beliefs about strategies for ameliorating them.

Two main themes emerged when reviewing the literature on teacher burnout. The first theme indicated that novice or early career teachers experienced higher rates of burnout (Orchard et al., 2020; Strang, 1995; Taylor et al., 2019; Whalen et al., 2019). Taylor et al. (2017) noted that new teachers often lacked coping strategies for stressful workplace situations. Also, novice teachers frequently "underestimate the amount of emotional labour required by their new profession" (Bullough & Baughman, 1997). The second theme identified a link between burnout and a lack of practical skills (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Senler, 2016; Taylor et al., 2019). These trends suggest that more focused training for early career teachers in the identified deficit areas may be needed to increase teacher retention.

Some countries have successfully begun implementing early career teacher induction programs and professional development through mentorship to improve retention rates and increase teacher effectiveness (OECD, 2011; OECD, 2020). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2020) notes that TALIS 2018 data shows that early career teachers typically receive teaching assignments in socio-economically challenging schools, resulting in them having less time to actually teach than their experienced counterparts due to their lack of confidence in handling classroom management issues. The OECD (2020), covering 40 countries, also notes that empirical evidence proves teacher participation in induction and mentoring programmes enhances student learning, as shown by studies from Glazerman et al. (2010), Helms-Lorenz, Slof, and van de Grift (2013), and Rockoff (2008). As one OECD report on the issue noted, "51% of novice teachers report not having participated in

any formal or informal induction activity at their current school, and only 22% have an assigned mentor" (p.39).

Regarding the Newfoundland and Labrador context, a formal teacher induction program for beginning teachers was created in 1998 between the Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association, the School Districts and the Department of Education (NLTA, 2006). The program's success relied on beginning teachers seeking information from their administrators about the program and the administrators being knowledgeable in pairing mentors and mentees (NLTA, 2006). Kutsyuraba (2014) noted that though the need for support was recognized in creating the program, it ultimately ended due to poor implementation. A beginning teacher handbook is available from the NLTA, but no formal teacher induction or mentorship program (NLTA, 2021).

Practical skills are necessary to effectively integrate teaching pedagogy and theory into the classroom (Orchard et al., 2020). Without sufficient practical experience, novice teachers may struggle to apply theoretical knowledge. Unfortunately, practical skills, such as people skills, learning how to deal with the emotional aspects of teaching, and interacting with students, parents, and colleagues, seem to be underrepresented (Day, 2008). Focusing on integrating practice into teacher training programs, Finland has dramatically improved literacy and teacher retention rates (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Similarly, Korpershoek, Harms, de Boer, van Kuijk, and Doolaard (2016) have noted that effective learning can only occur in a well-managed classroom where early career teachers are competently trained.

Teacher burnout can diminish teachers' effectiveness, and research indicates that teacher effectiveness is one of the most important contributing factors to student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2017). This phenomenon is being recognized by the Government of NL and the

Newfoundland and Labrador's Teaching Association (NLTA) in their recent publication on teacher retention, where they state, "The reality is that the working conditions for teachers are the learning conditions of students." (NLTA, 2024, p. 2). The education system should be a well-oiled machine whereby students and staff can succeed as learners and teachers if all parts are in working order.

1.5 Summary

To summarize, this study aims to evaluate whether a lack of preparedness contributes to compassion fatigue or burnout in teaching. The researcher hypothesizes that burnout significantly influences early career teacher attrition. The research question examines whether a lack of necessary competencies, skills and support contributes to compassion fatigue or burnout among early career teachers. Although teacher stressors are a well-documented issue, a smaller body of literature identifies stressors that cause early career teachers to have diminished job satisfaction and leave the profession. Narrowing down the specific issues that cause burnout among early career teachers can contribute to higher retention of teachers, greater job satisfaction and a more stable student learning environment.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

"Unless someone like you cares a lot, nothing will get better. It is not." – Dr. Seuss.

Research literature related to teacher preparedness, soft skills, early career teacher stressors, teaching competencies, and perceptions were investigated to evaluate which aspects of teaching contribute to compassion fatigue and where preparedness fails. The review draws on various empirical studies and policy reports, including perspectives from teachers, cooperating teachers, teacher educators, government, and academics. Research indicates a significant attrition rate among early career teachers, with one study finding that over half of those surveyed leave within the first five years (Williams et al., 2022). The literature also indicates that early career teachers struggling with work-life balance experience higher rates of panic attacks and poorer mental health (Williams et al., 2022). Similarly, studies reveal that negative stress-related experiences can lead to burnout and decreased career optimism among early-career teachers, which may contribute to their decision to leave the field (Taylor et al., 2019; Hong, 2010; Kelly & Northrop, 2015). Strang's (1995) research in the Newfoundland setting found that prolonged teacher stress can lead to burnout and contribute to higher attrition rates.

2.1 Previous Studies on Teacher Preparation

In her 1995 study on early career teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador, Strang found that teachers' self-rated competencies and stress levels significantly differed between novices and experienced educators. Her findings underscore the need for improved teacher preparation programs to mitigate feelings of overwhelm and compassion fatigue, contributing to high attrition rates among new teachers. Strang (1995) recommended that teacher preparation

programs focus on developing competencies that help teachers manage the challenges faced in the first few years of professional practice. Strang's (1995) research indicated significant differences between early-career and experienced teachers' self-rating of competencies and teacher stressors. Her findings align with those of Clarke et al. (1994), who found that beginner and expert teachers rated classroom management as their highest stressor.

According to the literature, starting a new profession inevitably brings challenges, but distinguishing between manageable and overwhelming situations is crucial. Dr. Brene Brown is a social work professor at the University of Houston and has done decades of research on how shame and other emotions affect our ability to live whole-hearted lives. From thousands of pieces of data, Brown (2018) states that overwhelm happens when your situation exceeds your coping strategies. Fair challenges are new situations one can manage using previous knowledge and experience. Regalado, Mena, and Gratacós (2021) completed a literature review of 34 studies on teacher induction programs focusing on teaching resiliency. Regalado et al. (2021), drawing on previous studies (Day & Gu, 2014; Morgan, 2011; Peixoto et al., 2018), found that those teachers supported by mentors in their first year of teaching were better able to cope with challenges and to grow professionally. Resiliency, defined as coping with adverse circumstances and growing through them (Morgan, 2011), is essential for meeting the realities of teaching, yet many studies show that new teachers often need additional preparation to enter the classroom (Strang, 1995; Sydnor, 2014; Whalen et al., 2019). Factors contributing to this unpreparedness include a need for practical skills such as classroom and behaviour management, inadequate soft skills for dealing with colleagues and parents, and the problematic transition from learner to teacher, often complicated by unrealistic expectations (Sydnor et al., 2021).

Feeling overwhelmed is a powerful and significant symptom of compassion fatigue and can lead to teacher burnout (Heikonen et al., 2017). A recent publication from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador describes how teacher burnout can result from the "overwhelming challenges of managing diverse classrooms with limited resources and support" (Government of NL, 2024). Research shows that approximately 50% of early career teachers (0-5 years of experience) leave the profession (Simms & Jerrim, 2020; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Whalen et al., 2019), a phenomenon strongly correlated with burnout and low job satisfaction (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Smith and Ingersoll (2004), using data from the 1999-2000 U.S. Census Bureau Schools and Staffing Survey, focusing on 3,235 beginning teachers, found that mentoring and induction programs significantly reduced attrition rates. Supporting this, Sims and Jerrim (2020) found similar trends in an international teacher survey of 260,000 teacher responses from 48 countries. If new teachers feel unprepared to face novel workplace challenges and lack appropriate coping strategies, they are more likely to experience higher stress levels and job dissatisfaction, potentially leading to higher turnover rates. In that case, feeling overwhelmed or emotionally flooded can lead to compassion fatigue and attrition (Albaba, 2017).

However, Pan, Chung and Lin (2023) found that though teacher preparedness is critical to a teacher's success, self-efficacy was given more attention in their research framework, Job Demands-Resources (JD-R), with workload being the most significant determinant of a teacher's well-being. For Pan et al. (2023), a teacher's well-being determines the quality of their teaching and directly impacts student learning. Pan et al. (2023) have found Job Demands to relate to the physical and mental effort required of teachers; Job Resources relate to social support, feedback and teacher autonomy, with personal resources extending beyond job resources to include self-efficacy and optimism. This study introduces the concept that preparedness is not the only thing

that concerns the well-being of teachers. This research introduces concepts critical to a teacher's well-being, such as social support, feedback, and optimism, which you can foster. This study gives the hope that through a supportive network of teachers and mentors, early career teachers can find well-being, positively impact students and remain in their teaching careers through a community effort, and not just through being prepared as they leave their teacher education program.

The studies discussed in the above section highlight the importance of teacher preparation and support programs in addressing the root causes of teacher burnout and attrition, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support systems for early career teachers.

2.2 Importance of Teacher Preparedness for Early Career Teachers

The sense of preparedness among early career teachers is crucial for the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. Studies show a positive correlation between feeling prepared and actual preparedness (Ingvarson et al., 2007; Stites et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2004), which is linked to both teacher success (Brown et al., 2019) and student achievement (Giallo & Little, 2003). According to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Newfoundland and Labrador (2018), "alignment between teacher preparation and the school system is critical" (p.16). A year-long study by Livers et al. (2021) on elementary teachers across three U.S. institutions found that "teacher candidates' sense of preparedness is integral to success as a teacher and longevity in the profession" (p. 29). They defined teacher preparedness as the feeling of success and confidence in executing a task or series of tasks.

Studies highlight that practicums provide invaluable teaching opportunities and positively impact early career teachers' feelings of preparedness (Onchwari, 2010; O'Neill & Stephenson,

2012). A meta-analysis of 185 articles on teacher education by Clarke et al. (2014) highlighted the critical role of cooperating teachers in student teachers' success, a conclusion further supported by Kirk et al. (2006) and Weiss and Weiss (2001), who similarly emphasize the significant influence cooperating teachers have on shaping the learning and preparation of student teachers. Additionally, Brown, Lee and Collins (2015) found that observing experienced teachers and building relationships with faculty is essential for the preparation and success of early-career teachers. This underscores the importance of ensuring teachers are well-equipped to enter and remain in their profession.

Despite these findings, many beginning teachers feel unprepared when they start their careers (Albaba, 2017; Clarke et al., 2014; Koehler et al., 2013; Sydnor, 2014; Willis et al., 2022). Sydnor (2014) followed nine former education students into their early teaching years and frequently found complaints that teacher education was inadequate, overly idealistic, and disconnected from classroom realities. Her study focused on the transition from student to teacher, emphasizing that early career teachers must experiment with new teaching practices and theories to find what works within the broader educational system. The participants expressed frustration over a gap between what they were taught and what they could implement in the classroom. The experimentation necessary for early career teachers may be best undertaken through the supervision of an experienced teacher, such as a mentor teacher; this mentor could guide the beginning teacher through the disconnection between teaching pedagogy and classroom realities.

Early career teachers who struggle with work-life balance experience higher rates of panic attacks and poorer mental health (Williams et al., 2022). Williams et al. (2022) recommend mental health and well-being training to help teachers manage the impact of their profession on

their personal lives. Since teachers' personal and professional lives are deeply intertwined, an inability to balance them negatively affects both. Unhappiness at home can lead to distress at work, and spending long hours in a mentally exhausting environment can affect teachers' time, especially if they bring work home. Williams et al. (2022) found that up to 52% of teachers with less than five years of teaching were more likely to leave the profession due to burnout.

These findings underscore the crucial role of an early career teacher's sense of preparedness and the need for teacher education programs to better align with the realities of the classroom and the broader educational system.

2.2.1 Teacher Education Programs

The literature suggests that while teacher education programs seem to prepare teachers as learners effectively, they often fail to provide them with the autonomy and confidence needed to start their careers (Sydnor, 2014; Flores, 2019). Without a sense of agency and trust, it is difficult for beginning teachers to feel competent in their teaching roles. Teachers face challenges beyond content delivery and engaging lessons, such as behaviour management, rigid school structures, adverse climates, and a lack of administrative support (Rowan & Townend, 2016). Albaba (2017) describes this transition from learner to teacher as a gradual shift from peripheral participation to full engagement through active involvement.

Practicums in teacher education programs aim to foster this active participation by allowing student teachers to practice in a cooperating teacher's role. However, studies suggest that new teachers often feel unprepared for the profession even after completing the practicum portion of the educational program. (Albaba, 2017; Celik & Zehir, 2024; Willis et al., 2022). Albaba (2017) found that while practicums can aid this transition, early-career teachers still face

social, cultural, political, and historical barriers, which lead to unequal power dynamics and a lack of recognition and autonomy. These challenges can hinder teachers from achieving active participation and demonstrate how practicum experiences may not always translate smoothly into the professional world, including interactions with parents, students, and colleagues. Another study by Clarke et al. (2014) emphasizes that the quality of the cooperating teacher's guidance is essential to the student teacher's development. Whether the cooperating teacher's level of participation in guidance was low (like an absentee landlord), medium (like a supervisor), or high (like a coach) significantly impacted the success of the student teacher.

Research emphasizes the practicum as the most crucial component of preservice teacher education (Clarke et al., 2014). Albaba (2017) and Faez and Valeo (2012) also found that preservice teachers view the practicum as vital for learning the practical skills necessary for their careers. Extended field experiences, such as internships, under the guidance of experienced cooperating teachers, are critical for applying teaching theories, trying new approaches, and gaining real-world experience with students and the teaching community (Clarke et al., 2014; Kirk et al., 2006; Weiss & Weiss, 2001).

2.2.2.1 Equal Opportunities During Practicum

As noted, student teachers often highly value practicums for preparing them for their careers, with cooperating teachers playing a crucial role. However, not all students receive adequate opportunities to apply the skills taught in their coursework (Faez & Valeo, 2012). Some studies have found that the professional preparation of cooperating teachers to mentor student teachers needs improvement (Clarke et al., 2014; Glickman & Bey, 1990). While practicums allow students to practice the theory and teaching strategies learned during

coursework, effective mentoring requires cooperating teachers to actively guide them by offering feedback, answering questions, and providing consistent support (Clarke et al., 2014).

When cooperating teachers lack the necessary mentoring skills, a gap in knowledge and support for student teachers can arise. Clarke et al. (2014) examined over 400 articles and found that many cooperating teachers needed guidance in providing critical feedback. Similarly, Bullough and Draper (2004) noted that some cooperating teachers struggled to balance their responsibilities and viewed working with student teachers as an additional challenge. Clarke et al.'s study also identified tensions between prioritizing the needs of the classroom and those of the student teacher. Unprepared cooperating teachers can leave preservice teachers feeling inadequately prepared for their new profession.

Teacher preparation begins with the educational institution but extends throughout a teacher's career. Coursework focuses on basic educational theory and teaching strategies. At the same time, practicums are expected to provide hands-on experience and additional] practical skills, such as the nuances of contacting parents and managing classrooms (Livers et al., 2021). However, a study by Willis, Shaukat, and Low-Choy (2022) found that many teachers lacked confidence in effectively communicating with parents and guardians. Livers et al. (2021) also reported that beginning teachers felt unprepared to develop positive dialogue and relationships with families. Their year-long study of 213 participants across three teacher preparation programs in the U.S. found that while preservice teachers in practicum felt confident planning lessons, they struggled to implement classroom management strategies.

Sometimes, these skills are even lacking in experienced teachers, whom many novice teachers look to for guidance. Sydnor (2017) found that the cooperating teacher in her study could not handle classroom behaviours and felt they needed to learn essential classroom

management skills. In a related study, Sydnor (2014) noted that some cooperating teachers expected student teachers to be able to model teaching and learning theories related to engagement, encouragement and authenticity without appropriately considering their lack of experience. Sydnor's research, which mainly focuses on early career teachers, followed participants through their practicum and early career years, noting significant gaps in teacher readiness. Similarly, Albaba (2017) found that cooperating teachers sometimes restricted student-teacher autonomy, limiting their ability to practice teaching methods.

As evident from the research discussed above, the quality of the practicum experience largely depends on the cooperating teacher, the classroom environment and the effectiveness of the faculty supervisor. This makes it crucial for mentors to be well-prepared and supportive to provide an optimal learning experience.

2.3 Ethical & Legal Preparedness

The teaching profession often involves navigating complex interpersonal conflicts, including disputes between students, teachers, administrators, parents, school boards, and administrators (Delaney, 2007). Teachers with adequate legal and ethical knowledge are better positioned to handle these challenges. Strike and Soltis (2009) underscore the importance of ethical considerations in teaching, such as deciding whether to return a hug from a student or ensuring appropriate supervision when alone with a student. Such scenarios illustrate the breadth of daily legal and ethical issues new teachers face.

These issues require a combination of knowledge and practical wisdom to ensure that new teachers can make well-reasoned and informed professional judgments. Strike and Soltis (2009) offer detailed case studies on dilemmas related to loyalties, whistleblowing, equity,

parental rights, student welfare, confidentiality, responsibility for enforcing school rules, teacher autonomy and values, child abuse, child neglect, physical punishment, sexual harassment, and fairness. Delaney (2007) also stresses that new teachers must be aware of their legal rights, advocating for a mandatory course in educational law. He argues that "educational law has a positive and practical role to play in the daily work of educators" (p. 15).

Many early-career teachers feel uncertain about their legal rights, responsibilities, and the legislative frameworks that govern their conduct. Delaney (2007) argues for a proactive approach where teachers are trained in their legal responsibilities before encountering problems. Osborne and Russo (2011) agree, noting that legal training can foster a secure teaching environment where educators can focus on student education without fear of legal repercussions.

Using Bloom's revised taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002), Strike and Soltis (2009) stress that merely studying case studies in coursework does not fully prepare teachers to make complex ethical decisions in real-life professional situations. They present a case study of an early career teacher seeking mentorship, only to find their mentor disengaged due to burnout, exacerbating the teacher's stress. These issues are complex, underscoring the need for knowledge of the appropriate professional codes of ethics and principles and ongoing professional development and support.

Given the high attrition rate among early-career teachers (Livers et al., 2014; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), many experts argue that current teacher preparation programs must better equip teachers for the practical challenges they will face in the classroom (Du Plessis et al., 2020; Regalado et al., 2021).

2.4 Soft Skills

In addition to the legal, ethical, and technical competencies vital for educators, developing interpersonal and professional abilities is critical for the success of early-career teachers. These abilities, often referred to as soft skills, encompass emotional intelligence, adaptability, problem-solving, teamwork, and time management (Grant & Goodman, 2018; Naibaho et al., 2021; Pichler, 2020; Tribble, 2009; Tyas & Sunarto, 2020; Yoke & Ngang, 2017). While technical expertise helps secure employment, these personal and relational skills sustain long-term professional success (Macqual & Salleh, 2021).

The complexity and significance of these abilities cannot be overstated (Watts & Watts, 2008; Klaus, 2010). In daily teaching practice, they are essential for tasks such as greeting students, resolving conflicts, managing classrooms, and collaborating with colleagues (George, 2000; Klaus, 2010). Communication, in particular, plays a pivotal role in fostering cooperation among educators, students, and parents, ensuring a cohesive learning environment (Macqual & Salleh, 2021). Teachers with strong communication skills are better equipped to deliver practical lessons, provide constructive feedback, and support student progress. Verbal and non-verbal communication further enhances learning and helps students achieve higher standards (Wellner & Pierce-Friedman, 2021).

Collaborative problem-solving is another indispensable skill that benefits both teachers and students. Educators who are confident in their interpersonal abilities are more effective in their roles and better positioned to nurture these traits in their students (Cheng & Zamaro, 2016; Taylor, 2016). Conversely, lacking these competencies may hinder classroom success and contribute to lower student achievement (Ijioma et al., 2014).

The role of these skills extends beyond classroom management to shaping the broader school culture. Adaptability, empathy, and emotional intelligence are crucial for fostering positive relationships with students and colleagues (Macqual & Salleh, 2021). These traits enable teachers to address diverse student needs, handle conflicts, and create inclusive environments. Moreover, integrating these abilities with technical expertise allows educators to navigate the complexities of teaching while mitigating burnout.

Despite their importance, many early-career teachers struggle with communication, classroom management, and disciplinary practices. Strang (1995) observed that new teachers often rely on advice from experienced colleagues to bridge these gaps. Empathetic communication, for example, profoundly impacts students' emotional well-being, underscoring the link between teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Eells, 2011; Melser, 2019).

Moral integrity and perseverance are also integral to professional success (Macqual & Salleh, 2019). Conscientious educators model consistent, honest efforts, helping students develop and emulate these traits. However, burnout, marked by detachment and inauthenticity, can hinder teachers' ability to demonstrate such values. Educators must be equipped with strategies to prioritize well-being and resilience, ensuring they can maintain their efficacy and positively influence their students.

The synergy between technical and interpersonal competencies, often termed "hard" and "soft" skills, is vital in teaching. Fernandez-Arias et al. (2021) describe hard skills as job-specific technical expertise and soft skills as the transversal abilities that ensure long-term success. While mastery of content knowledge is essential, the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively transcends specific disciplines. Hattie's (2015) meta-analysis highlights that teacher personality—closely tied to interpersonal competencies—significantly impacts students more

than subject knowledge. This underscores the importance of a balanced approach that combines technical expertise with relational skills for optimal student outcomes (Sisson & Adam, 2013).

In conclusion, cultivating these competencies is essential for beginning teachers. They foster positive classroom environments and prepare students for future success (Menter, 2016). Emotional stability, self-confidence, and adaptability are crucial for creating safe and effective learning spaces (Kleinsasser, 2014). The growing recognition of the role of quality educators in economic development further underscores the value of these skills. By mastering interpersonal and professional abilities, teachers can confidently manage their classrooms, inspire their students, and contribute to a cohesive and productive school culture (Porter, 2021; Taylor, 2016).

2.5 Burnout and Early Career Teachers

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion and low job satisfaction, is a significant concern across all levels of the teaching profession (Taylor et al., 2019). Negative experiences, appraisals, and personal and professional interactions have been found to contribute to burnout among teachers (Taylor et al., 2019). Although burnout and prolonged stress are commonly reported by veteran teachers (Fergusun et al., 2012; Fernet et al., 2012; Kyriacou, 2001; Loeb et al., 2005; NLTA, 2024;), even preservice teachers can report these negative experiences before they fully begin their career (Chaplain, 2008; Goldstein, 2005). This is particularly important, as early career teachers who face stress-related issues may experience reduced career optimism (Taylor et al., 2019), leading to early attrition from the profession (Kelly & Northrop, 2015; Hong, 2010). High teacher attrition rates impair student learning (Milanowski & Odden, 2007) because high teacher turnover results in inconsistent instruction. In a study conducted on early career teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador, Strang (1995) found that stress seemed to

contribute to the high attrition rates of new teachers, and prolonged stress adversely impacted mental health and job satisfaction.

Burnout and secondary trauma are symptoms of compassion fatigue. Burnout occurs when individuals feel hopeless and disenfranchised and believe their work lacks meaning (Ollison, 2019). The difference between compassion fatigue and burnout lies in the cause: environmental stressors typically drive burnout, while emotional exposure to other's trauma is more closely tied to compassion fatigue (Figley, 2002). Maslach and Jackson (1981) describe burnout as the cumulative stress of daily life, leading to physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by an inability to cope with the work environment. Symptoms include feelings of purposelessness, chronic stress, insomnia, anxiety disorders, fatigue, and headaches.

Addressing burnout and secondary trauma is essential for preservice teachers, as these issues can have long-lasting effects on their professional well-being. Miller and Flint-Stipp (2019) completed a study on preservice teachers focusing on self-care and trauma-informed training as a defence against burnout and secondary trauma. Secondary trauma is when individuals absorb the emotional burdens of others (Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019), potentially leading to negative feelings and a loss of trust in one's view of the world (Figley, 1995). Teachers working with traumatized children are especially at risk (Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found that teacher burnout includes emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. It is worth noting that Christina Maslach (1981) invented the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) after years of research into burnout factors. This itemized inventory has been widely used across professions to determine the extent of burnout. Closer to home, Calder (2017) applied the MBI and self-care assessments

to social workers in Eastern Newfoundland and found that those with higher levels of self-care practices experienced lower levels of burnout than those without such practices.

2.5.1 Burnout vs. Compassion Fatigue

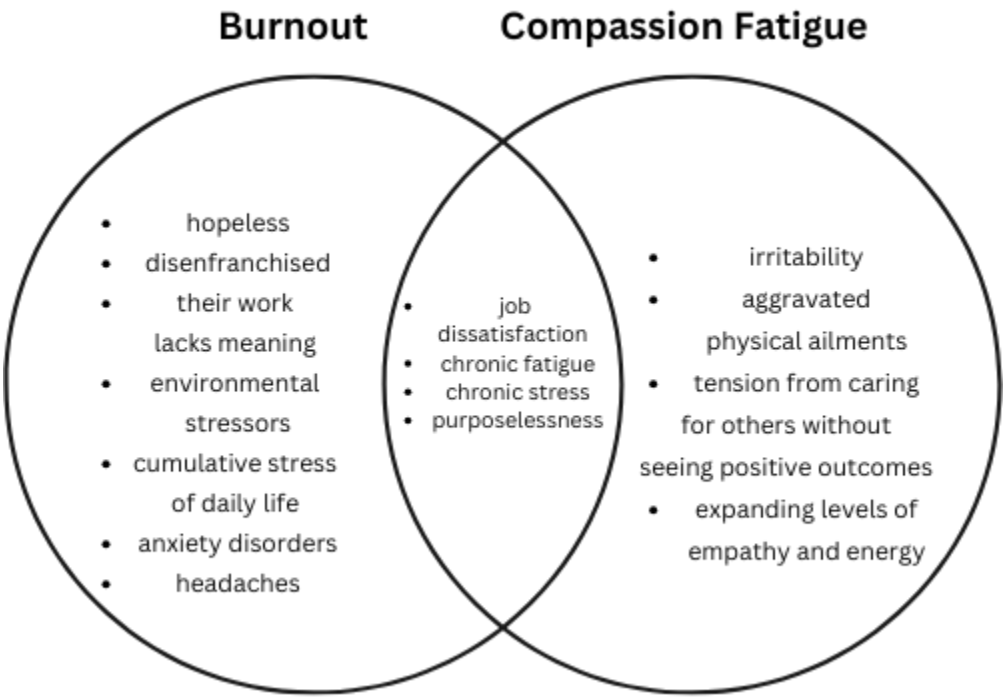


Figure 1. *Burnout vs. compassion fatigue [Original]*

Educators frequently engage in emotional labour, showing care, devotion, empathy, responsibility, and nurturing toward their students (Figley, 2002). This emotional labour exposes teachers to risks of burnout and compassion fatigue, which share similarities but differ in key aspects.

Burnout arises from prolonged work-related stress, leading to emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy. Compassion fatigue, on the other hand, results specifically from caring for high-needs individuals with traumatic stories, leaving teachers emotionally depleted and diminishing their sense of hope (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020).

Symptoms of compassion fatigue include chronic fatigue, irritability, lack of personal fulfillment, job dissatisfaction, and physical ailments.

The term "compassion fatigue" was first coined by Joinson (1992) in burnout research on nurses who experienced high attrition due to emotional exhaustion. Figley (2002) later described compassion fatigue as tension stemming from caring for others without seeing positive outcomes, emphasizing its link to energy and empathy expenditure (McHolm, 2006). Teachers, acting as counsellors, educators, and problem-solvers, are particularly susceptible due to the daily demands of working with students, many of whom have traumatic backgrounds (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020).

A recent survey by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) and the Newfoundland Government involving 6,000 teachers highlighted empathy as central to educators' roles. Teachers reported taking pride in the positive relationships they build with students, yet many struggle with the emotional toll of their profession (NLTA, 2024). These findings underscore the importance of addressing the risks of compassion fatigue and burnout.

2.6 Effects of Compassion Fatigue & Burnout

Understanding the effects of compassion fatigue and burnout is essential for supporting teacher well-being. Both conditions contribute to decreased job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, but compassion fatigue has unique ties to secondary trauma. Figley (1995) explains that secondary trauma, arising from exposure to others' traumatic experiences, can erode a person's trust and sense of meaning. Over time, this can lead to vicarious trauma, where an individual's inner experience is profoundly altered (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020).

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed., text rev.; American Psychiatric Association, 2022) lists the effects of compassion fatigue, including intrusive memories, flashbacks, negative self-worth, detachment, irritability, hypervigilance, impaired attention, and sleep disturbances. Teachers who work daily with many children—each bringing unique challenges and traumas to the classroom—are at high risk of experiencing these symptoms (Ollison, 2019).

Research indicates that all teachers face stressors, though novice teachers often report more significant challenges. Strang (1995) found that novice and experienced teachers struggled with similar issues, such as classroom management, discipline, and time management, though stressors like student misbehaviour have become more prominent over time. In Newfoundland, an NLTA survey revealed that 78% of teachers felt their workplace negatively impacted their mental well-being, and 87% reported experiencing burnout (NLTA, 2024). Contributing factors included diverse student needs, inadequate support, limited professional development, and large class sizes.

Addressing these challenges requires systemic support. Structured mentorship programs, which are standard in other Canadian provinces, have been shown to help new teachers transition into the profession (Kutsyuruba, 2012). However, Newfoundland and Labrador currently lack formal mentorship structures. Although colleagues often provide informal support, the absence of structured initiatives leaves many teachers without adequate resources.

To support teacher well-being, the NLTA has introduced programs targeting different career stages: “Invitation to the Conversation” for beginning teachers, “The Joy of Teaching” for mid-level teachers, and “Planning Transition” for late-career teachers (NLTA, 1993). These programs address challenges unique to each stage and promote professional growth.

Additionally, teachers can access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and a collection of resources, including relevant legislation, codes of ethics, the collective agreement, and insurance details (NLTA, 2024). These initiatives represent steps toward mitigating the emotional toll of teaching and fostering professional resilience.

2.7 How Compassion Fatigue Impacts Students

Teachers often assume a parental role in classrooms, providing essential care and support for students throughout the school day. Studies emphasize the importance of teachers as nurturing figures, particularly for students who may lack consistent care at home (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020). Figley (1995) underscores the importance of teachers in providing emotional validation and building trusting relationships with students, which is crucial for trauma victims.

Children bring their backgrounds and experiences to school, and teachers often serve as daily caregivers, especially for those facing emotional challenges (Ollison, 2019). Teachers, while trained to identify signs of abuse, also play a crucial role in meeting students' emotional needs beyond reporting visible signs of neglect or abuse. Students who feel unheard or undervalued elsewhere may seek emotional safety and support from their teachers (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020). This responsibility extends to creating a supportive classroom environment where all students feel emotionally secure and valued. As noted in an earlier section, meeting student’s emotional needs can increase the likelihood of developing compassion fatigue, especially if the teacher can see no positive outcomes (Figley, 2002). With this knowledge, it is apparent that teachers build positive relationships with students. Through compassion fatigue, they begin experiencing symptoms of burnout whereby they feel disenfranchised, hopeless and disinterested in their jobs (DuBois & Mistretta, 2020). Where a student once had an engaged, helpful and higher energy teacher, they now have a disinterested, irritable, and demotivated

teacher. Azeem and Hussain (2021) surveyed almost 300 students to determine whether teacher burnout directly impacted student achievement. The results showed that teacher burnout was nearly 80% likely to impact a student's academic achievement negatively.

2.8 Teacher Competencies

Understanding whether teachers lack specific competencies can help identify factors contributing to teacher burnout. High competency in a skill increases confidence and career optimism, while feeling unprepared can lead to negative feelings about one's career. Strang's (1995) research focused on differences between novice and expert teachers, their competency levels, and whether stressors were related to these levels. The results of Strang's (1995) study showed that, in general, experts (teachers who were teaching for more than 2 years) rated their competencies higher than novices (teachers with less than 2 years of experience). In addition to examining teacher competencies, Strang (1995) explored teacher stressors. Experts highly rated their competency to handle classroom discipline fairly and consistently, with this relating to the classroom management stressor rated highest for both expert and novice teachers. Overall, Strang's (1995) research showed that novice teachers felt competent primarily in all areas, prompting them to cite that Memorial University prepares graduates well for their teaching careers.

2.8.1 Teaching Competencies and Early Career Development

Teaching competencies encompassing technical (hard) and interpersonal (soft) skills make teachers feel confident. Any professional role that requires interpersonal skills to be used daily, especially with those on a different cognitive scale than an adult, requires the teacher's confidence in their hard and soft skills. While early career teachers often acquire these skills during their education programs, mastery typically develops with classroom experience (Falloon,

2020). However, Sydnor (2019) notes that many novice teachers feel underprepared, as the complexity of teaching often exceeds the scope of their initial training. Whalen et al. (2019) emphasize that while early career teachers eventually develop the same competencies as experienced educators, mentorship plays a vital role in bridging the gaps that formal education alone cannot fill.

Strang's (1995) research underscores the importance of teaching competencies in achieving student learning outcomes and highlights the role of self-evaluation in professionals not consistently available; Strang's study rated their competencies in classroom management, discipline, and time management highly, though their self-assessments closely resembled those of more experienced colleagues. However, self-rating evaluations can be biased, as individuals tend to assess themselves favourably (Wheeler & Knoop, 1982). Despite this limitation, self-assessments remain a valuable tool for identifying areas for improvement in teacher education programs.

Continuous learning is essential for teacher competency development, as educators must adapt to new theories and practices over time (Falloon, 2020). Strang (1995) identified six competencies where expert teachers excelled compared to novices: lesson planning, setting expectations, interpreting classroom events, distinguishing essential information, and providing feedback. These findings highlight the importance of mentorship and ongoing professional development in fostering these advanced skills.

2.8.2 Mentorship and Professional Development

Research consistently highlights the importance of mentorship in supporting beginning teachers. Andersen and Olsen (2006) studied 15 novice teachers in California and identified four

key themes influencing professional growth: developmental stages, school context, collaboration opportunities, and the ability to experiment with new roles. Participants emphasized that teaching competencies develop with practice, experience, and proper guidance. Conversely, inadequate or misguided mentorship can lead to frustration (Sydnor, 2019).

Andersen and Olsen (2006) propose a "grow-your-own" professional development model, where universities provide continued support to graduates. This approach not only aids the teachers' transition into the profession but also fosters positive learning within schools, giving graduates a sense of leadership and purpose.

Specific to Canada, Kutsyuruba et al.'s (2018) pan-Canadian study emphasizes the importance of formal mentorship and induction programs to help combat early career teacher attrition. Kutsyuruba et al. (2019) then focused on the well-being of early career teachers, finding a positive correlation between informal and mixed methods mentorship with improved well-being; conversely, lower levels of well-being were reported without mentorship. Another of Kutsyuruba et al.'s (2019) pan-Canadian qualitative studies focused on the importance of early career teachers building a supportive relationship with peers and mentors to maintain their well-being.

Specific to Newfoundland and Labrador, Kutsyuruba (2014) highlights that although a new teacher induction support program was created in NL in 1998 because of a recognized need, it ended due to poor implementation. Kutsyuruba (2014) also found that a handbook was then provided for new and beginning teachers from the NLTA along with the option of a mentor; however, mentorship was not consistently available, and the onus was on the new teacher to take responsibility for requesting a mentor. With the expectations already placed on a new teacher, the uncertainty of starting a new role, and the confusion that comes with trying to get started,

adding another duty, with a potential barrier, to their long list is not a recipe for success. Kutsyuruba (2014) also found induction provisions in only two of the five school districts in NL at the time. Kutsyuruba et al. (2014) found that the handbook from the NLTA for new and beginning teachers held a section regarding a new teacher conference and mentoring opportunities offered in partnership with the Faculty of Education at MUN, which had an annual winter date. Kutsyuruba et al. (2014) also found that the NLTA addressed the need to inform mentors of their role with a nearly 40-page handbook. A thorough background of information was given on the benefits and challenges of mentoring, with the administrator's role being identified as being responsible for creating mentor/teacher relationships.

2.8.3 Teacher's Perceptions and Professional Self-Concept

Teachers' perceptions of their workplace significantly shape their experiences, influencing their effectiveness and long-term commitment to the profession (Collie et al., 2012). For early career teachers, these perceptions impact their confidence and optimism in their career choices (Strang, 1995). Manuel and Carter's (2016) study of 22 Australian teachers found that while many entered the profession with altruistic motivations, external challenges such as inadequate support often led to uncertainty about continuing in the field.

Whalen et al.'s (2019) Canadian study revealed similar findings, identifying lack of administrative support, difficulty navigating school culture, and insufficient mentorship as major stressors affecting teacher retention. These challenges, combined with unrealistic policies, create a significant disconnect between teachers' expectations and the realities of the profession. Stone's (2015) research further highlights this issue, noting that educational reform often fails without teacher buy-in. Teachers face rigorous standards, new assessments, and demands to integrate technology, which can lead to disenfranchisement when adequate support is lacking.

2.8.4 Challenges Faced by Early Career Teachers

Research studies on beginning teachers' perspectives show an initial enthusiasm that quickly turns into discouragement (Andersen & Olsen, 2006; Kutsyuruba, 2012; Manuel & Carter, 2016; Strang, 1995; Sydnor, 2014). Kutsyuruba's (2012) pan-Canadian study focused on retention strategies in individual provinces, most notably induction programs with a fundamental emphasis on mentorship. Significant challenges faced by novice teachers included isolation, reality shock, inadequate resources and support, lack of planning time and interaction with colleagues, challenging work assignments, unclear expectations, difficulties dealing with stress, and lack of orientation about the school system (Andrews & Quinn, 2004; Anhorn, 2008; Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Whalen et al., 2019). The research has found that novice teachers often lack support and guidance, contributing to the beginning teacher experiencing a "baptism by fire." (Kutsyuruba, 2012, p. 237).

Research has also identified a disconnect between teaching reality and policy. Stone's (2015) research focused on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, noting that educational reform will fail without their support. Stone's research identified that early career teachers often leave the profession due to the realities of teaching not matching the policies that governed the classroom, echoing Sydnor's (2014) and Manual and Carter's (2016) findings. According to Stone (2015), early career teachers struggle with inadequate support, time, and training, facing rigorous standards and new assessments while incorporating tech-based tools to differentiate instruction for each student. Teachers enter the profession with high motivation but become disenfranchised when facing insurmountable challenges.

Similar factors and a policy disconnect have been identified in this Province. Strang's (1995) research highlights that classroom and time management are significant stressors for

teachers, particularly novices. The study used a comparative rating rather than a quantitative scale to measure stress levels, raising questions about how to accurately quantify teachers' stress perceptions to identify problems and solutions effectively. Educational policy reformation and program creation require addressing quantifiable problems for better success rates.

In summary, research on teacher perceptions and competencies has helped provide insight into the issue of teacher attrition and burnout. These results help inform new programs, further research and suggested policy reform, all of which are aimed at improving the profession and increasing student outcomes. Strang (1995) and Whalen et al. (2019) looked at teacher stressors and their relationship to a teacher's perception of their workplace, while other research focused on early career teachers' perceptions as they relate to career optimism (Manual & Carter, 2016; Stone, 2015; Sydnor, 2014). Recommendations from many studies focused on teacher perception and competencies suggested the need for more formalized guidance through initiatives such as mentorship programs (Kutsyuruba, 2012; Whalen et al., 2019). Teacher perceptions are an invaluable source of information. Though they are personal recollections with biases, they remain a source of valuable insider information that can guide the research for meaningful solutions.

2.9 Summary

This literature review examined published and peer-reviewed research studies that explored various facets of teaching, teaching effectiveness and burnout. It investigated research related to teacher preparation, including interpersonal and legal preparation and soft and hard skills. The chapter also surveyed research on burnout among early career teachers, the effects of burnout, and how supports, teacher competencies and teacher perceptions played a role in the dynamics of compassion fatigue. These topics were explored about the research question of this

study, informing the creation of survey items and interview questions. The literature analysis indicated that teacher preparation significantly influences burnout trends among early-career teachers and early career attrition. Furthermore, the review revealed that burnout rates are positively correlated with early career teacher attrition and are on the rise, reminding us of the need for adequate support.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The preceding chapter provided a literature review in this field and identified gaps in current research. This chapter focuses on the research methods employed, including quantitative and qualitative approaches, to gather data from teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) through an online survey and phone interviews. These methods comprehensively examine the factors influencing teacher preparedness and its correlation with burnout. Employing quantitative and qualitative data collection methods provides a thorough and nuanced exploration of the research questions, offering more comprehensive insights into the experiences and perspectives of teachers, particularly in Newfoundland. Qualtrics was used to develop and analyze the online survey, and the semi-structured phone interviews were developed using Creswell's (2008) text. The interview data was analyzed using Saldana's (2021) coding manual. Newfoundland and Labrador was selected as the research setting due to the researcher’s location and affiliation with Memorial University, the only university in the province.

3.1 Purpose

This study evaluates the potential link between a lack of preparedness and the development of compassion fatigue in teachers, particularly among early career educators. Previous research has highlighted that early career teachers are especially vulnerable to these issues due to deficits in social support, coping strategies, self-efficacy, and soft skills (Mena et al., 2023; Naibaho et al., 2021; Strang, 1995; Taylor et al., 2017). Stressors and a perceived lack of competence significantly contribute to burnout, often leading to teacher attrition.

In response, some countries have implemented early career teacher induction programs, targeted professional development, and mentorship initiatives to improve teacher efficacy and retention (OECD, 2011; 2018). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

(OECD) emphasizes the importance of continuous training from pre-service to professional stages to mitigate these risks. This study aims to update our understanding of compassion fatigue among teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador, providing insights to inform educational policies, teacher training programs, and support systems to prepare educators better and reduce burnout.

3.2 Study Design

Creswell (2008) explains that a quantitative research approach aims to explain a relationship among variables, while a qualitative research approach aims to explore a problem in-depth to give a detailed understanding. By combining both approaches, Creswell (2008) maintains that the researcher will attain a "better understanding of a research problem than utilizing either quantitative or qualitative by itself" (p. 62). This mixed-methods (Creswell, 2008) research study employed participant interviews and a survey instrument to collect qualitative and quantitative data. A pragmatic approach was adopted, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to explore teacher preparedness and compassion fatigue. Thematic analysis and coding were employed to analyze the qualitative data, aiming to develop insights into participants' perspectives and to "construct predictive statements about the experiences of the individuals" (Creswell, 2008, p.61).

This pragmatic approach aligns with practical, real-world applicability and integrates various methods to understand the research topic comprehensively. The survey, attached as Appendix E, utilized a quantitatively scaled questionnaire alongside a qualitative section for comments. The study aimed to gather insights from teachers at various career stages, aligning with Cohen, Manion, and Morrison's (2018) assertion that studying different respondents at various points in time aids in investigating a topic of interest. The semi-structured interviews

consisted of open-ended questions, attached in Appendix F. Participants could choose to complete an online questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, or both. The questionnaire was administered using Qualtrics, while semi-structured interviews were conducted by phone. Data collected included demographic details, self-rated competency scales, and opinion-based questions. Data collection occurred multiple times throughout the school year, capturing perspectives during different periods of perceived stress. The data collection timeline spanned approximately six months, followed by four months of data analysis and review.

3.3 Ethics

The study obtained ethics approval for this study from the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). The study followed all ICEHR guidelines, with all relevant stipulations and approvals included in the Appendices to this document.

Participants were instructed not to provide identifying information in the qualitative survey section to ensure anonymity. Informed consent was obtained through explicit participant agreement using the Qualtrics survey form. The survey was designed to be simple, with short and easy instructions and a link for additional information. It featured minimal graphics and standard software, with specific instructions for each section to ensure clarity. The layout included explicit 'next' and 'submit' buttons, a confidentiality guarantee, and contact information for the researcher and their supervisor were provided. Participants could exit the survey at any time and skip questions.

The study used an informed consent form for the semi-structured interviews, sending it as a PDF for electronic signature, with participants also being given the option of signing and

sending a printed hard copy to the researcher's address. All data was anonymized, and participants could withdraw from the study up to two weeks after their interview.

Following policy PROG-309 (NLESD), approval for the project to be disseminated to NLESD employees was gained through submitting appropriate documents to the NLESD. Research instruments and approvals are presented in the appendices. The consent form provided detailed information about the research, including contact information, purpose, expectations, duration, withdrawal options, benefits and risks, confidentiality and anonymity guarantees, data use and storage, reporting and sharing of results, and contact information for questions. You can find the consent form in Appendix G. Participants signed and returned PDF copies of the informed consent form.

3.3.1 Sampling Method and Subject Recruitment

The study employed non-randomized purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2008), focusing on teachers in Newfoundland. This approach allowed the research to target individuals whose experiences were most likely relevant to the research objectives. Purposeful sampling is used in qualitative studies to help focus on a specific group, such as teachers (Creswell, 2008). Recruitment occurred through postings to a private teacher's NL Facebook group, emails sent to Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) teachers across the province and word of mouth (i.e. "snowball sampling"). According to the NLESD Annual Report for 2020-2021, there were 5,821 full and part-time teaching staff, with 1,845 substitute teachers, totalling a potential 7,666 subjects, with participants spanning early-career to veteran teachers. Early career teachers were those with five years or less of teaching experience. This group is important because research shows that teacher attrition is highest within the first five years of teaching, indicating a critical intervention period (Johnson, 2011; Clandinin et al., 2014; Raab, 2018).

Recruitment occurred twice, at the end of the 2021/2022 school year and in the middle of the 2022/2023 school year. Participants volunteered for the phone interview without monetary or material incentives. The online survey and phone interview format allowed participants to participate anywhere.

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1 Online Survey Instrument

The study developed survey questions using Strang's (1995) competency and teacher stressor scales as a conceptual framework. It aimed to capture qualitative and quantitative data to comprehensively analyze teacher stressors and competencies critical for success in classroom teaching and student development. The study based the survey items on items from previous studies (Strang, 1995; Anthony & DiPerna, 2017; Venegas-Muggli, 2020). The survey was divided into four parts:

- Part A: Four questions gathering personal demographic information;
- Part B: Six questions assessing teacher stressors;
- Part C: Ten questions evaluating teacher competencies.
- Part D: Eleven open-ended survey items

Teachers confirmed their consent by clicking "OK" at the beginning of the survey. The questionnaire featured multiple-choice, dichotomous, and Likert rating scale questions (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). It began with general queries, progressed to personal questions, and then moved to closed-ended rating scale questions before concluding with open-ended questions for qualitative insights. Clear instructions defined relevant terms, avoided complexity and negative phrasing, and included a comment section for qualitative input.

In summary, the survey instrument was designed to gather information on self-reported perceptions of teacher stressors and competencies through a well-sequenced combination of structured and open-ended questions. This approach ensured a thorough examination of potential factors that may influence teacher compassion fatigue identified by the relevant literature.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews over the phone at a time convenient for the participants. During these interviews, participants could voice any additional concerns about burnout not covered in the survey instrument to address potential researcher confirmation bias. The study analyzed the interview data alongside the questionnaire outcomes, incorporating any new themes from the interviews.

Following Creswell's (2008) best practices for phone interviews, the process included obtaining informed consent, introductory remarks to establish rapport, a structured interview path, and open-ended questions to encourage reflective responses. The researcher transcribed the responses, and the interviewer recorded all participant comments and personal remarks for coding using text segmenting to identify relevant themes.

The semi-structured interviews focused on open-ended reflective questions about compassion fatigue and preparedness for teaching. The questions were carefully chosen based on relevant literature (Strang, 1995; Taylor et al., 2019; Carroll et al., 2020; Naibaho et al., 2021) and reviewed by the research supervisor for professional relevance and appropriateness. This approach allowed participants to share their experiences, enriching the data set. The semi-structured interview questions can be found in Appendix H.

3.5 Qualitative Data Analysis: Two-Cycle Coding

The study analyzed qualitative data from the short answer questions in the online survey and the semi-structured interview questions using first and second-cycle coding methods (Saldana, 2021). To ensure confidentiality, the data was transcribed and anonymized.

First Cycle: In-Vivo Coding: The first coding cycle utilized the *In-Vivo* method, which involves coding the data by closely examining participants' words to capture the essence of their experiences (Saldana, 2021). This method is particularly suitable for capturing the nuances and richness of participants' responses.

Second Cycle: Focused or Pattern Coding: The study employed the Focused or Pattern Coding method in the second cycle. This approach allowed the categorization of previously coded data into broader themes or patterns (Saldana, 2021). Refining and condensing the data made identifying recurring patterns and overarching concepts easier. Organizing the data this way facilitated drawing more explicit connections between different pieces of information, resulting in a deeper understanding of the key themes and insights that emerged.

These coding methods align with Creswell's (2008) approach to qualitative data analysis, where identifying and interpreting themes is central to developing meaningful insights. Additionally, they help the researcher build meaning using participants' words and ideas as the data (Charmaz, 2006). Using *in-vivo* coding, the researcher captures participants' meanings and perspectives expressed in their own words (Saldana, 2021). By employing these coding methods, this study aims to develop a nuanced understanding of teacher burnout, drawing on the experiences and perspectives of educators. Further details on the coding process are provided in the findings chapter.

3.6 Validity/Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985), supported by Adler (2022), outline key criteria for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reflexivity. Credibility was enhanced in this study through multiple forms of triangulation:

1. Investigator triangulation: The research supervisor reviewed the data analysis to provide an additional perspective and reduce potential bias;
2. Data triangulation: Multiple data sources were collected over ten months, ensuring findings are not based on a single point in time; and,
3. Methodological triangulation: Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, allowing for diverse approaches to answering the research question.

Transferability was ensured by providing thick, meaningful descriptions, allowing readers to understand the context and relate the findings to other research settings (Drisko, 2024). The study demonstrates dependability and confirmability by transparently describing research steps throughout the thesis. This detailed account of the methodology aligns with accepted standards and allows others to verify the research process.

The researcher addresses reflexivity by being aware of their conceptual lens and values, engaging in discussions with the research supervisor, using careful coding procedures, and member-checking. The research design was appropriate for addressing the research question and hypothesis, with research questions based on relevant literature and a purposive sampling method selected to generate rich, thick qualitative data.

The use of Qualtrics for data collection and analysis, along with *In-Vivo* coding, further enhanced trustworthiness. *In-Vivo* coding, a qualitative technique where researchers use participants' words or phrases (Saldana, 2021) to label data segments, ensures that the data is represented accurately and authentically. The study adhered to ethical guidelines by receiving ethical approval through ICEHR, demonstrating a rigorous and ethical approach to research.

Additionally, member checking was employed during the phone interviews, allowing participants to review and confirm their responses, further ensuring accuracy and trustworthiness.

3.7 Limitations

The sample size, with 132 participants in the online survey and six in the phone interview survey, was small relative to the population of Newfoundland and Labrador's 5,395 teachers as of the 2022-2023 school year. Response bias is another possible limitation, as participants with strong opinions may be more likely to respond, potentially skewing the results (Elston, 2021). There is also the possibility of selection bias, as individuals who choose to participate may have distinctive characteristics or experiences compared to those who do not (Collier & Mahoney, 1996). For example, individuals who have left the profession were not part of the broader population of individuals currently teaching in the province during the 2022-2023 school year, and these former teachers may have differed in key characteristics related to compassion fatigue.

Recall bias is also a concern, as participants may not have accurately remembered their teacher preparation experiences. Furthermore, in phone interviews, interviewer bias may have influenced responses through the phrasing of questions or the interviewer's tone (Chandler & Munday, 2020). To mitigate this bias, the interviewer triangulated with the supervisor to increase the validity of the survey tool.

Finally, qualitative analysis is subjective, as interpretation can introduce bias. To address this, the study used in-vivo coding, triangulation with the supervisor, and member checking to ensure the rigour and accuracy of data analysis**.**

3.8 Summary

In conclusion, this methodology chapter provides a concise overview of the study's purpose, research paradigm, ethical considerations, study design, data analysis methods, trustworthiness measures, and limitations. The research was conducted as a descriptive study incorporating qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative component included a semi-structured interview and a short-answer section in the online survey, while the quantitative component utilized competency and stressor rating scaled survey items—the combination of qualitative and quantitative data analysis allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the research question. The sample comprised all certified teachers with access to either a professional NLESD email or a private NL teacher's group on Facebook. Data was collected and analyzed using Qualtrics for the online survey and *in-vivo* and pattern coding for the qualitative aspects to identify relevant broader themes. ICEHR granted ethical approval, with additional approval from the NLESD. To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed triangulation, including seeking input from the research supervisor, using multiple data sources and research methods, and employing trusted software for quantitative analysis. Study limitations may include potential researcher bias, recall bias in participant self-reports, response bias, selection bias, interviewer bias in the phone interview portion, and subjectivity in qualitative analysis, which may affect the validity of study findings. Additionally, challenges included small sample size, time constraints with data collection at two points in the year, and qualitative analysis's inherent subjectivity.

Chapter 4: Findings from Quantitative Data

This chapter overviews online survey results and participant data. Qualtrics software was used to analyze the data from the online survey. The analysis aims to explore the complexity of participants' responses and present the data comprehensively. Categorical information such as training level, years of teaching, gender, teaching setting, and grade level taught is discussed, along with self-rated teaching competencies and teacher stressors.

4.1 Quantitative Findings (Online Survey: Parts A, B & C)

The online survey is comprised of four parts. The first three parts collect quantitative data; the last part (Part D) is a qualitative open-ended question section and will be represented in section 4.2. Part A collects demographic information about participants, Part B collects information on how teachers perceive their own teaching competencies, and Part C collects information on teacher stressors.

4.1.1 Part A – Participant Backgrounds

132 respondents completed the online questionnaire. In Part A of the online survey, respondents provided information on their training level, years of teaching experience, gender, teaching setting (urban or rural), and current grade level taught. Notably, 23.53% (n=72) of respondents reported holding a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree, while 20.49% (n=27) were early-career teachers with 0-5 years of teaching experience. Most respondents were female (80.33%, n=98), and there was a relatively balanced representation of urban (58.68%, n=71) and rural (41.32%, n=50) teaching settings. Participants were equally distributed across all grade levels.

Participants reported having completed various degrees and educational qualifications. The most common degree was a Master of Education degree, accounting for 23.53% (n=72) of responses. Other reported degrees included a certificate in STEM (0.33%, n=1), Bachelor of Physical Education (0.99%, n=3), Bachelor of Commerce (0.33%, n=1), Bachelor of Therapeutic Recreation (0.33%, n=1), Music Education (1.98%, n=6), Bachelor of Fine Arts (0.99%, n=3), Certificate Program in Library Studies (0.33%, n=1), Ph.D. ABD (0.33%, n=1), Bachelor of Recreation (0.33%, n=1), Master of Arts (0.66%, n=2), and Certificate in Criminology (0.33%, n=1) and a Master of Science (0.33%, n=1).

In terms of teaching experience, 20.49% (n=25) of respondents had 0-5 years of experience, 24.59% (n=30) had 6-10 years, 13.93% (n=17) had 11-15 years, and 40.98% (n=50) had 15+ years. While the majority had over 15 years of experience, there was also significant representation from early-career teachers.

Regarding gender, 18.03% (n=22) of participants were male, 80.33% (n=98) were female, 0.82% (n=1) were non-binary/third gender, and 0.82% (n=1) preferred not to say. Regarding teaching settings, 41.32% (n=50) taught in rural areas, while 58.68% (n=71) taught in urban settings. This distribution reflects the broad geographical reach of the electronic survey, capturing perspectives from both urban and rural educators.

Participants in the online survey were evenly distributed across grade levels, with 51 participants teaching Primary (25.12%), 53 participants teaching Elementary (26.11%), 49 participants teaching Junior High (24.14%), and 50 participants teaching High School (24.63%). These numbers total 203; however, only 132 participants responded to questions. Upon further investigation, several participants were teaching two grade levels and chose both, equaling the higher number.

Twenty-five early career teachers responded to Part A. Most participants hold degrees that focus on primary and elementary education, including four individuals with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary), two with a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary), and three with additional specializations, such as Bachelor of Special Education or a Bachelor of Science. Others have qualifications tailored to secondary education, with four participants holding a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and several combining secondary education with disciplines such as science, physical education, or special education. A smaller subset includes qualifications in post-secondary education, therapeutic recreation, or advanced certifications in STEM fields. The gender distribution reflects a majority of female participants (20), alongside three males, one identifying as third gender, and one preferring not to disclose. Geographically, the sample includes both rural (11) and urban (14) participants, with teaching levels spanning primary, elementary, junior high, and high school. This diverse educational and demographic profile provides a rich foundation for exploring the research questions.

4.1.2 Part B – Competencies, Skills, and Dispositions

In Part B of the online survey, respondents assessed their perceived skill level for various teaching competencies using a Likert Scale ranging from Poor to Fair, Satisfactory, Good, and Excellent. Notably, no part of the survey was mandatory; therefore, participants could exit at will, leaving this section with an overall response average of 64.6 participants per section compared to the 132 total participants for Part A. Within each competency section, there were multiple items for participants to respond to, none of which were mandatory; therefore, response rates for each item varied. There were 24 items for Classroom Competencies, 12 for Government

Expectations, 8 for Professional Dispositions, 18 for Technology, and 15 for Teaching Theory and Practice.

Survey Item 1: Classroom Competencies

Out of the 24 items, the Classroom Competencies section had an average response count of 64. Item 1 of the survey assessed participants' perceived effectiveness in classroom competencies. The first set of competencies focused on Classroom Competencies, with most participants rating their skills as Good or Excellent. The top five categories ranked as Excellent, along with their corresponding percentages, were as follows:

- Emphasizing the ability to be open: 53.85% (n=35)
- Emphasizing the ability to be flexible: 52.31% (n=34)
- Communicating classroom expectations: 49.23% (n=32)
- Embodying professionalism: 48.44% (n=31)
- Bringing fair and positive classroom expectations: 44.62% (n=29)
- Recognizing classroom conflict: 44.62% (n=29)

These responses indicate that teachers feel most competent in soft skills such as communication, conflict recognition, and professionalism. Over half of the respondents rated their ability to be open and flexible as excellent, suggesting their confidence in adapting to change. Most responses fell within the reasonable range, particularly in communication competencies related to discipline, students, and parents.

Participants also identified areas where they felt less confident. The four categories rated as Poor, along with their corresponding percentages, were:

- Having adequate administrative support to manage classroom conflict: 10.94% (n=7)
- Having adequate resources to manage classroom conflict: 4.62% (n=3)

- Implementing methods to reduce disturbances: 3.08% (n=2)
- Knowing fair and effective discipline: 3.08% (n=2)

While these ratings were lower than the Excellent categories, they highlight areas where teachers perceive a need for improvement, particularly in classroom management, cooperation, and the availability of resources and support.

Survey Item 2: Government Expectations

Out of the 12 items, there was an average response count of 65 for the Government Expectations section. This item focused on teachers' perceptions of government expectations, encompassing demands from the Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD). The government funds teachers' salaries as public servants, and teachers must meet the expectations set by these governing bodies. Ratings ranged from Poor to Excellent, with fewer Excellent ratings than in Classroom Competencies. Teachers felt less competent in their knowledge of government expectations than classroom competencies. The top three competencies rated as Excellent were:

- Meeting professional responsibilities: 41.54% (n=27)
- Understanding the code of ethics: 40.00% (n=26)
- Following school district policies, procedures, and curricula: 36.92% (n=25)

These ratings indicate teachers' confidence in meeting professional standards, understanding ethical codes, and adhering to district guidelines. In contrast, the lowest-rated competencies in the Poor category were:

- Knowing whom to contact regarding conflicts with the administration: 12.31% (n=8)
- Knowing available supports: 10.77% (n=7)

- Understanding union rights: 7.69% (n=5)
- Understanding union duties: 7.69%) (n=5)

These responses reveal that surveyed teachers perceived a lack of competence in accessing support and understanding union roles.

The survey data provides insights into teachers' understanding of legislation and professional responsibilities. Respondents rated their knowledge on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent). The survey covered relevant laws, sexual harassment policies, physical abuse policies, union rights, the code of ethics, union duties, collective agreement rights, conflict resolution, and available support. Overall, respondents rated their understanding as Good or Excellent for most questions. However, understanding relevant laws and policies on physical abuse and knowing whom to contact for conflicts with the administration received lower ratings.

Survey Item 3: Professional Dispositions

Out of 8 items, the average response count was 65 for the Professional Dispositions section. This item assessed teachers' professional dispositions, including their tendencies to act and think in specific ways (Tiilikainen, Toom, Lepola, & Husu, 2019). The scale ranged from Poor to Excellent, with most responses falling in the Excellent to Good range. The top three dispositions rated as Excellent were:

- Respect for staff and students: 72.31% (n=47)
- Maintaining professionalism: 57.81% (n=37)
- Maintaining healthy relationships with the administration: 43.08% (n=28)

This data indicates that teachers feel most competent in respecting staff and students, maintaining professionalism, and fostering healthy relationships with the administration. The

highest-rated competency in the Poor category was 'Maintaining a healthy work/life balance (24.62%), suggesting that teachers feel less competent about their ability to achieve such a balance.

The survey covered diverse topics, including professionalism, respect, effective communication with administration, and colleague relationships. Teachers rated themselves highly in respect, professionalism, and relationships with administration but indicated a need for improvement in maintaining a work/life balance.

Survey Item 4: Technology

Out of 18 items, the Technology section had an average response count of 64. Survey item four assessed teachers' competencies in technology, with ratings ranging from Poor to Excellent. Overall, respondents rated their understanding of educational technology favourably, most falling between Satisfactory (3) and Good (4). The highest-rated competencies for excellence were:

- Understanding how to deliver instruction through technology: 44.44% (n=28)
- Understanding how to use educational technology: 40.00% (n=26)

In contrast, the competencies rated lowest in the Poor category were:

- Having access to technology support: 7.69% (n=5)
- Understanding how to use best practices to instruct in a blended environment: 7.69% (n=5)
- Understanding new and emerging technologies: 4.62% (n=3)
- Understanding how to troubleshoot issues with educational technology: 4.62% (n=3)

The survey covered topics such as delivering instruction through technology, troubleshooting technical issues, engaging students, virtual and blended learning, and

accommodating student needs. The highest ratings were for engaging lessons, and the lowest were for understanding how technology delivers instruction. While teachers feel confident in giving instruction and using educational technology, they feel less competent in accessing support, using best practices in a blended environment, troubleshooting issues, and keeping up with emerging technologies.

Survey Item 5: Teaching Theory and Practice

Out of 15 items, there was an average response count of 65 for the Teaching Theory and Practice section. Survey item five evaluated teachers' competencies in Teaching Theory and Practice using ratings ranging from Poor to Excellent. Most ratings fell into the Good category, with a few notable Poor ratings. Teachers rated their ability in 15 areas, including understanding motivation strategies, implementing inclusive classroom strategies, and planning practical lessons:

- Understanding motivation strategies: 67.19% (n=43)
- Identifying supports to implement varied instruction: 64.62% (n=42)
- Recognizing students who require instructional intervention: 58.46% (n=38)

However, the competencies with the lowest ratings in the Poor category were:

- Establishing boundaries between planning at work and planning at home: 27.69% (n=18)
- Develop engaging lessons: 23.08% (n=15)

Respondents rated their understanding as satisfactory to good in most areas, with the highest ratings in lesson engagement and planning. However, the survey highlights areas needing more support, particularly in implementing inclusive classroom strategies, having adequate time to develop engaging lessons, and establishing boundaries between work and home planning.

4.1.3 Part C – Teacher Stressor Rating Scale

Survey items in this section asked participants to provide ratings for twelve stressors on a scale from 1 to 9, where 9 represents the highest stress level, and 1 represents the lowest. These stressors cover various aspects of teaching, including student misconduct, inadequate resources, time management, health management, staff relationships, classroom management, understanding relevant professional legislation, union support, parent communication, discipline implementation, and work-life balance. Based on Strang's (1995) research on student-teacher self-rated stressors, this study selected and adapted these stressors to reflect challenges faced by modern teachers (Barber, Walters & Chartier, 2022; Bell, Wilcoxen, Steiner, 2022; Bush, 2019; Albaba, 2017).

Mean ratings ranged from 3.06 to 7.23, with the highest stressor being "managing work-life balance" and the lowest-rated stressor being "understanding professional legislation." The top three stressors rated by all participants were:

- 'Managing work-life balance' (mean of 7.23),
- 'Managing health and energy' (mean of 6.89), and
- 'Time management' (mean of 6.21).

The lowest stressors rated by participants were:

- 'Understanding professional legislation' (mean of 3.06),
- 'Understanding union supports' (mean of 3.33),
- and 'Poor staff relationships' (mean of 3.75).

There were 10 participants who identified as early career teachers who responded to the teacher stressor scale. Among those 10 participants, 5 participants (50%) worked in a Rural setting, and 5 participants (50%) worked in an Urban setting. Among those 10 participants, two

were teaching Primary, 1 participant was teaching Elementary only, 2 participants were teaching Elementary/Junior High, 1 participant was teaching Junior High only, 2 participants were teaching Junior High/High School, and 2 participants were teaching High School only. The highest stressors rated by the early career teachers were:

- 'Managing work-life balance' (mean of 8.1),
- 'Managing my health and energy' (mean of 6.7),
- 'Student Misconduct' (mean of 5.7)

The lowest stressors rated by early career teachers were:

- 'Understanding professional legislation' (mean of 2),
- 'Understanding union supports' (mean of 2.6),
- 'Poor staff relationships' (2.8)

These findings suggest that teachers face the most significant stressors in effectively balancing their work and personal lives, managing their health and energy levels, and managing their time efficiently. For early career teachers, balancing their work and personal lives and managing their health and energy levels were significant stressors. However, student misconduct was a more significant stressor than time management. In contrast, both sets of teachers experienced lower stress levels regarding understanding professional legislation, union support, and maintaining positive staff relationships. To make an interesting note, early career teachers rated these stressors lower than their more experienced counterparts. Participants in the interview portion noted that understanding professional legislation and union support were things they could look for if needed, whereas managing work-life balance was a daily occurrence. Therefore, teachers view chronic stressors like managing work-life balance as more significant than acute stressors like issues dealing with professional legislation or union support.

Table 1.

The twelve stressors with mean, standard deviation, and count.

#	Field	Mean	Standard Deviation	Count
1	Student misconduct	5.70	2.12	63
2	Inadequate classroom resources	4.98	2.56	64
3	Inadequate professional resources	5.31	2.25	62
4	Time management	6.21	2.07	63
5	Managing my health and energy	6.89	1.83	64
6	Poor staff relationships	3.75	2.54	55
7	Classroom management	3.82	2.26	62
8	Understanding professional legislation	3.06	1.99	52
9	Understanding union supports	3.33	2.15	55
10	Parent communication	4.64	2.31	61
11	Implementing discipline	4.16	2.03	62
12	Managing my work and life balance	7.23	2.10	64

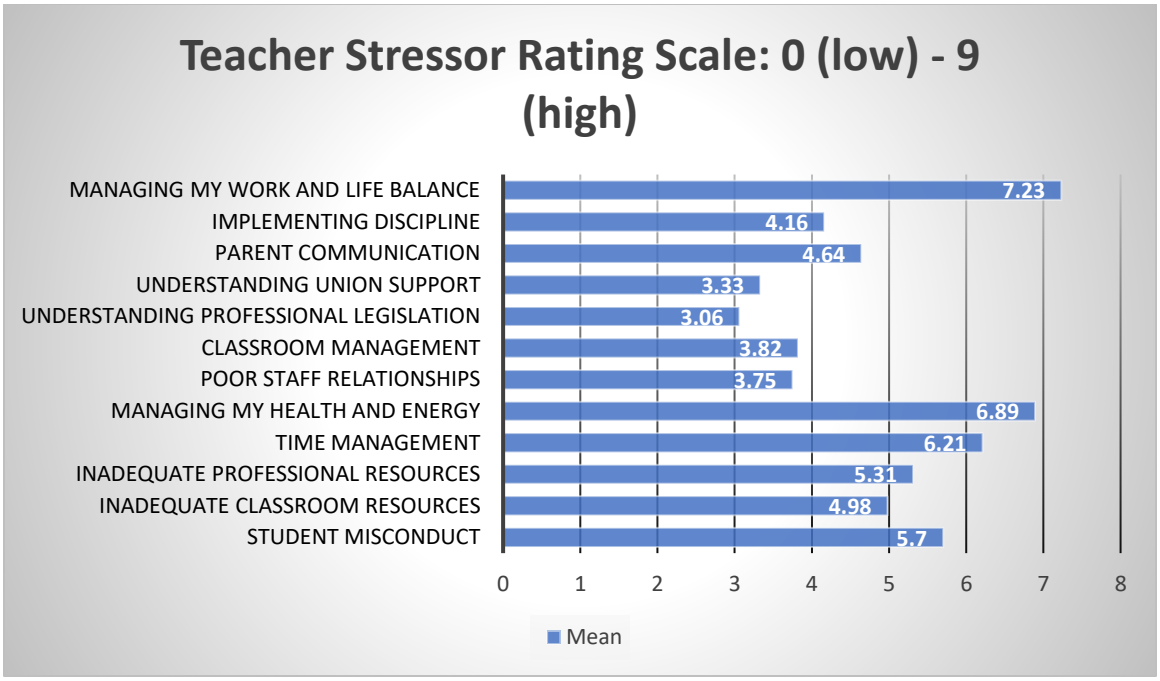


Figure 2. *Teacher stressor ratings: top three and bottom three.*

4.2 Summary

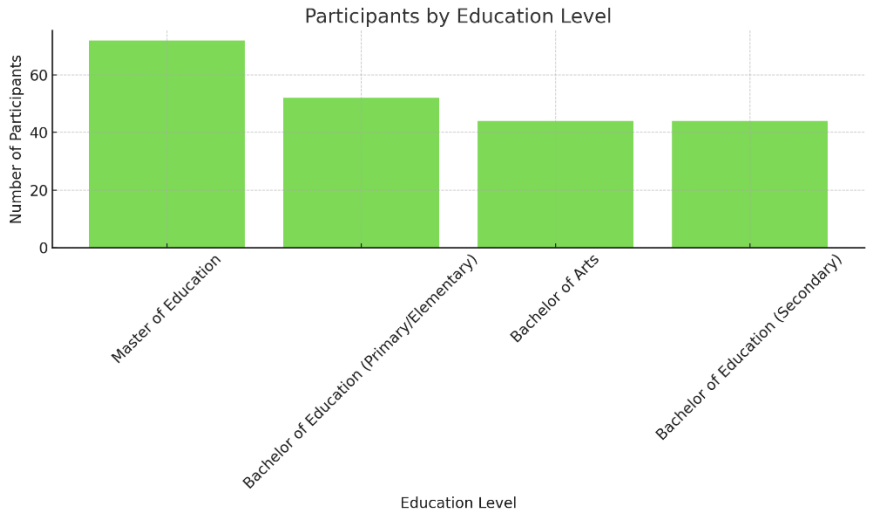


Figure 3. *Participants by Education Level.*

The quantitative portion of the online survey included 132 participants. Most participants held a Master of Education (n = 72, 23.53%), followed by a Bachelor of Education

(Primary/Elementary) (n = 52, 16.99%), Bachelor of Arts (n = 44, 14.83%), and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) (n = 44, 14.83%).

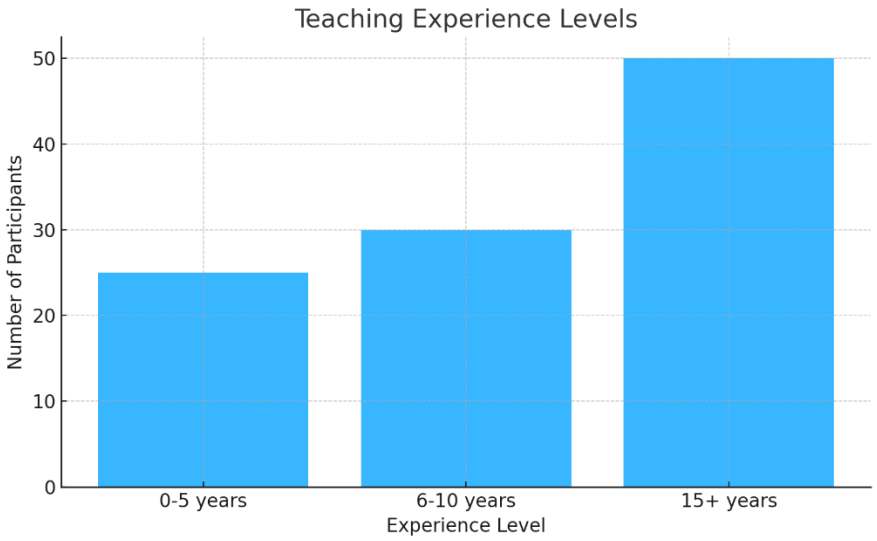


Figure 4. *Teaching Experience Levels.*

Regarding teaching experience, the majority had been teaching for over 15 years (n = 50, 40.98%), followed by those with 6–10 years (n = 30, 24.59%) and 0–5 years (n = 25, 20.49%).

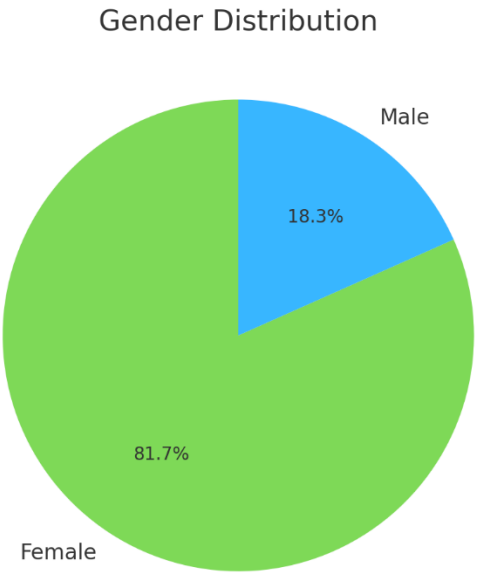


Figure 5. *Gender Distribution.*

Most participants were female (n = 98, 80.33%), with males comprising a smaller portion (n = 22, 18.03%).

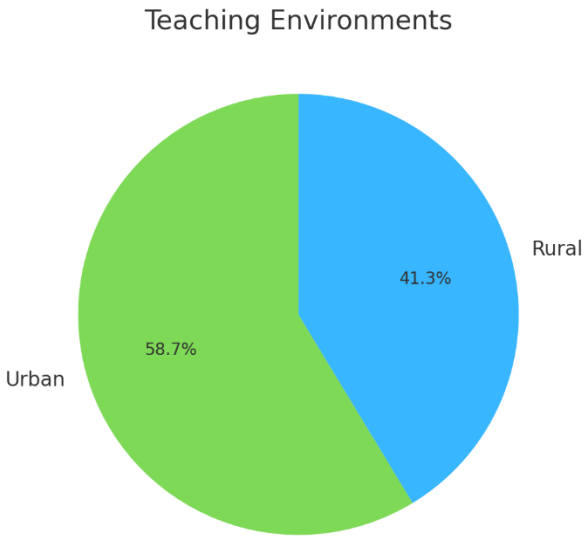


Figure 6. *Teaching Environments.*

Most participants taught in urban environments (n = 71, 58.68%), while the rest worked in rural settings (n = 50, 41.32%).

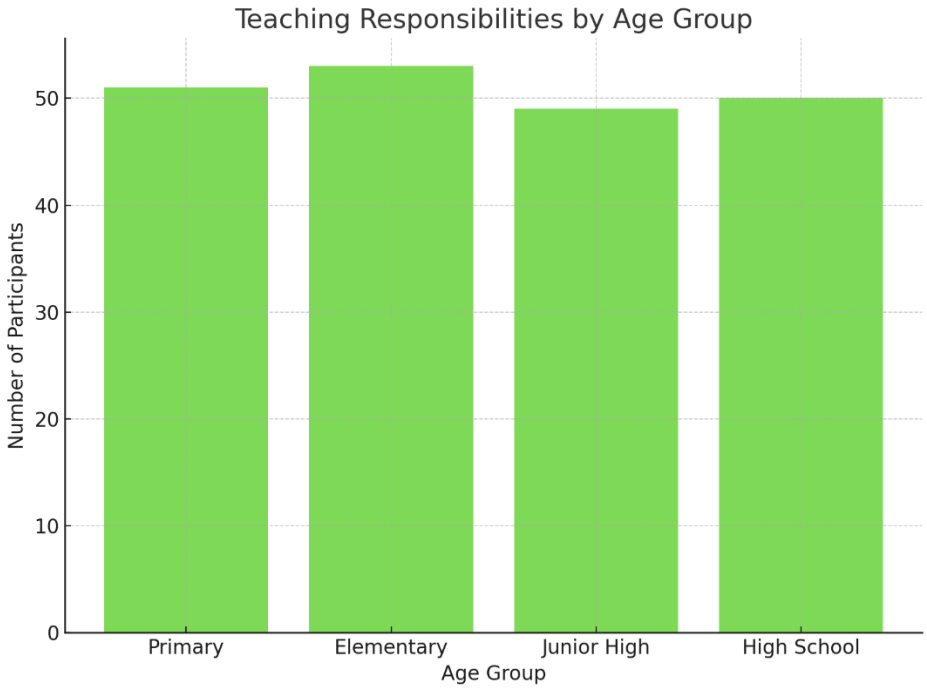


Figure 7. *Teaching Responsibilities by Age Group.*

Teaching responsibilities were relatively evenly distributed across age groups: Primary (n = 51, 25.12%), Elementary (n = 53, 26.11%), Junior High (n = 49, 24.14%), and High School (n = 50, 24.63%).

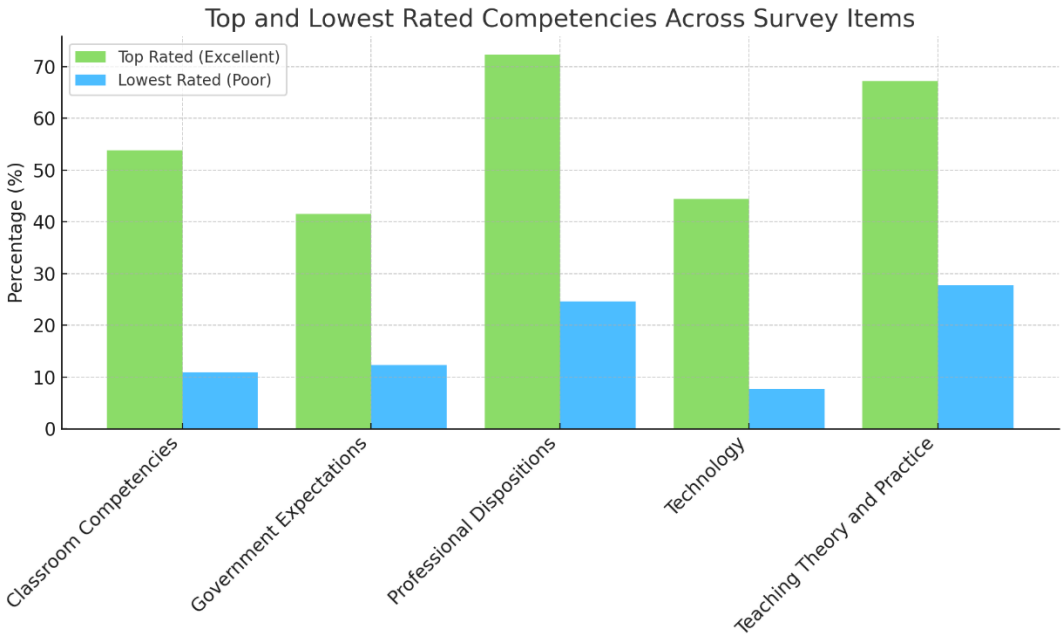


Figure 8. *Top and Lowest Rated Competencies Across Survey Items.*

On a 5-point scale (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent), most participants rated their classroom competencies as *Good (4)*. Similarly, they rated their ability to meet Government Expectations as *Good (4)*, their disposition as *Excellent (5)*, their knowledge/use of technology as *Good (4)*, and their grasp of theory and practice as *Good (4)*. The top-rated (Excellent) competencies were 'Emphasizing the ability to be open' (53.85%, n=35) within Classroom Competencies, 'Meeting professional responsibilities' (41.54%, n=27) in Government Expectations, 'Respect for staff and students' (73.31%, n=47) in Professional Disposition, 'Understanding how to deliver instruction through technology' (44.44%, n=43) in Technology, and 'Understanding motivation strategies' (67.19%, n=43) in Teaching Theory and Practice. With the lowest rated (Poor) competencies being 'Having adequate administrative support to manage classroom conflict' (10.94%, n=7) in Classroom Competencies, 'Knowing whom to contact regarding conflicts with the administration' (12.31%, n=8) in Government Expectations, 'Maintaining a healthy work-life balance' (24.62%, n=16) in Professional Disposition, 'Having access to technology support'

(7.69%, n=5) in Technology and ‘Establishing boundaries between planning at work and planning at home’ (27.69%, n=18) in Teaching Theory and Practice.

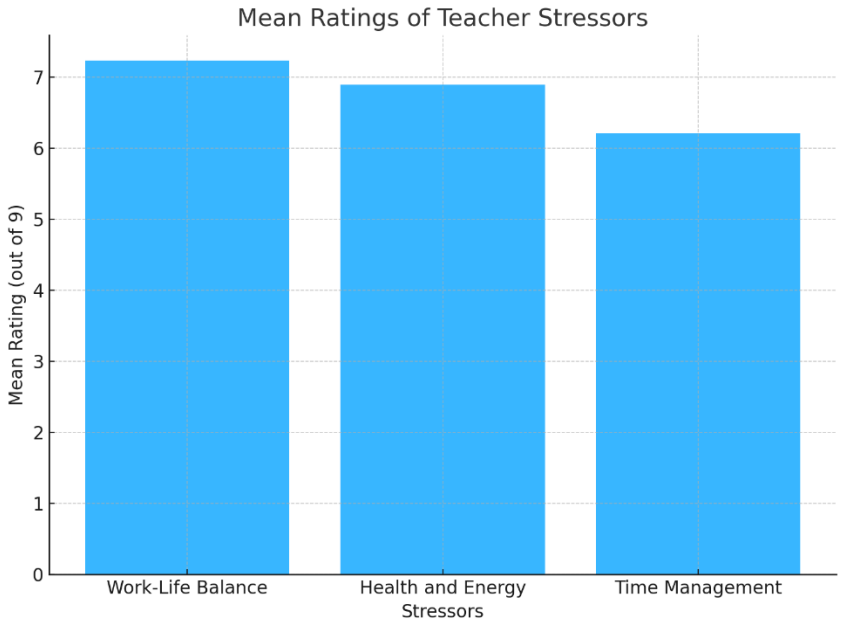


Figure 9. *Mean Ratings of Teacher Stressors.*

Regarding teacher stressors, managing work-life balance emerged as the highest-rated concern (mean = 7.23/9), followed by managing health and energy (mean = 6.89/9) and time management (mean = 6.21/9).

Out of 25 participants (19%) who identified as early career teachers, 10 participants (13.2%) responded to Part C: Teacher Stressors. Within their responses, they noted their top three stressors to be managing their work/life balance (mean=8/9), managing their health and energy (mean=6.7/9) and student misconduct (mean=5.7/9).

The quantitative survey included 132 participants, with the majority holding a Master of Education and most teaching in urban environments. Participants were predominantly experienced teachers, with over 40% having more than 15 years of experience, and the majority

identified as female. Teaching responsibilities were evenly distributed across Primary, Elementary, Junior High, and High School levels.

Competency ratings revealed strengths in professional disposition, openness, and instructional strategies using technology. However, areas of concern included administrative support, work-life balance, and access to technology resources. Managing work-life balance was the highest-rated stressor overall, particularly among early career teachers, who also highlighted health and energy management as key challenges. These insights underscore the systemic pressures faced by teachers while also identifying core competencies that support their professional roles.

Chapter 5: Findings from Qualitative Data

This chapter overviews the qualitative data from the online survey and the interviews. The in vivo coding method analyzed these results and genuinely represented the participant's words. Themes found through a two-cycle coding method will be presented to help clarify points raised by participants.

5.1 Qualitative Findings (Online Survey: Part D)

The online survey instrument contained eleven short, open-ended questions. On average, 46 of the 132 participants (35%) responded to the open-ended question section, with many survey respondents choosing not to engage with this part. Of the early career teachers (n=27, 20.49%), six early career teachers (5%) responded to the open-ended questions. Of these six early career teachers, there was an even split of 3 teachers (50%) working in an Urban setting and three teachers (50%) working in a Rural setting. There was 1 participant (17%) teaching Primary, 1 participant (17%) teaching Elementary/Jr. High, 1 participant (17%) taught junior high only, 1 participant (17%) taught junior high/high school, and 2 participants (33%) taught high school only. There were four female participants (67%), and two were male (33%). The study obtained these responses using Qualtrics. The study summarized, categorized, and analyzed the responses using in-vivo and focused codes. A summary of responses to each open-ended survey item follows.

5.1.1 - In your opinion, what factors contribute to compassion fatigue or teacher burnout?

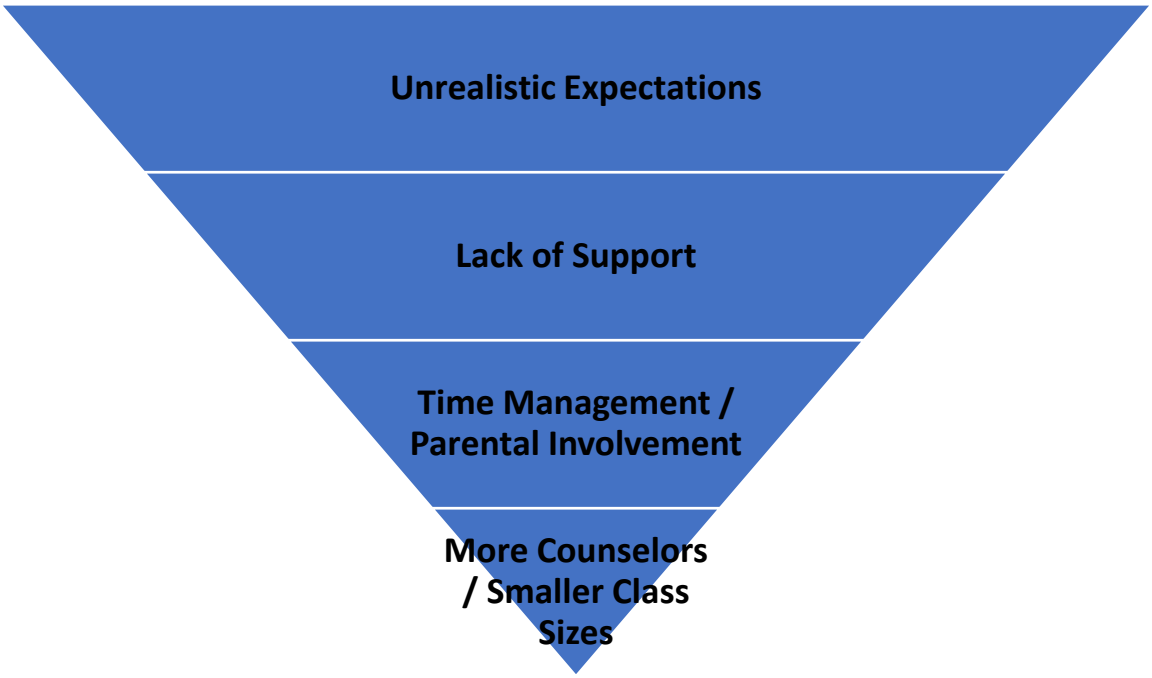


Figure 10. *Compassion fatigue responses identified six top factors.*

There were 51 respondents to this question. The top six factors contributing to compassion fatigue or burnout, as identified by all respondents, include the unrealistic expectations placed on teachers (18.5%, n=28), a lack of support (10.6%, n=16), challenges related to time management and parental involvement (i.e. both with 7.3%, n=11), the need for more counsellors, and a need for smaller class sizes (6.6%, n=10). Workload emerged as the most common theme, with participants citing issues such as dense curriculums, large class sizes, and unrealistic stakeholder expectations. Participant responses also highlighted challenges related to time management, the stress of managing COVID-19 restrictions, and student absenteeism. Additionally, setting personal boundaries and maintaining a work-life balance were frequently mentioned. The ongoing addition of new responsibilities by the Department of Education was also noted as a significant contributor to stress. Overall, the findings suggest that

the difficulties teachers face require a comprehensive approach that prioritizes their well-being and acknowledges the complexity of their work.

Early career teachers (n=6, 12%) identified several factors contributing to compassion fatigue and teacher burnout. These included a lack of recognition and appreciation for their efforts, insufficient administrative support in addressing significant issues such as resource allocation and student behaviour, and large class sizes without adequate resources. Teachers also highlighted the absence of sufficient classroom support, limited time for rest and holidays, and unrealistic workloads due to minimal or nonexistent preparation periods, often requiring them to cover internal duties during their prep time. Additionally, teachers noted the challenge of maintaining boundaries between personal and professional life, such as responding to work emails at home, and the lack of time to design and differentiate engaging lessons for their students. These systemic issues collectively contribute to the high stress and emotional fatigue experienced in teaching.

5.1.2 - In your opinion, what could be done to reduce compassion fatigue?

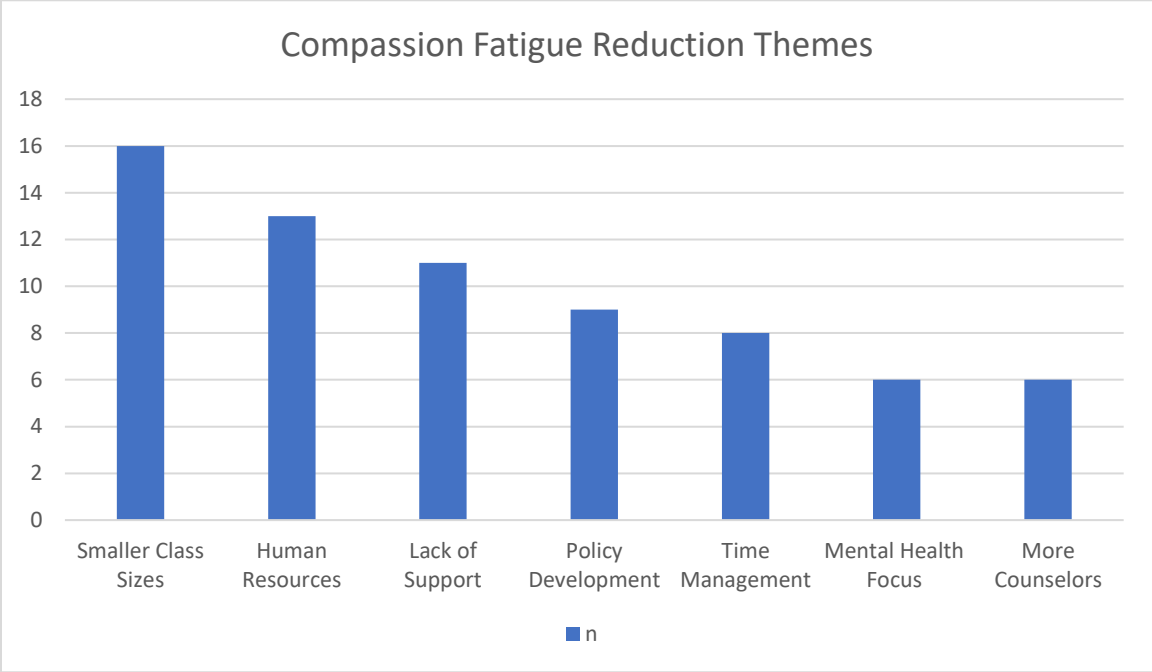


Figure 11. *Compassion Fatigue Reduction Themes.*

There were 49 respondents to this question. To reduce compassion fatigue, participants suggested providing more support and resources to teachers, such as additional planning time, classroom support, and human resources for classroom management and cleaning. They also expressed a desire for more opportunities for Socio-Emotional Learning and creativity, with less emphasis on dense curricula. Respondents also recommended smaller class sizes and a more significant role for society and parents in teaching their children skills like resilience and empathy. They emphasized the importance of mental health and self-care, teacher autonomy, respect for their expertise, and placing greater responsibility for learning on students. Participants also suggested providing additional help in the classroom, such as removing non-teaching duties and increasing accountability for students and parents. The findings indicate that teachers believe

recognizing and valuing their efforts and reducing their workload are crucial in reducing compassion fatigue.

5.1.3. As a new graduate, did your teaching practicum provide enough practical experience to prepare you for the real classroom?

There were 50 respondents to this question. With survey responses from 50 participants regarding the adequacy of their practicum in preparing them for real-world teaching, 64% (n=32) felt inadequately prepared, 22% (n=11) felt adequately prepared, 6% (n=3) had mixed feelings, 6% (n=3) could not recall, and 2% (n=1) did not respond. Some participants noted that their practicum, heavily focused on theoretical situations, took place under different circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While many participants found the practicum beneficial, they also expressed a need for additional training in certain areas. Recommendations included providing new educators with practicum experiences across multiple grade levels, providing more real-world classroom experiences for teacher candidates, and establishing a transitional period with a mentor during the early years of teaching. Participants highlighted the need for preparation in virtual education, managing student behaviours (e.g. physically abusive behaviours) and needs, and adapting to differences between rural and urban environments. Some felt frustrated by the lack of preparation provided by their teacher-training programs and suggested that more opportunities should be provided for interaction and learning within the school environment. Others suggested that their teacher preparation program focus more on practical skills and techniques for successful teaching, including teaching students with special needs and managing instructional tools/equipment.

Additionally, participants suggested offering seminars on teacher rights and the role of teacher associations, such as the NLTA in Newfoundland and Labrador. They suggested that these seminars could help new teachers understand their rights within the union and facilitate their transition into the teaching profession.

5.1.4. As a new graduate, did you feel you were competently prepared to balance life and work? Why, or why not?

There were 50 respondents to this question. Most respondents felt unprepared to balance life and work as new graduates. Out of 50 responses, 68% (n=34) felt unprepared, 24% (n=12) felt prepared, and 8% (n=4) indicated that the question did not apply to their situation. The data underscores the complexity of work-life balance in teaching, highlighting the need for ongoing support.

Many participants described feeling overwhelmed by work and lacking resources or support (n=7). Some reported sacrificing personal time and family responsibilities to meet job demands. Balancing work and life as an early-career teacher requires time, knowledge, and support from colleagues and administration. Those who felt equipped to balance work and life often attributed their ability to manage this balance to experiential learning (n=5) achieved through life experience.

This data aligns with the teacher stressor rating scale, where teachers rate their highest stressor as their inability to manage work and life balance (mean of 7.23 out of 9), energy, health (mean of 6.89), and time management (mean of 6.21). Participants shared experiences and challenges related to work-life balance, with some (n=3) suggesting a system for sharing existing resources created by veteran colleagues.

Several participants (n=5) reported that their experiences before the teaching program helped them balance work and personal life. Others (n=5) mentioned that they had to learn everything on the job, emphasizing that the mental demands of teaching are impossible to prepare for fully. Many developed strategies for work-life balance only after gaining experience, suggesting a gap between the preparation provided by teacher-training programs and lessons learned on the job from the everyday realities of teaching.

One participant highlighted the importance of a positive support system, suggesting that a positive community could help new teachers achieve a better work-life balance.

5.1.5. Do you feel there were competencies you had to learn 'on the job'? Explain.

Out of 35 responses, 33 respondents (94.29%) felt they had to learn competencies on the job, while two did not.

Commonly cited areas of on-the-job learning include managing student behaviour and needs (n=14, 40%) and developing interpersonal skills (n=12, 34%). Participants (n=14, 40%) noted that each class and situation is unique, making it impossible to learn everything in a degree program. This requires teachers to adapt and learn through trial and error.

Participants also mentioned navigating school policies, district protocols, collective agreements, and integrating curriculum themes with real-life applications as areas requiring on-the-job learning. The consensus was that teaching is complex, requiring constant learning and development, with experience as the best teacher.

Respondents noted that they learned important soft skills on the job, including conflict resolution skills with peers and parents. They also highlighted the need for ongoing technical support in schools due to frequent technological changes.

Additionally, participants mentioned managing classroom and work/life balance as significant competencies learned on the job. This ties into the teacher stressor rating scale, which rates managing work/life balance as one of the highest stressors for teachers.

One participant shared their experience of continuous learning by mentioning that having their previous position made "redundant" led them to move to a school with grade levels they had not previously taught, forcing them to learn new skills. Other participants noted that replacement positions and personal ambition helped them continuously acquire new learning competencies.

5.1.6. Do you feel your co-workers help you learn teaching competencies?

Among the 47 respondents, 82.98% (n=39) reported that their co-workers helped them learn teaching competencies. In contrast, 10.64% (n=5) partially agreed, 4.26% (n=2) did not feel supported by their co-workers, and 2.13% (n=1) found the question not applicable.

Respondents highlighted co-workers as valuable sources of support and resources, noting that they contributed by sharing collective wisdom, offering ideas, acting as role models, and providing advice and information. Participants explicitly mentioned mentorship programs and pairing new teachers with experienced ones as potentially helpful. While some respondents did not receive support, most indicated their co-workers were instrumental in their learning and growth as teachers.

Participants also noted that the degree of support from co-workers varied based on the school environment and the level of engagement from colleagues. Many emphasized the importance of guidance, encouragement, and modelling of effective practices by co-workers. The

value placed on having an experienced mentor reinforces the importance of mentorship initiatives for professional development and improving teaching competencies.

*5.1.7. Which competencies did you feel you learned adequately in your post-secondary program**?***

There were 44 respondents to this question. Three participants (6.81%) stated that the question was not applicable; an explanation for this could be that they did not know how to answer or felt they could not give an accurate representation. Three participants (6.81%) could not remember well enough to answer, 8 participants (18.18%) said they learned very little of nothing, and 30 participants (68.18%) offered examples of competencies they felt they had learned adequately during their post-secondary program. The most commonly cited areas of preparation included teaching pedagogy (n=11, 25%), lesson planning (n=9, 20.46%), relationship building (n=8, 18.18%), curriculum (n=7, 15.9%) and assessment (n=6, 13.64%). These responses reflect a balance between the practicalities of teaching, such as reading a lesson plan, and soft skills, such as professionalism.

The competencies participants reported having learned adequately encompassed various skills and teaching-related knowledge. Practical skills included several broad domains: **lesson planning and curriculum development** (lesson planning, writing, organizing and planning lessons, reading curriculum binders, curriculum development, and multi-module teaching, accommodating exceptional learners); **assessment and evaluation** (differentiating lessons, assessing student progress, creating tests, evaluation techniques, and standardized assessment); **teaching methodologies** (employing various teaching methods, cross-curricular teaching, using scientific applications, exciting/creative instructional methods; **technical and specialized skills and knowledge** (technical skills related to educational technology, subject matter expertise); **and theory and policy** (understanding the school system, understanding the theory of education).

Soft skill competencies included relationship building, facilitating group work, working with new people, counselling skills, public speaking, managing the classroom, engaging students, and displaying professionalism.

Two common areas that participants indicated having adequately learned in their teacher education were educational theory and subject area expertise. Many participants felt they were adequately prepared in teaching planning and evaluative aspects, such as familiarity with curriculum, lesson planning, standardized assessment, differentiated instructions, and group work. Several participants noted that they gained the most competencies during their practicum, particularly in teaching with students, adjusting teaching strategies, behaviour management, and assessment practices. One participant highlighted an elective course on legal and moral issues and effective teaching methods as one where they learned their most valuable competencies.

In addition to classroom management and group work, participants mentioned learning counselling and relationship-building skills, which are relevant to the core themes investigated in this study about teacher burnout. Some participants felt they had learned these core skills well in their teacher education program. However, 22% (n = 10) of respondents felt their practicum lacked sufficient practical experience, while only 6% (n = 3) thought it provided enough. This suggests unequal access to valuable experiences in practicum, leading to a more targeted discussion on competencies learned and their relation to factors leading to teacher burnout. While a subset of the total participants felt they were adequately prepared, this is a comparatively small group regarding the total number of respondents.

Teacher education programs may be teaching competencies well. It is also possible that there are differences between veteran and early-career teachers, with veteran teachers being less harsh when judging the adequacy of their teacher-education programs because they recognize the

inherent complexity of the job or they may forget how unprepared they felt upon entry. Similarly, novice teachers may feel overwhelmed by a complex and fast-paced profession and may assign blame to their teacher-education programs for systemic problems that have no easy solutions.

To address the differences between early career teachers (0-5 years of experience) and veteran teachers (15+ years of experience), we can compare their specific responses. Six early career teachers (13.6%) responded to this question. One participant (2.3%) had a negative experience, citing: "*Not a whole lot*," whereas the other 5 participants (11.4%) cited learning competencies in subject matter, professionalism, creating a test, lesson planning, and relationship building. Twenty-three veteran participants (52.3%) responded to this question. The three participants who responded with not applicable were in this category; therefore, recall bias may be one explanation. Recall bias proved an issue as some stated they did not know and that it was a very long time ago to recall. However, others noted how to read objectives, theory, lesson planning, teaching methods, curriculum development and legal and moral issues. One veteran participant noted that their practicum was a positive experience in their teacher program. Some veteran participants did note that the program taught lectures, but doing so was a better way to learn (i.e., on-the-job experience).

5.1.8. What role has professional development played in learning teaching competencies?

There were 46 respondents to this question. To summarize the data for this question, the study categorized responses into positive and negative. According to the data, 53.33% (n=25) of respondents felt that professional development (PD) positively impacted their learning of teaching competencies, while 44.44% (n=20) believed it hindered their understanding. Additionally, 2.2% (n=1) considered it not applicable. These mixed responses suggest the need

for targeted research into the overall effects of professional development and its delivery to teachers. It is also important to note that perceptions about the effectiveness of professional development may also be tied to the types of problems teachers currently encounter within their schools and classrooms, highlighting the importance of understanding educators' needs. Participants provided suggestions or explanations for both positive and negative reactions. This summary will first highlight the main elements of the positive responses, followed by the negative responses.

Among the positive responses, participants noted that professional development (PD) was more effective when tailored to teachers' needs. Many indicated that continuous improvement was crucial in effective teaching, which professional development can support. Some mentioned that professional development helped them stay up-to-date with mental health training. Others appreciated the recent shift to self-directed professional development, which they found beneficial. Many reported feeling more confident and enjoying the growth that professional development offers. They emphasized the importance of ongoing development and change in the education industry, with professional development fostering professional competencies.

In contrast, negative responses indicated that, while professional development (PD) could be helpful, participants often lacked the time to implement new strategies in the classroom. Some participants found self-directed learning more effective than traditional professional development. Others felt that professional development needed to be more targeted and realistic to be helpful. Many believed PD was effective only when genuine and meaningful, expressing a desire for better PD experiences. One participant pointed out unequal PD opportunities for substitute teachers. Although no survey participants specified PD was chosen or distributed, interview data revealed that teachers could independently sign up for online PD opportunities.

Participants also mentioned schoolwide mandatory professional development but stated that they needed additional clarification on who determined the topics taught.

5.1.9. How did the public health measures due to COVID-19 affect your teaching?

There were 46 respondents to this question. According to the data, 86.96% (n=40) of respondents felt that public health measures due to COVID-19 negatively affected their teaching, while 13.04% (n=6) thought they had a positive effect. Below is a summary of both perspectives.

The six participants who felt positively impacted noted that the measures forced growth, flexibility, and creativity despite the challenges. Digital classes encouraged students to hold themselves accountable, and having resources in digital form facilitated a smoother transition. Some respondents also used the time to research educational pedagogies to improve their teaching.

On the other hand, the 40 participants (86.96%) who felt negatively impacted highlighted the lack of connection due to physical distancing, mask-wearing, and virtual meetings, which significantly impacted the teacher-student relationship. Some participants began their teaching careers during the pandemic, dealing with daily fatigue and increased stress. Others felt that these challenges were strongly tied to compassion fatigue, as students brought trauma and anxiety into school—issues that participants believed social workers or psychologists were better equipped to handle. Additionally, concerns were raised about workload, students' emotional well-being, and inconsistent rules.

Overall, the impact of COVID-19 on teaching was significant and diverse. Teachers had to adapt to new mediums, and some could not be in the classroom due to health risks. The lack of personal connection affected their ability to manage learners, and there were concerns about the

emotional well-being of students impacting relationships. The use of masks, shields, and inconsistent regulations posed additional challenges. The increased workload required teachers to adapt to more technology and interactive online media quickly. The inability to interact with students in non-academic settings made school faceless and duller, reducing opportunities for social-emotional learning and building student rapport.

5.1.10. In your opinion, has virtual or blended learning contributed to compassion fatigue?

Forty-eight participants responded to the question about virtual and blended learning's impact on compassion fatigue in teachers. According to the data, 75% (n=36) of respondents believed it was a contributing factor, while 18.75% (n=9) disagreed. Additionally, 6.25% (n=3) provided support for both perspectives.

The public health measures due to COVID-19 had diverse effects on teaching. Online teaching during internships limited hands-on experience. Health risks forced teachers to switch to virtual learning and stay out of the classroom. Wearing masks and shields hindered facial expressions and voice projection, essential elements in classes like music. Inconsistent rules hampered communication and added to frustration—making relationship-building and social-emotional learning difficult. The increased workload, changes in assessment practices, and challenges in reaching some students increased teachers' stress. The erosion of boundaries between work and home life, the elimination of fun activities for distancing purposes, and the lack of professional development and support made it an exhausting period.

5.1.11. Is there anything that you would like to add?

There were 28 respondents to this question. Among them, 19 (67.8%) provided firsthand experiences, while 7 (25%) expressed well wishes to the researcher, reflecting the supportive

nature of some teachers. The themes echoed previous questions and included motivation, parental involvement, inadequate support and resources, mental health, unrealistic expectations, a lack of appreciation, the need for greater student accountability, smaller class sizes, and issues with the substitute system. The most frequently mentioned themes were unrealistic expectations (n=5) and inadequate support (n=5), followed by mental health (n=4), motivation (n=4), parental involvement (n=4), student accountability (n=4), and inadequate resources (n=4). More infrequently referenced themes included appreciation (n=2), smaller class sizes (n=1) and substitute issues (n=1).

Participants' statements reflect teachers' experiences of burnout and exhaustion, highlighting the need for more support from the Department of Education, increased parental engagement, updated curricula, and more realistic stakeholder expectations. Teachers stressed the impact of their jobs on their mental, physical, and personal well-being, calling for more community and employer support and resources. Specifically, they suggest updating policies on evaluation, bullying, and student standards while reevaluating what can be realistically expected from teachers. Insights from a mid-career teacher provide a deeper understanding of the challenges educators face:

> "*I have been teaching for [over fifteen] years. I was once told that the pendulum would eventually swing back toward a commonsense approach to teaching and learning. That has not happened. The system bends and bucks to the whims of ridiculous bulldozer/helicopter parents. More support is needed for personnel, including administrators, at the school level. Teachers (on the front line) feel they are at the bottom, receiving the blame for all the system failures. The public seems to no longer trust our noble intentions. It is getting to the point where a cohort of the public that hates schooling and is intent on making ridiculous demands on our resources and personnel is running the show. Until this changes, nothing will improve. International students come here and are gob struck by how typical disrespect, laziness, and lack of accountability for students is. Every student has challenges, but it should be our job to teach them to read, write, compute, think critically and grow as an independent and contributing member of*

> *society. Today, we are inflating marks and graduating students who can barely read or show up to work on time. We are becoming increasingly complicit in a lie that the system is working. The blind push to SEL (Social Emotional Learning) has ignored our prime directive: education! Morale is rock bottom. Leadership does not exist. Lots of blame, though. It all goes toward the teacher wrapped up in a "we are so proud of our teachers" superficial bow. Hopefully, someone will come in and shake the system to its core and restore some real accountability."*

This passionate statement reflects years of teaching experience, highlighting themes such as the need for appreciation, student accountability, students' motivation levels, and the unrealistic expectations placed on teachers. As mentioned, these themes were common across several participants' responses. The participant emphasizes the need for higher-level accountability and expresses their concerns that never-ending responsibilities and expectations contribute to compassion fatigue. They call for realism, citing the need for the need for more support and understanding from parents, the community, and the government.

Maintaining personal boundaries is crucial for preserving mental energy. Without clear boundaries, individuals may prioritize requests that drain their power over their mental well-being. This lack of boundaries contributes to burnout, as noted by this participant, echoing findings from earlier survey sections related to mental health.

> *"I loved teaching. I still love going into the classroom and helping kids when I am mentally capable. It makes me feel good. But teaching did not love me back. It took a lot from me and my children. A lot of that is because I allowed it. I did not know any better, and the demands to be a "good" teacher overwhelmed me. It saddens me to think I may never return to a full-time classroom."*

Another participant echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the need for self-care as they describe the toll teaching can take:

> "*Good teachers always find a way to try and positively affect their students. These are the ones who, in my opinion, experience burnout. They cannot do a half-assed job. It is all or nothing, and with online learning, the effort required to do this doubled, if not tripled. Please take care of yourselves and thank you for caring that much."*

As mentioned above, the top-rated stressor in Part C of the survey was the inability to manage work-life balance, highlighting the need for boundaries to preserve mental health. Participants attributed this struggle to their compassion for students, passion for their work, and reluctance to fall short of professional expectations.

Participants expressed feeling overwhelmed by the increasing demands placed upon them, a sentiment that aligns with the recurring theme of unrealistic expectations. One participant captured this experience.

> *"Teaching is a rewarding but exhausting profession. It drains you mentally in a way hard for others to understand. The constant spin in your mind of subject matter, who is safe, who is fed, who is unhappy, who has learning challenges, who needs extra support, who has a special need, who is neuro-diverse, who needs what from me at any given time is exhausting. How will I address the needs of all of these people and still go home to my own children and have enough left to parent them well? Parents and students now expect constant access to us, and a truly dedicated mental break in the day is virtually impossible. The never-ending responsibilities and expectations on teachers is a difficult standard to attain. And yet most of us do to our own detriment and that of our families."*

This statement underscores the mental toll of unrealistic expectations, especially the pressure to meet everyone's needs at the expense of personal well-being. They highlight the question, "Who needs what from me?" Other comments in this section echoed these sentiments, such as "Teachers are just real people" and "The demands of the job are increasing." vividly illustrating how these expectations contribute to their struggles as they expressed concern for new teachers entering the profession.

Underscoring the value of colleague support, one participant's comments remind us how much new teachers have to learn and how their more experienced peers can serve as a valuable source of practical knowledge:

> *"I love my job. I am currently in a replacement, and I enjoy each and every day with my students. But teaching has to be the only profession around that does not have a manual. There is no book telling me what is right or wrong, there is no guidebook for working with students with difficulties, someone who lives in a home with conflicts, or someone who causes conflicts themselves. There is no manual to instruct me on how to use PowerSchool or even the Smart board. I have depended on my colleagues and students more then anyone from the district level to help teach me about various things in my day to day job. I was in a replacement a couple years ago. First replacement ever. It was report card time. I was entering the job at the beginning of November and had to take all grades from the previous teacher to get ready for the first-semester report card. I had no idea there was even a program available to enter the grades and figure out the overall mark. I was sat in our staff room, almost in tears, trying to figure out how to make it work when a colleague walked in. She saw my distress and took me to a nearby computer and introduced me to the program. There have been many times during my career that I have felt this lost."*

This participant's response underscores the intensity of the frustration and anxiety caused by a lack of practical knowledge early in their teaching career. Many participants in the survey echoed the sentiment that teachers acquire necessary competencies through experiential learning and peer support. They highlighted the importance of practical experience, with many citing their practicum as the most critical aspect of their training. Such comments also suggest the value of peer mentorship, where experienced teachers guide newer colleagues to be more effective and successful. While much mentoring happens informally, as was the case here, a structured mentorship program could provide equal access to mentorship opportunities, enhance the sense of community, guide early-career teachers, and support all.

5.1.12 Qualitative Findings: (Online Survey - Early Career Teachers)

Among the six early career teachers who responded to the open-ended questions in the online survey, three taught in a Rural area and three taught in an Urban area. The early career teachers represent a range of teaching levels, including one individual teaching at the primary level, one at both elementary and junior high, one at junior high exclusively, one at junior high and high school, and two focusing solely on high school. The analysis revealed several insightful themes based on participants' experiences. These included "*Lack of recognition and appreciation of efforts*" and "*Lack of support from administration in tackling the big issues,*" highlighting a need for better acknowledgment and administrative assistance. Participants also emphasized structural concerns such as "*Too many kids in classes and not enough resources to be what they all need*," with one teacher stating, "*My classes should be half what they are at maximum*." Further challenges included "*Very little classroom support given to classroom teachers who have a challenging classroom*" and "*Not enough holidays/time off*." Time-related pressures were underscored by themes such as "*Not enough time*," "*Few to no prep periods*," and "*Expecting teachers to cover internally when they should be having a prep*." Finally, personal and professional boundaries were noted as critical, with participants highlighting issues like "*Not sending boundaries for personal time, checking email at home, not receiving adequate prep time at work*," and "*The lack of time to create and differentiate engaging lessons for my students*." These themes provide a comprehensive view of the challenges faced by educators in various teaching contexts.

5.2 Qualitative Findings (Phone Interviews)

5.2.1 Qualitative Analysis: In-Vivo Coding and Focused Coding

In-vivo coding is a qualitative data analysis method that involves coding data using the exact words or phrases provided by the participants. "In vivo" means "in the living," emphasizing the method's focus on capturing participants' authentic language and meanings. This approach is particularly valuable in research aimed at understanding participants' lived experiences, as it ensures that the analysis remains closely aligned with their perspectives (Saldana, 2021). Taking the participant's direct language as a first cycle, a second cycle of focused codes can be applied by reviewing the in-vivo codes and representing common themes that unite specific phrases (Saldana, 2021).

Table 2:

First Cycle In-Vivo Codes and Second Cycle Focused Codes from Responses

First Cycle In-Vivo Codes	Second Cycle Focused Codes	Example Quotes
Large Class Size	Need Smaller Classes	"Class sizes are far too large." "CLASS SIZES!!!!!"
Too Many Roles	Unrealistic Expectations	"Playing too many roles in the classroom and listening to stories from children who need a compassionate adult they can trust."
Compassion for Teachers	Being Appreciated	"Show compassion for teachers and make them feel appreciated."
Communication	Connections/Relationship Building	"Classroom misbehaviour documentation and parental communication"

This table describes the Two-cycle coding process to determine the focused codes representing the 52 themes described below.

Table 3:

In-Vivo First Cycle Coding Example

Participant's lived experience	In-Vivo First Cycle Coding
CLASS SIZES! Pressure from parents, lack of support from some parents. The teacher is no longer just a teacher… we have become parents, nurses, secretaries, janitors, councillors, IRT specialists, computer techs… you get the idea.	CLASS SIZE LACK OF SUPPORT TOO MANY ROLES
Lack of support. Teachers are required to devote so much of their own time to meet all expectations that are asked of them. No other job requires so much unpaid time to be involved, and it is exhausting.	LACK OF SUPPORT NOT ENOUGH TIME UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS EXTREME WORKLOAD
Continued piling on of new responsibilities with less time to perform them. This includes additional duties, developing materials for new courses, learning how to use online teaching tools, more extensive class sizes, etc.	EXTREME WORKLOAD UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS NOT ENOUGH TIME LARGE CLASS SIZE
Unrealistic demands are put on teachers by parents, school boards and administrators.	UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Once the first cycle of code is determined by looking at the lived experience of the participants, the codes are then grouped and given a focused code to represent them best.

Table 4:

Grouped and Focused Codes Example

Grouped In-Vivo First Cycle Codes	Focused Codes determined from grouping
“UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS NOT ENOUGH TIME”	UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS
“LARGE CLASS SIZE, CLASS SIZE”	NEED SMALLER CLASS SIZES

In-vivo coding is especially useful in studies exploring complex and deeply personal phenomena, such as compassion fatigue and teacher burnout. By coding the data using the participants' words, researchers can identify patterns, themes, and key concepts directly from the participants' language. These emergent patterns are then analyzed to uncover broader insights into the phenomena under investigation. Below is a figure demonstrating the total number of themes found by analyzing all qualitative data in the study.

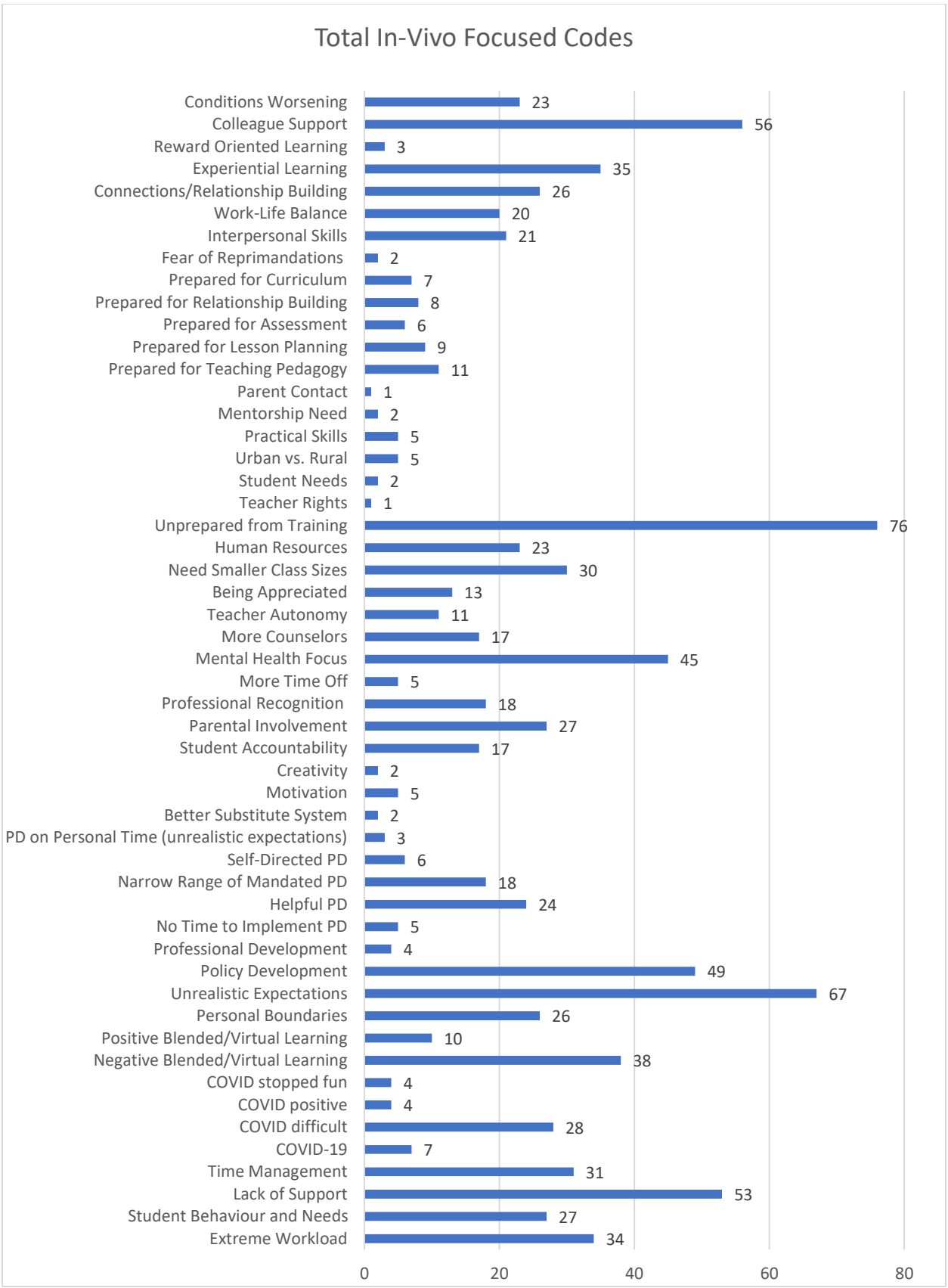

Total In-Vivo Focused Codes
Conditions Worsening 23
Colleague Support 56
Reward Oriented Learning 3
Experiential Learning 35
Connections/Relationship Building 26
Work-Life Balance 20
Interpersonal Skills 21
Fear of Reprimandations 2
Prepared for Curriculum 7
Prepared for Relationship Building 8
Prepared for Assessment 6
Prepared for Lesson Planning 9
Prepared for Teaching Pedagogy 11
Parent Contact 1
Mentorship Need 2
Practical Skills 5
Urban vs. Rural 5
Student Needs 2
Teacher Rights 1
Unprepared from Training 76
Human Resources 23
Need Smaller Class Sizes 30
Being Appreciated 13
Teacher Autonomy 11
More Counselors 17
Mental Health Focus 45
More Time Off 5
Professional Recognition 18
Parental Involvement 27
Student Accountability 17
Creativity 2
Motivation 5
Better Substitute System 2
PD on Personal Time (unrealistic expectations) 3
Self-Directed PD 6
Narrow Range of Mandated PD 18
Helpful PD 24
No Time to Implement PD 5
Professional Development 4
Policy Development 49
Unrealistic Expectations 67
Personal Boundaries 26
Positive Blended/Virtual Learning 10
Negative Blended/Virtual Learning 38
COVID stopped fun 4
COVID positive 4
COVID difficult 28
COVID-19 7
Time Management 31
Lack of Support 53
Student Behaviour and Needs 27
Extreme Workload 34
0
20
40
60
80

Figure 12. *In-vivo codes found by analyzing all compiled qualitative data.*

There were 6 participants for the phone interview portion and 132 for the online questionnaire. Using In-Vivo coding to analyze all data, 52 focused themes were discovered. Above in Figure 5 is a chart detailing the 52 themes and how often they were found in participant's responses. To find a replica of the phone interview, refer to Appendix A; to find a representation of the open-ended survey items in the online questionnaire, refer to Appendix B. By analyzing frequently mentioned keywords, words and phrases across participant's responses, the researcher gains a clearer understanding of emerging themes throughout data analysis. Figure 5 shows the themes mentioned more than 40 times: *Unprepared from Training (76), Unrealistic Expectations (67), Lack of Support (53), Colleague Support (50), Policy Development (49), and Mental Health Focus (45)*.

Notably, the theme, Unprepared from Training, includes subthemes such as Teacher Rights, Student Needs, Urban vs. Rural, Practical Skills, Mentorship Need, Parent Contact, Prepared for Teaching Pedagogy, Prepared for Lesson Planning, Prepared for Assessment, Prepared for Relationship Building, Prepared for Curriculum. Also, the theme of Professional Development provided subthemes of No Time to Implement PD, Helpful PD, Narrow Range of Mandated PD, Self-Directed PD, and PD on Personal Time. Also, COVID-19 provided subthemes of COVID-19 difficult, COVID-19 positive, COVID stopped fun, Negative Blended/Virtual Learning, and Positive Blended/Virtual Learning.

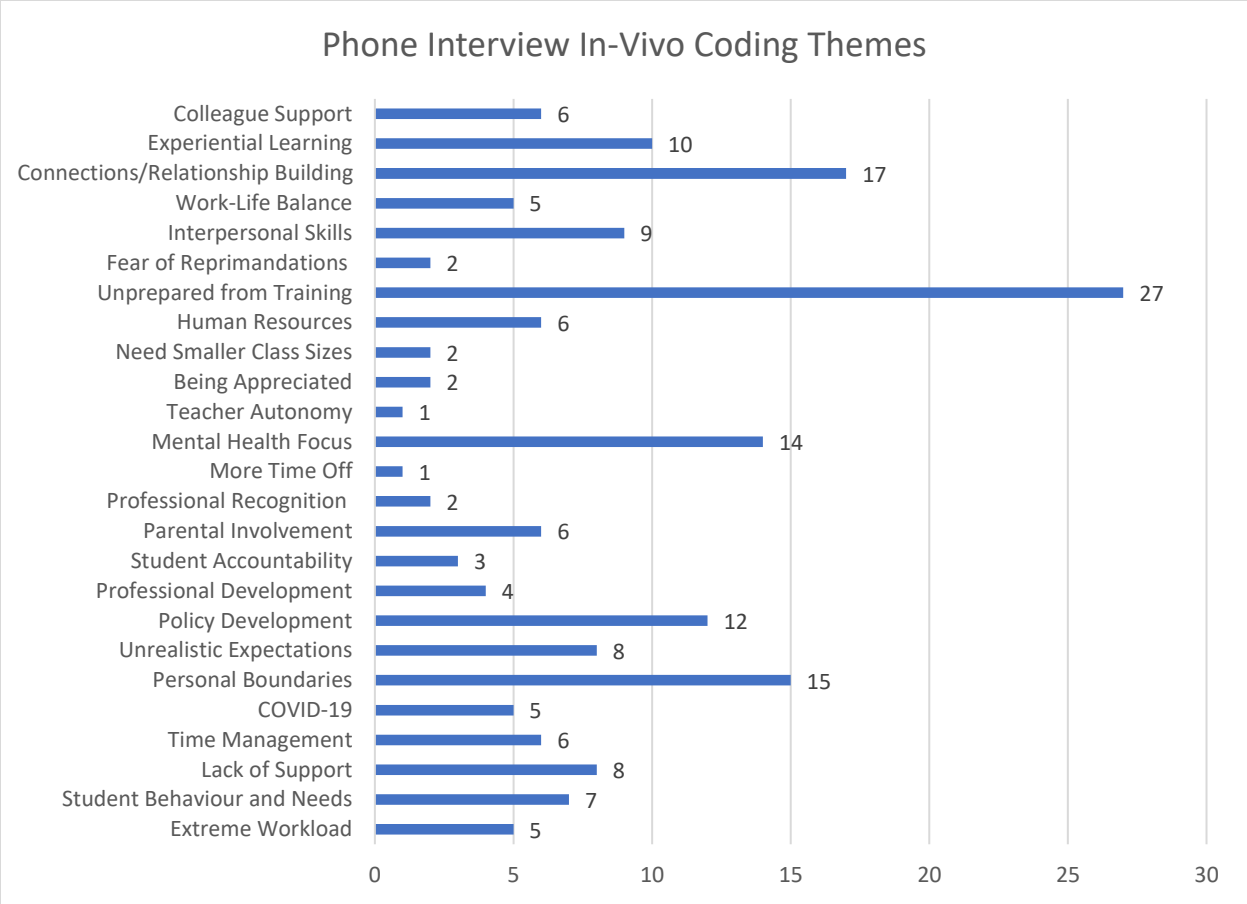


Figure 13. *In-vivo coding of the responses to the phone interviews.*

This chart shows the in-vivo coding themes found by analyzing the interview participant data alone. A copy of the interview questionnaire can be found in Appendix B. The central theme found by examining the six interview participants' responses was 'Unprepared from Training' with 27 mentions. Follow-up themes with the most mentions were 'Connections/Relationship Building' with 17 mentions, 'Personal Boundaries' with 15 mentions, 'Mental Health Focus' with 14 mentions and 'Policy Development' with 12 mentions. The themes that had between 6 and 10 mentions were 'Experiential Learning' with 10 mentions, 'Interpersonal Skills' with nine mentions, 'Unrealistic Expectations' and 'Lack of Support' with eight mentions each, 'Student Behaviour and Needs' with seven mentions, 'Colleague Support,' 'Human Resources,' 'Parental

Involvement' and 'Time Management' with six mentions each. The themes that had between 1 and 5 mentions were 'COVID-19', 'Work-Life Balance' and 'Extreme Workload' with five mentions each, 'Professional Development' with four mentions, 'Student Accountability' with three mentions, 'Fear of Reprimandations', 'Need Smaller Class Sizes', 'Being Appreciated' and 'Professional Recognition' with two mentions each and finally 'Teacher Autonomy' and 'More Time Off' with one mention each.

The most frequently mentioned themes suggest a strong sense of unpreparedness from participants' educational training programs before they entered their professions. Interestingly, there is a notable emphasis on experiential learning, implying that they felt unprepared for their academic training program but believed they learned competencies on the job. However, in acquiring these competencies on the job, all participants mentioned personal boundaries, with the majority referencing a focus on mental health. Another noteworthy finding among interview participants was frequently mentioning the importance of connections and relationship-building skills. This aligns with the discussion of soft skills discussed in the literature review and the findings from the independent online survey responses.

5.2.2 Interview Participant Profiles

For the semi-structured interviews, there were six participants. This section will briefly overview each participant to give the reader a character profile; all names are pseudonyms.

Lena is a teacher with less than ten years of teaching experience. She does not have a tenured position, providing a perspective shaped by her experience as a replacement and substitute teacher. She has taught most of her career teaching in an urban area and holds a Master of Education degree. She teaches the primary grade level.

Ethan is a teacher with less than ten years of experience. He holds a tenured position, offering a balanced perspective from replacement and tenured teaching roles. Throughout his career, he has taught in both urban and rural settings. He also has a Master of Education degree. He teaches the primary grade level.

Lucas is a recently retired teacher who had a long, whole career. He held a tenured position and offers a valuable perspective on the changes he has observed affect the teaching community. Lucas taught in urban and rural areas and holds a Master of Education degree. He taught a high school grade level.

Ava is a teacher who has less than ten years of teaching experience. She has a tenured position but also brings insights from her previous work as a substitute and replacement teacher. She has taught in rural areas for most of her career and holds a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree. She is teaching in an elementary/jr—high grade level.

Maya is a teacher with less than ten years of teaching experience. She does not have a tenured position and provides the perspective of a replacement and substitute teacher. She has

taught primarily in rural areas for most of her career and is working towards completing a graduate degree in education (M.Ed.). She is teaching at a high school grade level.

Sophia is a teacher with less than ten years of teaching experience. She holds a tenured position, providing the perspective of an early career teacher in a permanent position. She has spent most of her career teaching in rural areas and is considering completing a Master of Education degree. She is teaching in an elementary/junior—high grade level.

5.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

This section presents insights gathered from six participants through phone interviews consisting of fourteen short open-ended questions and relevant follow-up inquiries. Using in-vivo and focused/thematic coding, the analysis aimed to uncover key factors influencing compassion fatigue and burnout among teachers.

From a total of 234 mentions, the top five themes identified were:

- **Unprepared from Training** (11.5%, n = 27)
- **Connections/Relationship Building** (9.4%, n = 22)
- **Experiential Learning** (6.8%, n = 16)
- **Mental Health Focus** (6.4%, n = 15)
- **Personal Boundaries** (6.0%, n = 14)

The following summary provides an overview of the qualitative data gathered from each semi-structured interview question, highlighting the related themes and insights shared by participants.

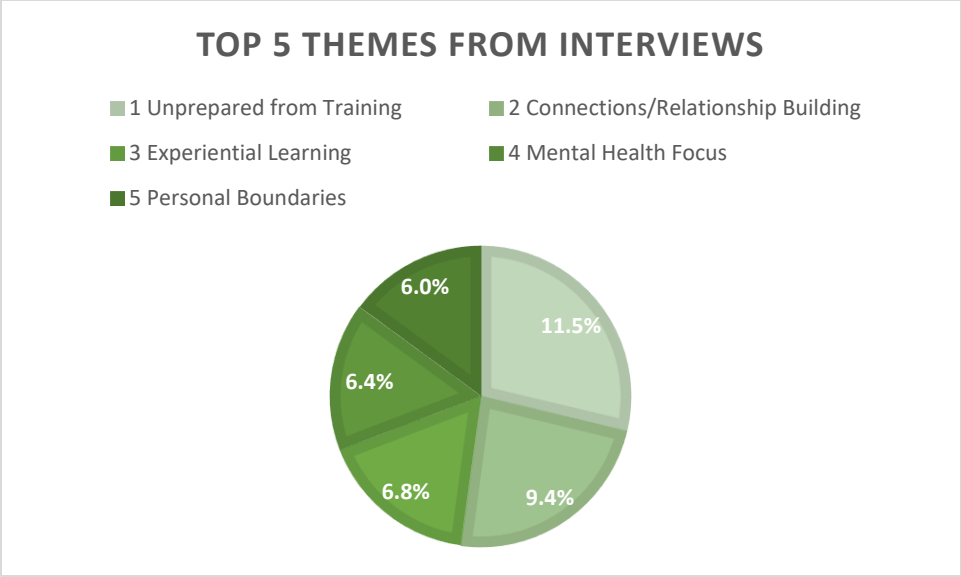


Figure 14. *Compassion Fatigue Reduction Themes.*

5.2.1 Have you experienced compassion fatigue as a teacher? If so, what contributed to that burnout?

All six participants (100%, n = 6) reported experiencing compassion fatigue as teachers. Contributing factors included understaffing, hearing about students' tragic home lives, frustration with a lack of administrative support, an inability to help students in their home environments, excessive caring, and an overwhelming workload.

Participants shared personal experiences illustrating the causes of their compassion fatigue. Lena described how insufficient external support from administrators and the broader education system left her feeling overburdened:

> "*Lack of all other supports like administration support, extra support outside …from… NLTA, NLESD, and parents... I was overworking myself."*

Sophia explained how her deep care for students led her to seek professional counselling:

"*I wanted to help them* [students], *and I tried to do whatever I could to help them, but I just got really burned out to the point that I went through the EAP program and sought out counselling."*

Other participants highlighted the challenges posed by their responsibilities and limited resources. Ava emphasized the multifaceted nature of teaching: "…*teaching is so much more than just curriculum."* Ethan identified staffing issues as a major contributor: "…*most notable contributing factor will be class sizes and…understaffing*." Maya reflected on the overwhelming demands of the profession: "…*what has contributed to that* [compassion fatigue] *would be constantly having a million things on my plate at one time."* Sophia also offered a proactive perspective, emphasizing the importance of self-care: "*You have to recognize your limitations to protect yourself."*

The data revealed several recurring themes from 17 mentions. The top four themes were Person*al Boundaries* (17.6%, n=3), Ment*al Health Focus* (17.6%, n=3), *Lack of Support* (11.8%, n=2), and *Work-Life Balance* (11.8%, n=2). The remaining themes had one mention (5.9%) each: *Extreme Workload, Time Management, Parental Involvement, Being Appreciated, Need for Smaller Class Sizes, Human Resources,* and *Connections/Relationship Building*.

5.2.2 Have you seen other teachers experience compassion fatigue?

All six participants (100%, n = 6) reported having witnessed other teachers experiencing compassion fatigue. Participants noted that burnout often leads some teachers to leave the profession, while others struggle with opposing views from administration or taking on too much responsibility for others. Additionally, participants highlighted insufficient resources and certain

times of the year—such as during exams, end-of-year reports, and school activities—as periods that exacerbate burnout.

Participants shared their observations and insights regarding their colleagues' experiences with compassion fatigue. Sophia described how taking on too much can overwhelm teachers: "*Definitely…they don't have the same toolbox… it's them trying to take on everything for everybody…and it just is too much*."Reflecting on her experience in a primary/elementary school, Lena emphasized the care and dedication teachers have for their students: "*All the time… it is because we care about the kids…. We want to do better*." Maya, who teaches in high school, detailed how the end-of-year demands amplify stress for teachers: "*Yes, I would say that is a common issue for teachers… especially this time of year (exams)… trying to cover curriculum… graduation…other school activities… progress reports… and contacting parents of kids who are at risk of failing*."

The data analysis revealed several recurring themes among 16 mentions. The top 4 themes mentioned were *Mental Health Focus* (18.8%, n=3), *Personal Boundaries* (12.5%, n=2), *Extreme Workload* (12.5%, n=2), *Connections/Relationship Building* (12.5%, n=2). The remaining themes, each with one mention (6.3%), were *Lack of Support, Unrealistic Expectations, Policy Development, Human Resources, Unprepared from Training, Unprepared in Practical Skills,* and *Work-Life Balance.*

5.2.3 Do you feel you were adequately trained to manage classroom behaviours in post-secondary education?

Of the 6 participants, 83.3% (n=5) stated they felt they were not adequately trained in their teacher-education programs to manage classroom behaviours. The one participant who

answered affirmatively added that their ability to manage classroom behaviours improved with practical experience. Four other participants commented that post-secondary education primarily focuses on theory, leaving classroom management skills to be learned on the job. Participants highlighted that their programs did not cover essential practical skills such as sending emails to parents, making phone calls, or handling conflicts like student fights. They also pointed out the mental strain in managing classroom behaviours as a significant challenge.

Comments from the participants supported these insights when asked whether they were adequately trained to manage classrooms in their teacher education programs. Lucas reflected on the inadequacy of his training: "*Not at all. This success came from basically being in the field."* Ethan acknowledged the value of experience in developing these skills: *"I want to say yes… but… like anything, you get better at it the more practical experience you have*." Sophia explained the disconnect between theoretical training and classroom realities: "…*no. Just because the reality of classrooms today is very different from what you're talking about theoretically… I don't know that anyone's ever really properly trained for classroom management*." Lena echoed this sentiment, highlighting the lack of preparation for practical challenges: "*It gave us resources… but… the thing with the degree is it didn't teach you about all the other extra stuff that comes with it…phone calls to parents… how to deal with two students…having a fist fight*."

The data analysis identified recurring themes from 24 mentions. The top four themes were *Unprepared from Training* (20.8%, n=5), *Experiential Learning* (16.7%, n=4), *Unprepared in Student Needs* (12.5%, n=3), *Unprepared in Practical Skills* (12.5%, n=3). Other themes included *Unrealistic Expectations* (8.3%, n=2), *Student Behavior and Needs* (8.3%, n=2),

Connections/Relationship Building (8.3%, n=2), *Parental Involvement* (4.2%, n=1), *Mental Health Focus* (4.2%, n=1), and *Unprepared for Parent Contact* (4.2%, n=1).

5.2.4 Do you feel you were adequately trained in postsecondary to understand the relevant law, legislation, and your collective agreement?

Of the six participants, 66.7% (n = 4) stated they were not adequately trained during their post-secondary education to understand the relevant laws of teaching, legislation, and their collective agreement. While participants acknowledged the importance of legal knowledge, several emphasized that managing classroom behaviours was a more immediate and critical skill. Some participants felt their graduate programs offered better preparation in this area, while others indicated they gained knowledge through professional experience and self-directed learning.

Ethan reflected on the difference between his graduate and undergraduate programs: *"I would say that from two graduate programs, I received probably more adequate training in those areas as opposed to undergraduate."* Sophia shared her realization during her master's program: "*No…I didn't do anything related to law or ethics until I was in my master's program… when I was doing that course, it was like, oh my gosh, why didn't we do this sooner?"* Lucas described how he only gained a practical understanding of relevant laws late in his career: "…*it was at the tail end of my career when I actually submitted a grievance."*

The data revealed several recurring themes from 18 mentions. The top three themes were *Unprepared from Training* (22.2%, n=4), *Unprepared in Teacher Rights* (22.2%, n=4), and *Experiential Learning* (11.1%, n=2). Other themes mentioned once (5.6%) included *Lack of Support, Policy Development, Parental Involvement, Unprepared for Student Needs,*

Unprepared for Practical Skills, Fear of Reprimandations, *Connections/Relationship Building*, and *Conditions Worsening*.

5.2.5 What teaching competencies, such as skills and knowledge, are crucial for a teacher to master?

Of the six participants, 83.3% (n = 5) identified patience as a critical teaching competency. Participants also highlighted a wide range of other essential competencies, including coregulation, trauma-informed practice, flexibility, work-life balance, behaviour management, community support, mentorship, colleague support, subject matter knowledge, the judgment of character, learning about disabilities, technology, relationship-building, boundary setting, and organization. Many of these are examples of soft skills discussed earlier in the study.

Participants elaborated on the diverse skills and knowledge essential for effective teaching. Lucas emphasized a combination of technical and interpersonal competencies: "*Subject matter knowledge… handle on technology…patience…got to judge a character*." Ava highlighted the importance of soft skills and external resources: "*trauma-informed practice…flexibility…work-life balance…behaviour management… community supports*." Ethan stressed the significance of patience and emotional regulation: "*It takes a lot of patience and… a real big focus on… coregulation*." Sophia underscored the value of relationships and collaboration: "*…develop relationships with students and engage in respectful interactions… seek out support from others… co-teaching… just forming collaborative relationships*." Lena focused on mental health and personal boundaries, emphasizing: "*Patience and self-preservation. Setting boundaries, that's a huge one*."

The data revealed several recurring themes from 17 mentions. The most frequently mentioned themes were *Personal Boundaries* (17.6%. n=3), *Mental Health Focus* (11.8%, n=2), *Connections/Relationship Building* (11.8%, n=2), *Interpersonal Skills* (11.8%, n=2), *Colleague Support* (11.8%, n=2). The remaining themes, each mentioned once (5.9%), included *Student Behavior and Needs, Lack of Support, Time Management, Policy Development, Parental Involvement,* and *Teacher Autonomy.*

5.2.6 Which competencies did you learn in your practicum?

Participants identified a variety of competencies they developed during their practicum, including teaching skills, organizational skills, patience, curriculum knowledge, lesson planning and delivery, and management skills. However, three participants noted limited exposure to classroom management, as their supervising teachers typically handled that aspect.

Participants shared their experiences and insights regarding the skills gained during their practicum. Ethan highlighted his ability to adapt to challenging situations: "…*teaching skills, a lot of organizational skills… the ability to work under more stressful situations than I had in the past*." Ava reflected on the importance of gaining real-world experience: "*There is just no comparison to when you're in the room by yourself*." Lucas valued the opportunity to develop practical skills: "…*managing your time, preparing your lessons.*" Sophia pointed out a common challenge, emphasizing her limited experience with classroom management: "*I didn't do a whole lot of classroom management stuff, really. That was the teacher that handled that.*" Lena shared a lasting insight she gained during her practicum: "*What not to say*." As noted in the literature, these competencies underscore the practicum's crucial role in preparing teachers for their careers.

When reviewing the competencies mentioned, several patterns emerged. Out of 20 mentions, the top cited theme was *Prepared for Relationship Building* (15%, n=3). Other themes, each mentioned twice (10%), included *Prepared for Lesson Planning, Prepared for Curriculum, Unprepared from Training, Mental Health Focus, Student Behavior and Needs and Experiential Learning*. The themes mentioned once (5%) were *Time Management, Personal Boundaries, Unprepared in Student Needs, Unprepared in Practical Skills, and Connections/Relationship Building.*

5.2.7 Which competencies did you learn on the job?

Participants expressed that they developed many key competencies while on the job, particularly in areas not covered during their practicum. Two participants (33.3%, n = 2) described learning "everything else" or "all the rest" while working, specifically highlighting classroom and behaviour management as well as relationship building. Additional skills developed on the job included managing stress and extreme workload, trauma-informed care, being a supportive colleague, flexibility, life skills, personal boundaries, evaluation methods, seeking help, time management, drafting report cards, interactions with parents, how to disagree peacefully, and curriculum and teaching strategies.

Participants provided specific examples of the skills they developed while teaching. Ethan described how managing a heavy workload helped him handle stress more effectively: "*…having a large workload… has definitely made me better at dealing with stressful situations*." Ava explained how necessity drove her learning and growth: "*I grew up real darn fast… life skills… I'm more interested in like relationships than making school a positive experience*." Lucas emphasized practical skills gained on the job: "*Time management was a big thing… evaluation*." Sophia reflected on the broad range of competencies she acquired: "*All the rest.*

*Thinking on your feet, reacting to things and handling the classroom managemen*t." Lena echoed this sentiment, listing the variety of skills she learned: "*Oh, gosh. Everything else… connections… time management… how to write report cards, how to write emails to parents, how to have meetings with parents*."

The data analysis identified recurring themes among 32 mentions. The top three themes were *Connections/Relationship Building* (15.6%, n=5), *Experiential Learning* (12.5%, n=4), and *Student Behavior and Needs* (9.4%, n=3). Other themes mentioned twice (6.3%) were *Time Management, Policy Development, Interpersonal Skills*, and *Colleague Support*. The remaining themes, each mentioned once (3.1%), included *Extreme Workload, Lack of Support, Personal Boundaries, Unrealistic Expectations, Professional Development, Student Accountability, Mental Health Focus, Human Resources, Unprepared from Training, Unprepared in Student Needs, Unprepared in Practical Skills,* and *Work-Life Balance.*

5.2.8 Do you feel comfortable asserting yourself to the administration when you see an issue?

Five of the six participants (83.3%) indicated they were comfortable asserting themselves to the administration when they noticed an issue. One participant, however, expressed discomfort, noting that as a probationary teacher, they were afraid of potential consequences for asserting themselves to the administration.

Participants shared their experiences and perspectives regarding asserting themselves to the administration. Sophia described her positive experience, emphasizing the role of supportive administrators: "*Yes. I'm pretty lucky because I've have awesome admins since I started, I know not everyone is that lucky*." In contrast, Maya, an untenured teacher, voiced her hesitations about

speaking up: "*Not overly… I still feel that as a probationary teacher just starting, I always have to be mindful of what I am saying because I don't want anything to come back and hurt me*."

The data analysis revealed several key themes among seven mentions. The most frequently mentioned theme was Connections/Relationship Building (42.9%, n=3). Other themes, each mentioned once (14.3%), included Personal Boundaries, Experiential Learning, Fear of Reprimandations and Interpersonal Skills.

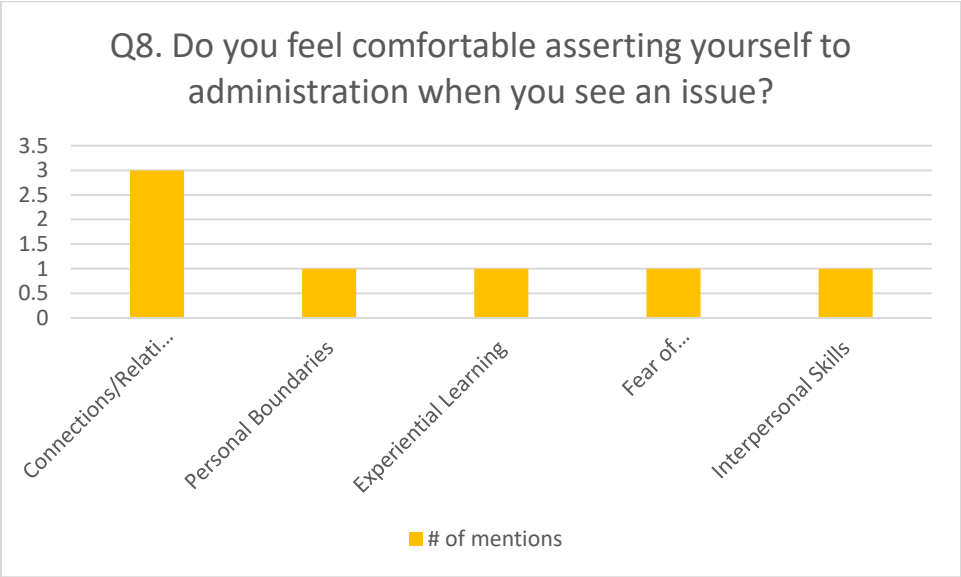


Figure 15. *Comfort addressing administration.*

5.2.9 Do you feel applicable professional development is occurring to keep your skills and knowledge relevant?

Only one participant (16.7%) definitively stated that they felt professional development (PD) relevant to their role was occurring. In contrast, the remaining five participants (83.3%) expressed uncertainty or dissatisfaction. Participants highlighted a growing emphasis on mental health-related PD but noted that their workload often left little time to apply what they had learned. Additionally, concerns were raised about the inconsistent quality of PD sessions and a

perceived lack of applicability in recent years, with some viewing PD as a mere break for teachers. One participant also expressed frustration with the shift to digital PD occurring outside school hours, which they felt disrupted their work-life balance.

Participants shared their diverse perspectives on professional development. Ava expressed her frustration with balancing PD and other responsibilities: "…*there's not enough balance in the school year to provide us with both the PD and the time to do those other things to prevent burnout."* Lena raised concerns about the lack of follow-through from PD sessions: "*There's no action with what has been said during PDs*." Untenured, Maya was more direct, "Nope, I feel there is a lack of PD for everything…there might be PD offered that might be helpful, but I feel that if I am not paid for it, *I won't do it*."

The most frequently mentioned themes reflected some common issues related to professional development. Out of 14 mentions, the top two were Professional Development (PD) (21.4%, n=3) and Work-Life Balance (14.3%, n=2). The remaining themes were Helpful PD, Self-Directed PD, PD on Personal Time, Extreme Workload, Lack of Support, Personal Boundaries, Interpersonal Skills, and Connections/Relationship Building, all having one mention (7.1%) each.

5.2.10 Do you understand all relevant laws applicable to your position as a teacher?

All six participants (100%) stated that they did not fully understand the relevant laws applicable to their teacher position. While they expressed awareness of where to seek information, they emphasized the absence of formal training on legal matters. Several participants suggested that the teaching association should offer a course on teacher rights.

Others reflected on the importance of seeking legal knowledge independently or highlighted discussions with colleagues about the need for legal understanding.

Participants shared personal insights into their lack of knowledge of education law. Lucas emphasized the need for structured training: "*I didn't have a clue; [I knew] nothing about it. I always said that before any teacher goes out, the NLTA, or whoever should sit down and offer a course and that these are your rights*." Maya shared an on-the-job realization,

> *"No. Like, I hugged a student one day. She was having a panic attack. A female student… I have a student-teacher relationship with and another teacher said to me after, 'I can't believe you hugged that student,' and I said like she was having a panic attack and needed a hug, and this other teacher was like, 'Well you clearly haven't taken any law courses in your master's degree' and I was like no but at the end of the say I am also going to be a human and if that's what is going to lose me my job then that's pretty sad."*

Participants' comments point to a significant gap in legal training. Out of 11 mentions, the top theme was Unprepared from Training (54.5%, n=6). Other themes, each mentioned once (9.1%), included Unprepared in Teacher Rights, Interpersonal Skills, Connections/Relationship Building, Experiential Learning, and Colleagues Support.

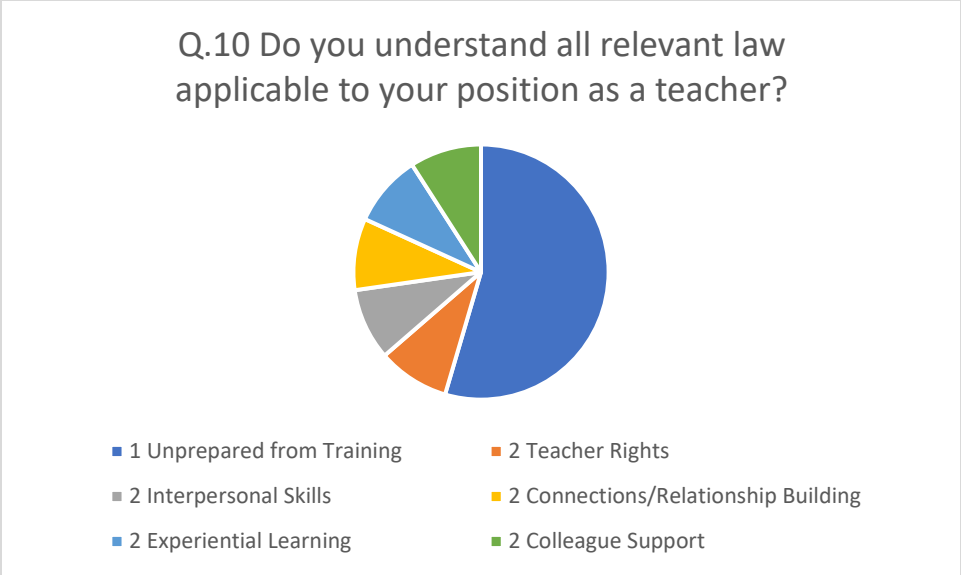


Figure 16. *Understanding relevant laws regarding teaching positions.*

5.2.11 Do you understand how the collective agreement affects you?

Out of six participants, three (50%) stated they did not understand how the collective agreement affected them. Two participants (33.3%) indicated that while they did not understand it initially, they eventually learned over time. One participant (16.7%) stated that they did understand the collective agreement because of the work of engaged union representatives at their school. Participants also noted that they know where to find information about the agreement, are motivated to learn about it independently, or have gained knowledge through past experience as a union representative or through direct experiences such as filing a grievance.

During discussions, participants shared their personal insights and experiences related to the collective agreement. Ethan highlighted the value of active support: "… *we have also had some really like engaged like representatives at our school."* Sophia, with honesty, shared her challenges: "*No. And I should, because I'm our NLTA rep in our school. And, but anytime an*

issue comes up, like, I'm reaching out asking NLTA questions because I don't understand all the ins and outs of the union."

The participants' responses reflected several recurring themes regarding their understanding of the collective agreement. The top two themes were Unprepared from Training and Unprepared in Teacher's Rights, with five mentions (41.7%). The remaining themes were Experiential Learning and Colleague Support, each with one mention (8.3%).

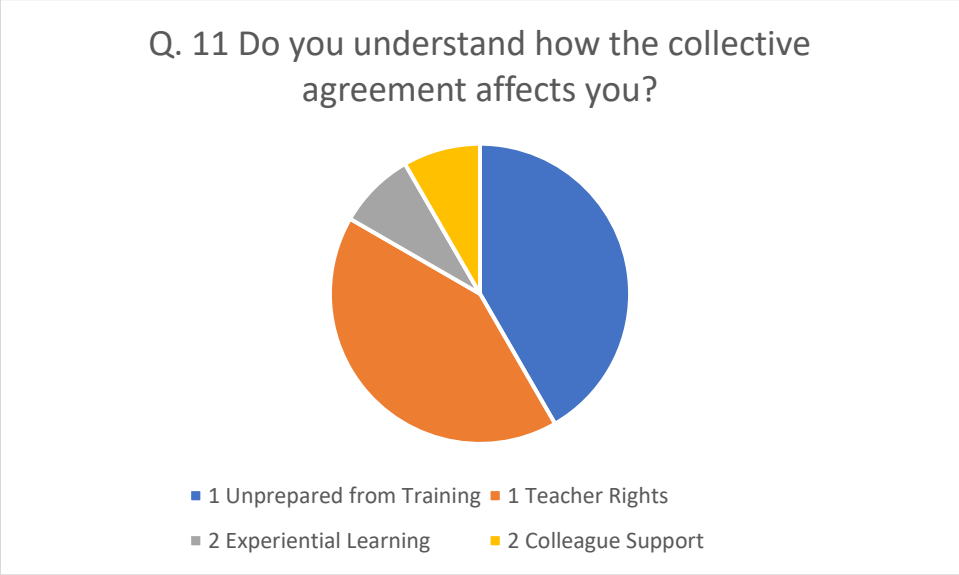


Figure 17. *Understanding how the collective agreement affects them.*

5.2.12 Do you know what services your union offers?

Five (83.3%) of the six participants stated that they now know what services their union offers, providing various reasons for this awareness. Some participants explained that they became more attuned to the political aspects of their profession after entering the workforce, which sometimes led to heightened conflict. Others gained awareness through experiences such as filing a grievance, actively seeking information, or utilizing the Employee Assistance Program

(EAP). The remaining participants (16.7%) indicated they were unaware of the specific services offered but noted they knew who to contact if the need arose.

Throughout the interviews, participants reflected on their personal experiences with union services. Lena remarked: "*I do and I have taken advantage of some of them, especially the EAP*." Sophia shared a similar perspective: "*I do… I have availed of the EAP."*

The data revealed several recurring themes related to participants' experiences with their union. Among 14 mentions, the most frequently noted themes were Unprepared from Training (21.4%, n=3) and Connections/Relationship Building (14.3%, n=2). The remaining themes, each with one mention (7.1%) included Experiential Learning, Mental Health Focus, Lack of Support, Unrealistic Expectations, Policy Development, Student Accountability, Parental Involvement, Need for Smaller Class Sizes and Human Resources.

5.2.13 How has COVID-19 impacted your feelings towards your teaching career?

All six (100%) participants noted that teaching during COVID-19 was challenging. Participants mentioned that the fluid expectations caused stress, but also noted that maintaining personal boundaries helped students hold themselves accountable. They also expressed that their jobs became more difficult due to increased workloads and the need to put everyone else's needs above their own. Some participants highlighted unrealistic expectations set by the district, increased parental involvement, and the difficulties of teaching remotely. While they were happy to be back in the classroom and still enjoy teaching, they also faced challenges because of students who lack basic knowledge, making it hard to reach curriculum outcomes. Others stressed that some problems could have been avoided if decision-makers had paid closer attention to what was going on in the classroom.

Through the interviews teachers shared their individual perspectives on the pandemic's challenges. Ethan reflected on the fluid nature of responsibilities during COVID-19, stating: "*You know, an ever changing thing, I felt like you know the responsibilities of the job were like very fluid and like that obviously you know can cause come stress for like teacher snad parents and students… I haven't lowered accountability standards*." Ava expressed frustration over the lack of sustained recognition for teachers' efforts: *"…we have to put everyone first before ourselves… we were valued for 0.2 seconds, when school shut down…then we were just torn apart for every single thing else*." Lena criticized decision-makers for being disconnected from classroom realities: "*Like, it was just ludicrous rules again, made by people who are not in the classroom setting*."

The data revealed several recurring themes. Among 21 mentions, the top five themes were *COVID-19* (19%, n = 4), *COVID-19 Difficult* (14.3%, n = 3), *Personal Boundaries* (9.5%, n = 2), *Parental Involvement* (9.5%, n = 2), and *Policy Development* (9.5%, n = 2). The remaining themes, each mentioned once (4.8%), included *Extreme Workload, Unrealistic Expectations, Student Accountability, Professional Recognition, Being Appreciated, Human Resources, Connections/Relationship Building*, and *Interpersonal Skills*.

5.2.14 Is there anything else you would like to add?

Out of six participants, three (50%, n=3) declined to add further comments, while the remaining three (50%, n=3) shared additional thoughts. These participants emphasized the importance of addressing teacher burnout, highlighting the need for more research, commitment to action, targeted education, and increased funding and support. Several participants expressed frustration with decision-making processes that prioritize governing educational theories over practical experience, which they found deeply frustrating as classroom teachers.

Sophia underscored the systemic nature of the issue, stating: "*You're not the best teacher you can be because the kids deserve more and again, it's not our fault. It's a system failing education, which encompasses educators and students and families*". Another participant described the current state of teaching as being in a "*sad state right now*," and suggested that additional time for family or parental leave could alleviate the emotional burden on women. Similarly, Lucas voiced his frustration with decision-makers:

> *"They're making decisions in terms of their philosophy. That's totally out to lunch and they're not on the ground and the longer they're away from not being on the ground, the more they're going to make these decisions that are super frustrating."*

Ava emphasized the urgency of the issue, stating: "*I think that this is a huge topic and one that absolutely requires not only research but action, commitment to action."* Lena shared a different perspective, reflecting on the gender dynamics within education:

> "*I find it interesting that it's such a female-dominated career. At least K-6 is, but our administration still tends to be male-dominated and even the people in NLTA, like its males who, are being voted in. I know that's about politician thing as well because more males tend to do that, but it's just, it's just an interesting thing because…I know that they don't understand the full dynamic about we as women do, when the emotional load that we carry."*

Participants' additional comments highlighted several key themes. Among 11 mentions, the most frequently noted were *Mental Health Focus* (18.2%, n = 2) and *Policy Development* (18.2%, n = 2). Other themes, each mentioned once (9.1%), included *Lack of Support, Time*

Management, Unrealistic Expectations, Professional Development, Professional Recognition, More Time Off, and *Conditions Worsening*.

5.3 Summary

An average of 46 out of 132 participants (35%) responded to the qualitative section of the online survey. To note, there is no definitive way to determine the demographics of participants who responded to the qualitative section of the online survey. The qualitative portion of the survey highlighted recurring themes.

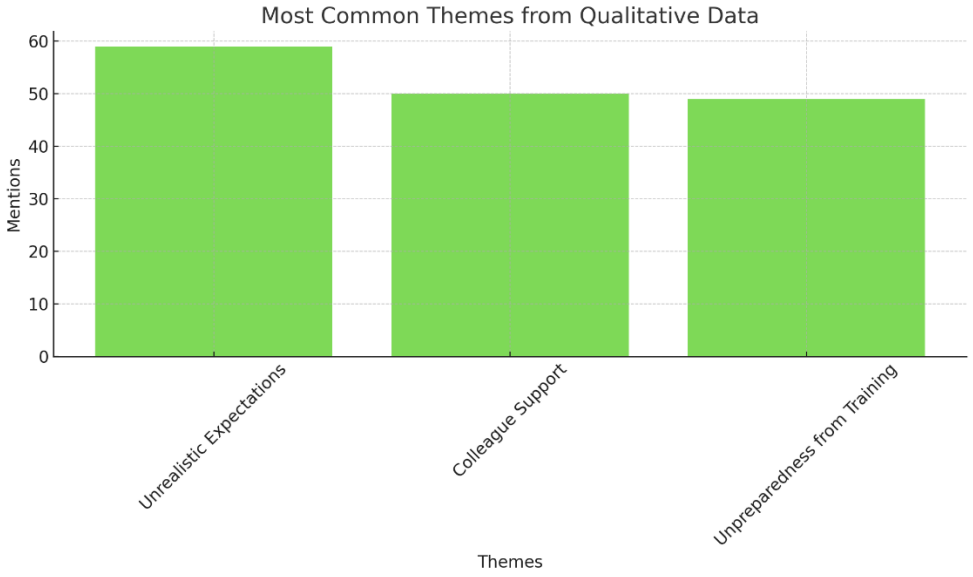


Figure 18. *Most Commons Themes from Qualitative Data.*

The most common were Unrealistic Expectations (n = 59, 7.5%), Colleague Support (n = 50, 6.3%), and Unpreparedness from Training (n = 49, 6.2%). In qualitative interviews, all participants reported experiencing compassion fatigue or burnout and observed similar issues among colleagues.

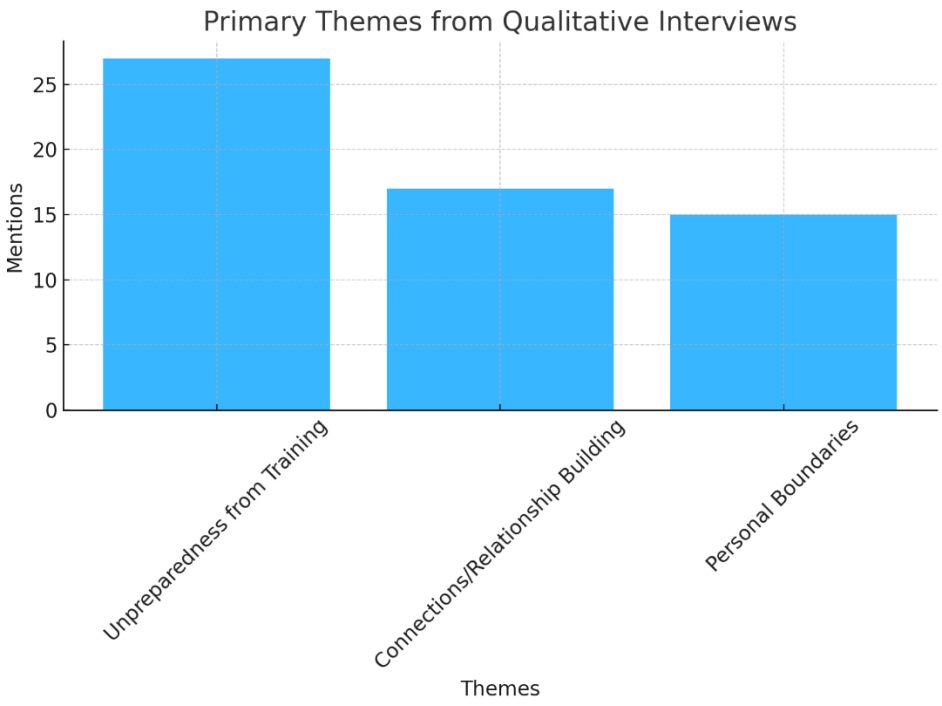


Figure 19. *Primary Themes from Qualitative Interviews.*

The primary themes from the interviews included Unpreparedness from Training (n = 27, 15.2%), the importance of Connections/Relationship Building (n = 17, 9.6%), and the necessity of Personal Boundaries (n = 15, 8.5%).

In conclusion, the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data suggest that teachers perceive unrealistic expectations, insufficient colleague support, and inadequate preparation during training as key contributors to burnout. Participants also indicated that targeted professional development, enhanced teacher training, and improved support systems may help mitigate burnout risks.

Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter analyzes the data gathered in the study on teacher burnout, interpreting the findings of the research question, identifying contributing factors, and highlighting patterns and trends. Quantitative and qualitative data are examined to provide a nuanced understanding of teacher burnout, focusing on themes such as lack of resources, inadequate support, large class sizes, and overwhelming workloads. By synthesizing these findings, this chapter aims to contribute to the knowledge of teacher burnout and offer insights for future research and practical interventions to mitigate the issue.

6.1 Connections & Themes

Teachers described working without adequate resources in a system under strain, placing them under considerable psychological stress. Neither professional development nor education programs had fully prepared them for such intense demands, especially during the early stages of their careers. The cumulative effect of these factors was all too often high levels of stress, decreasing job dissatisfaction, and a lack of confidence in one's professional abilities. As noted, all six interview participants reported experiencing burnout. Although the online survey did not directly ask about burnout, one respondent mentioned it voluntarily, two reported compassion fatigue, and 5 out of 51 participants in the qualitative section expressed exhaustion or tiredness from teaching. Additionally, 51 participants shared their views on factors contributing to compassion fatigue, which are discussed in further detail below.

The data aligns with the research question, indicating that a significant number of teachers feel unprepared (n=76) and unsupported (n=53) due to unrealistic expectations (n=67), which likely contribute to burnout. Participants called for more realistic expectations from policymakers, the community, parents, and administration. They also emphasized the need for

greater professional autonomy, increased support, smaller class sizes, more counsellors, and more effective preparation for the realities of teaching.

There is much to learn from analyzing the data and examining the frequently mentioned themes. The themes of inadequate support and resources were central to participants' responses, revealing a larger issue within the system: the unrealistic expectations being placed on teachers given the tools they have to work with. Many participants highlighted that they struggled to maintain a work-life balance and manage their time and energy. These are symptoms of a more significant problem.

6.1.1 Connection to Research Question

Teacher burnout emerged as a significant problem among participants in the study in both the survey and interviews as they reflected on their early career experiences and training. The data revealed that the top stressor for participants was difficulty managing work-life balance, with participants rating it at 7.23 out of a possible 9 (n=64), with 1 being a low stress rating and 9 being the highest. Notably, 64% (n =32) of respondents felt unprepared for their teacher training program to manage this balance, which aligns with their reported stress levels.

Participants felt that their training programs should better prepare them for the practical aspects of the profession. However, the practicum portion of their education was viewed as more beneficial than theoretical courses that seemed disconnected from the everyday realities of teaching. One participant emphasized the importance of mental health training for new teachers and learning to set and maintain boundaries in challenging professional situations:

> *"I will start this by saying I have burnout. I have been a full-time permanent teacher for 8.5 years now. I sub. I think that many factors contributed to my*

burnout. First off, I worked in a high-incidence environment. We had a large number of students who were part of the foster system and others who dealt with serious mental health issues. Abuse was also prevalent in the area. As a young teacher, I was never taught how to deal with a large influx of these things. There was no guidance on boundaries and maintaining mental health. We would be given an impersonal list of "dos and don'ts" that do not address what it is like when a 12-year-old asks you to stand outside the door so she can take a pregnancy test. Mental Health protections for teachers must be taught and properly addressed to new teachers."

Moreover, 94% (n=33) of participants felt they had to learn competencies on the job, often through trial and error and by learning from colleagues. This underscores the importance of mentorship programs in helping new teachers transition into the profession, with 83% (n=39) indicating that co-workers' support was essential in developing teaching competencies.

6.1.2 Connections Beyond the Research Question

Participants highlighted other significant stressors, including a lack of professional resources, with a stressor rating of 5.31/9 (n=62) and inadequate support (n=45). Many related these issues to the unrealistic expectations placed on teachers. They indicated feeling stress over difficulties associated with managing a suitable work-life balance (rating of 7.23/9, n=64), managing their health and energy (rating of 6.89/9, n=64) and time management (rating of 6.21/9, n=63).

Concerns were also raised about large class sizes (n=30), with participants highlighting how a lack of student accountability (n=17) and parental involvement issues (n=27) compounded these challenges. Qualitative responses indicated that students who consistently fail to complete

the prescribed curriculum, often with parental enabling, make teaching particularly challenging due to their lack of engagement. Furthermore, participants noted that post-pandemic students are presenting more socio-emotional issues, leaving teachers feeling unprepared to handle the psychological demands of these concerns. They emphasized the need for more instructional resource teachers (IRT) and counsellors, stating that merely training teachers to take on these socio-emotional issues without additional support would exaggerate their workload. Many agreed that time management (n=31) is a significant issue and called for more time off or reduced duties. Addressing these challenges by placing the responsibility solely on teachers would only add to unrealistic expectations already contributing to compassion fatigue. As noted, large class sizes and a lack of support—particularly from policymakers, administrators, colleagues, the community and mentors—were major stressors. While COVID-19 exacerbated these challenges, some participants noted positive outcomes, such as smaller class sizes and increased awareness among parents of the difficulties teachers face. However, overall, the general sentiment is that teachers feel overworked and undervalued due to a lack of acknowledgement of the complexities of their profession.

Study data identified unrealistic expectations (n=67) and extreme workloads (n=34) as critical factors contributing to compassion fatigue. Participants called for more resources, support, and appreciation from the policymakers, including reduced student-to-adult ratios and greater professional autonomy. One participant highlighted how unrealistic expectations from the public, parents and administration exacerbate burnout:

> "*…I have burnout…the expectations of the public pressure teachers. Not to mention the expectation of parents and even administrators to bend backwards at all hours for all students (while somehow maintaining professional*

distance/boundaries). Not to mention that a lot of the time, we are powerless in our positions. Teach this way, teach that way, but hit all the curriculum points. Do new things, but not if they will cost more money. We have very limited autonomy within our classrooms and often are not lucky enough to have supportive administrators. My psychologist once said that one of the biggest factors in burnout is the feeling of being ineffective. I found this to be profoundly accurate. In my last year of full-time teaching, I felt incredibly ineffective. The students had difficulty, and the administration was spineless. Once a teacher has hit "I cannot do anything anymore," the next stop is stopping teaching."

This participant was one of many calling for increased autonomy and more substantial support from administrators. Their experiences align with existing literature, such as Ollison (2019), which states that burnout is a negative element of compassion fatigue, marked by hopelessness, disenfranchisement, and a sense that one's work is meaningless. Teacher effectiveness, a major contributor to student achievement (OECD, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2017), is closely linked to these concerns. In their competency ratings, teachers rated themselves as Excellent in respecting staff and students, and maintaining professionalism and a healthy relationship with administration. With a Poor competency rating in maintaining a healthy work life balance. This unequal distribution is another sign that the teachers are pouring their emotional resilience cup out for the staff, students and administration but are unable to feel satiated in the impact their effort is trying to impart. Overall, participants emphasized the need for systemic recognition of teachers' workload and greater involvement in decision-making processes that impact their professional obligations.

6.2 Literature Connections

6.2.1 Unrealistic Expectations: Regulating Body and Society

The literature consistently demonstrates that unrealistic expectations contribute to teacher burnout and dissatisfaction. Anderson and Terra (2015) investigated the challenges 138 teachers in Norway faced, highlighting issues such as managing government paperwork, adapting to large class sizes, motivating students, and addressing social and emotional problems. The teachers viewed these challenges as stemming from a poorly designed educational system rather than personal inefficiencies. They concluded that teachers need a stronger voice in decisions about improvements, particularly regarding bureaucratic demands and limited financial resources that hinder adaptive teaching.

Anderson and Terra's (2015) research findings align with those of the current study, which also identified burnout as a consequence of trying to meet governmental expectations, handling large class sizes, motivating students, managing classrooms, and handling unrealistic expectations. This study underscores the significant contribution of society's and government's unrealistic expectations to teacher burnout. The research identified key themes that emerged from the qualitative data, including unrealistic expectations (67 mentions), lack of support (53 mentions), and policy development (49 mentions). In responses to open-ended questions, participants noted that expectations on teachers continue to rise without removing existing duties, leading to overwhelming pressure. This sentiment was reiterated throughout responses to reflect a theme of *worsening conditions, as expressed by one interview participant:*

> "*When work and expectations are piled on, disproportionately heavier on us than the people doing the piling, it is difficult to fight off compassion fatigue, especially when there appears to be no end in sight."*

This statement reflects the perception that excessive work and expectations are imposed without providing teachers with a voice, directly linking high workloads and unrealistic workloads to compassion fatigue. Unfortunately, the participant also seems to believe that it is likely that this trend will continue.

Hagger, Mutton, and Burn's (2011) study on teacher induction programs also highlighted the significant role played by unrealistic expectations. The three-year longitudinal study found that early career teachers struggled with external expectations and their expectations of teaching and students. First-year teachers found managing multiple demands and their time challenging. Additionally, they discovered that teaching involved more than just subject content knowledge, with significant managerial and administrative duties. Building connections and relationships with students and parents was crucial for gaining trust, respect, and cooperation. The study found that first-year teachers often entered the profession with expectations that did not fit the reality they experienced. However, through their experiences in the classroom, they gradually learn and evolve. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) cautioned against expecting first-year teachers to focus solely on student learning when primarily focused on adapting and surviving.

Hagger et al.'s (2011) study found that while unrealistic expectations contributed to early career teachers' stress, experiential learning while on the job helped to alleviate some of these pressures. This aligns with the present study's finding that many teachers acquire critical competencies through on-the-job experience, reinforcing the importance of ongoing professional development and experiential learning. The research challenges the notion that teachers learn everything they need during initial training, highlighting the importance of ongoing teacher induction programs. Expecting early-career teachers to perform like seasoned professionals is unrealistic and hinders their development by neglecting to provide educational and professional

support. Norman and Feiman-Menser (2005) argue that recognizing all beginning teachers as learners is crucial for designing effective induction programs. This approach can help reduce these unrealistic expectations by acknowledging the need for ongoing learning and support early in their careers.

5.2.2 Mentorship

Early career teachers often report a disconnect between their formal classroom training and their on-the-job experiences (Du Plessis et al., 2020). Flores (2019) found that many new teachers face more significant challenges in their first year than anticipated, contributing to high attrition rates within the first five years. This issue has increased support for induction programs (Mena, Clarke, 2021). According to Regalado *et al.,* induction programs help integrate teachers into schools, reduce stress, strengthen their coping skills and promote commitment to the profession. Other studies support these findings and note additional benefits, including improved teacher retention (Çobanoğlu & Ayvaz-Tuncel, 2018; Harmsen et al., 2019; Çam Aktaş, 2018; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). One participant from this study shared how a lack of training led to emotional distress and described how a colleague stepped in to help,

> "*I was sitting in our staff room, almost in tears, trying to figure out how to make it* (report card software) *work when a colleague walked in. She saw my distress, took me to a nearby computer, and introduced me to the program. Many times during my career, I have felt this lost*."

This participant's experience highlights the importance of structured help from more experienced teachers, which can reduce stress and enhance their commitment to the profession.

Overall, the literature strongly supports the implementation of teacher induction programs and their ongoing improvement.

Mentorship within teacher induction programs for early career teachers is not a new concept. Kutsyuruba (2012) reviewed teacher induction programs in Canada and found that while mentorship is often discussed in educational research as a strategy to reduce attrition, comprehensive induction programs are only implemented in New Brunswick, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories. Kutsyuruba's (2012) research identified mentorship as a critical component of these programs, matching experienced teachers with new teachers to the profession or the region.

Perla, Agrati, and Amati's (2021) study in Italy explored effective mentorship models based on OECD recommendations. They found that mentors were crucial in helping teachers transition into their careers and continue development throughout their professional lives. The study reported that 89.6% of teacher trainees found their internship valuable, with 78% explicitly appreciating the support of a mentor. Perla *et al.* (2021) advocated for a 'continuous' model of teacher training and mentoring that extends beyond preservice training, aligning with OECD documents (2016, 2020). This approach includes informal support from experienced teachers in the same school. The continuous mentorship model is essential because teacher trainees must develop classroom management skills, teaching techniques, and an understanding of the school system (Perla *et al*., 2021).

The current study echoes the need for improvements in teacher training, with many respondents reporting feeling unprepared (n=76). However, many also noted that their practicum or internship was the most helpful in preparing them for their teaching career. One participant stated: "*I learned an immense amount from my teaching practicum."* Along with the practicum,

respondents also emphasized the helpfulness of colleague support, with 50 mentions in the online survey. Participants called explicitly for a mentorship program to address the transition from student teacher to professional teacher. One participant commented in the open-ended portion of the online survey: "*There should be a better transition. I benefited greatly from learning from experienced teachers. A mentorship program would be helpful"*. This sentiment was echoed by 94% of survey respondents, who indicated that they had to learn many skills on the job early in their careers.

Meanwhile, 83% of respondents felt their colleagues helped them learn teaching competencies and provided strong support. Perla et al. (2021) also noted that adequately training mentors and implementing a network mentoring system would help ensure that teacher trainees transition smoothly from formal to informal mentorship, maintaining a professional learning network throughout their careers. Further surveys with diverse populations of teachers are recommended to tailor mentorship programs to specific needs rather than relying on generalized findings from smaller studies.

Since 2002, Scotland has implemented a successful Teacher Induction System (TIS) to support new teachers and promote quality and retention (McMahon–Mena & Clarke, 2021). This structured program provides mentorship and support to early career teachers. A 2005 survey of 3908 teachers confirmed the TIS's positive impact (Audit Scotland, 2006), supporting that a mentorship-focused teacher induction program benefits early-career teachers.

6.3 Complementary Findings

These findings are complementary as the researcher’s lens was through a lack of preparedness and was obtained through qualitative response analysis. Participants reported that a *lack of support* from the system, administration, other educators, parents and the community

significantly contributed to their feelings of burnout. This theme was mentioned 53 times and was the fourth most mentioned theme. Responses to the online survey and qualitative interviews emphasized the importance of administrative support. Many participants felt that those who could provide support were not doing enough to adequately alleviate daily stressors, including colleagues, parents, administration, community, and policymakers. One participant directly attributed their end-of-career compassion fatigue to a lack of support from their administration: "*I often found that the administrator or administrators had very little intuitive understanding, many times, of the problems at hand*." This educator, who had a 30-year career, left on a sour note due to a conflict with the administration rooted in a disagreement between the participant and a parent. Others similarly noted a lack of support from various sources, with one participant stating there is a “lack of all the other supports like administration support, extra support outside like from, *we will say, the NLTA, NLESD and parents.*" This response mentions the perceived lack of support from policymakers, the teacher’s union and administrators.

Other participants mentioned the pandemic's impact on student behaviours: "*There is a lack of help/resources from parents and admin to help overcome this. We are expected to fix these issues without the proper resources and tools. It makes teaching and learning harder than pre-pandemic."* Many participants expressed the need for a more precise understanding that a classroom teacher is not a counsellor and cannot address the complex socio-emotional issues that students bring daily, particularly after the pandemic. They emphasized the need for proper resources and support systems. They noted how vital collegial support is: "*I have to be a supportive person in the building because otherwise none of us are going to survive this* (teaching)." This participant strongly believed that greater colleague and community support

were needed, mainly when teachers teach children in high-needs environments such as low socio-economic districts.

The lack of support is closely linked to the theme of parental involvement. The theme of parental involvement received 27 mentions (i.e. the 15th most mentioned theme). There is a link between lack of support and parental involvement because when participants mentioned parental involvement, it was in the context of unrealistic parental demands, needing more support from parents, and receiving pressure from parents. One participant shared:

> *"Teachers need to be supported by the general public. When the community does not support teachers, they fight a daily battle. It is mentally draining. Many people do not see everything we do outside the 8-3 school day. We teach during those hours. Planning, marking, extracurricular activities, and everything else happens outside those hours. Parents/guardians need to take responsibility for their children. Students come to school without basic skills such as manners. Teachers help students build their character, but parents often do not want to take responsibility for their child's education because that is 'the teacher's job'".*

Many participants felt there was little support or recognition beyond meeting educational outcomes. An interesting perspective came from a principal, who shared: "*As a Principal - I receive little to no support from my DOS (Director of Schools)***.** *They are there when they want something but become invisible when I require support at my school*." This perspective suggests that the lack of support for teachers may stem from higher administrative levels and policymakers, contributing to teachers feeling overwhelmed by excessive workloads and unrealistic expectations. According to the data, wearing many hats without adequate support increases the burden on teachers, making their roles even more challenging. As one participant

noted, linking unrealistic expectations to worsening conditions: "*We must be honest and realistic about what any one teacher can manage. As I head into my last year of teaching, I feel sorry for those young teachers who will be exiting the profession within the next 5-10 years. The job is untenable."*

This participant paints a bleak future for current teachers, reflecting on their long career in teaching. The research revealed a troubling theme of worsening conditions, mentioned 23 times. When combined with 53 mentions of lack of support and 67 mentions of unrealistic expectations, the findings indicate that many teachers go to work each day feeling unsupported and hopeless about improvement. It is unrealistic to expect anyone to be effective under such a burden. One participant, with extensive experience, stated:

> *"I have been teaching for 27 years. I was once told that the pendulum would eventually swing back toward a common sense approach to teaching and learning. That has not happened. The system bends and bucks to the whims of ridiculous bulldozer/helicopter parents. Little support is left for personnel, including administrators, at the school level. Teachers on the front line feel they are at the bottom, receiving the blame for all the system failures. The public seems to trust our noble intentions no longer. It is getting to the point where a cohort of the public that hates schooling and is intent on making ridiculous demands on our resources and personnel is running the show. Until this changes, nothing will improve…Hopefully, someone will come in and shake the system to its core and restore some real accountability. I will be retired by then. Good luck!"*

This participant presents a pessimistic outlook on the future of teaching based on personal experience and calls for systemic change. This study aims to address teacher burnout, and the evidence that teachers not only experience these issues but also believe they will worsen underscores the urgency of finding solutions. Teachers must feel adequate in their roles, as research by the OECD (2020) links teacher effectiveness to better student outcomes, which are key to a stronger educational future.

Others were more positive and focused on their own agency to adapt and create positive change. Teachers can adapt and respond to challenges when provided with the necessary time and support to solve problems. One participant reflected on how their ability to co-regulate when students' emotions escalated contributed to their professional success. When asked which skill was the most important for a teacher to master, they replied:

> "*Well, it obviously takes much patience, and I would say it's a really big focus on. I guess the right word would be co-regulation. Not only having the ability to help students become regulated when they're dysregulated, but you know, kind of being able to regulate yourself in those situations, if that makes sense."*

Classroom management can be especially challenging for teachers as they try to control their emotions while helping dysregulated students. This theme addresses student behaviour and needs and was mentioned 27 times in the qualitative data. Many participants contributed to experiential learning by improving their classroom management skills. One participant said: "*I had to figure out what classroom management style worked best for me. There are different children in every class and every class dynamic is unique. I had to learn to adapt to whatever situation I was presented with and I feel that I have done this effectively.".*

An exciting finding throughout the research was the repeated mention of resilience as a self-taught soft skill acquired through experiential learning. Resiliency is a capability shown by many teachers in this study as they remained in the teaching profession despite facing significant challenges. This phenomenon, particularly among early-career teachers, suggests that many teachers are motivated to remain in the field despite these difficulties. Resilience, defined as the ability to endure a negative experience, cope, and emerge stronger (Morgan, 2011; Regalado et al., 2021), helps teachers regulate their emotions and reduce stress (Tait, 2008). Leugers (2018) reported that teachers with positive experiences in their teacher induction programs develop strong resilience and are more likely to remain in their teaching positions long-term. This supports the idea that induction programs can teach and strengthen resilience, reducing burnout and increasing retention.

6.4 Limitations

Several possible limitations could affect the reliability of findings. First, the sample size was relatively small. There were 132 participants in the online survey and 6 in the phone interview survey. This was a small fraction of the overall population of teachers since, according to the Department of Education's 2023 report, as of the 2022-2023 school year, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) had 5,395 teachers. It should also be noted that recruitment for the phone interviews was also difficult.

Additionally, a potential limitation within the results would be the participant demographics for the qualitative responses from the online survey. There were only an average of 46 of the 132 respondents (35%) who responded to the open-ended survey items in Part D of the online survey. There is no definitive way to know how many of the 35% were among the 20.49% (n=27) of participants identified as early career teachers. This could impact the

representativeness and interpretation of the qualitative insights. However, teachers at all stages of their careers can reflect on their experiences in teacher training and their professional experiences at the early stages of their professional lives.

Also, for the phone interview questions, a potential limitation could arise from the fact that of the six respondents (100%), none were in the early career teacher range of 0-5 (0%), although 5 participants (83%) were in the 6-10 year range. One participant (17%) was in the 15-year range. The implication for these responses could mean a recall bias from respondents. The issue of not interviewing teachers in the early career teacher range routes back to the difficulty in recruiting teachers for the phone interview.

Another limitation could be selection bias, as all participants were current teachers who had not yet decided to leave the profession. Teachers who had already left the profession were not surveyed or interviewed, and this group may have different views on the issues being studied. This omission may affect the generalizability of the findings to those who have left teaching.

Another potential limitation is response bias, where participants with strong opinions might be more likely to respond, potentially skewing the results. Additionally, respondents may be more inclined to provide socially desirable answers rather than express their genuine opinions. Individuals who participated in the study may have different characteristics or experiences than those who chose not to, especially since all respondents were current teachers who had chosen to stay in the profession. This could introduce a selection bias limiting how broadly some findings can be applied.

Another potential limitation is recall bias. Out of all participants, 80% had been teaching for over five years, with over 40% of participants teaching for over 15 years. Some questions asked participants to recall their teacher preparation courses, so they may not have been able to recall their experiences accurately.

Regarding the semi-structured interviews, interviewer bias is a potential concern. The phrasing of questions, the interviewer's tone, or other factors could have influenced the participants' responses. At the time of data collection, the interviewer was a teacher with approximately eight years of teaching experience, which could have influenced the interpretation of data. Triangulation with the supervisor was used during the creation of the survey and data analysis to reduce bias and increase the validity of the survey tool.

Finally, qualitative analysis, which requires interpretation, always involves some level of subjectivity. To reduce this, two-cycle coding and triangulation were used (Saldana, 2020) during the analysis. Member checking was also employed to ensure members were satisfied with the accuracy of their responses after transcription.

6.5 Summary

This study's qualitative and quantitative methods successfully addressed the research question, revealing strong agreement among teachers that they felt unprepared to teach in their first year (n=76) and that this lack of preparedness was the cause of stress and posed a significant challenge during their early careers. The study identified several key themes related to teacher burnout, including unrealistic expectations (67 mentions), lack of support (53 mentions), and the need for policy development (49 mentions). A complementary theme was a lack of support from administrators, fellow teachers and parents, which was mentioned 53 times. This lack of support and worsening conditions (n=23) contributed to feelings of compassion fatigue among

participants as new teachers and throughout all career stages. Another significant finding was the emphasis on resilience among teachers, which some participants described as a self-taught skill developed through experience. Several solutions are recommended to address these symptoms of burnout. These include mentorship programs, revisiting and amending the expectations placed on teachers and providing targeted support to alleviate stress and improve teacher retention.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

The impact of teacher preparedness on the mental health of practicing teachers is immediate and profound. The toll of feeling unprepared when beginning their professional role can be extraordinary for early career teachers, leading to stress and internal conflict (Taylor *et al*., 2017). Studies indicate that teacher training programs sometimes need more appropriate methods, with ineffective training leaving too many early-career teachers feeling isolated, less motivated, and unsatisfied with their jobs (Albaba, 2017; Sorensen, 2021). This research reveals that practical, hands-on experiences, such as internships and colleague support, are crucial for teacher development. However, participants in this study who completed internships during the COVID-19 pandemic reported an unfortunate imbalance, with more theory and less practical skill development.

The original hypothesis aimed to discover whether a lack of preparedness had led to teacher burnout. An analysis of the open-ended survey responses and interviews highlighted the imbalance in teacher workloads due to large class sizes, lack of support, and unrealistic expectations. This workload imbalance contributes to teacher burnout at all career stages, with new teachers, in particular, feeling the adverse impact of increased responsibilities and growing unrealistic expectations.

7.1 Research Question

The research question that this study sought to answer was whether a lack of preparedness contributed to burnout or compassion fatigue in teachers. The study also sought to identify specific contributing factors and themes related to teacher preparedness and compassion fatigue. As noted, data was gathered using a survey instrument and semi-structured interviews. Using two-cycle coding, the responses were analyzed. The first open-ended survey question

asked the participants what they felt contributed to teacher burnout, and interestingly, being unprepared for teaching was not mentioned. However, the highest-rated stressor for participants was ‘managing my work and life balance’ with a mean score of 7.68 out of a possible 9, with 1 being a low stress rating and 9 being the highest. When asked if they felt prepared to manage their work/life balance, out of 50 responses, 68% (n=34) felt unprepared, 24% (n=12) felt prepared, and 8% (n=4) were not applicable. Combining those responses with the responses of 50 participants regarding the adequacy of their practicum in preparing them for real-world teaching, 64% (n=32) felt inadequately prepared, and 22% (n=11) felt adequately prepared. The data reveals mixed feelings among participants regarding their teacher training programs. Many expressed that their practicums provided valuable experiences, particularly in lesson planning, classroom management, and building relationships, but fell short of fully preparing them for the realities of teaching, such as managing challenging classrooms, supporting students with special needs, and handling emotional and behavioural issues. Balancing work and life emerged as a significant concern, with many stating their programs offered little to no guidance on managing workload or maintaining personal well-being. Participants frequently cited that they learned more "on the job" or through mentorship and real-world experiences than from their formal education, with some emphasizing the disconnect between theoretical training and practical application. Overall, participants felt their teacher training programs lacked comprehensive preparation for the multifaceted demands of the profession.

The semi-structured interviews allowed for a more in-depth investigation of participant perceptions. What became clear was that all phone interview participants felt compassion fatigue from the teaching profession. All phone interview participants also stated that they had witnessed compassion fatigue in their colleagues, which suggests that it is an ongoing issue in the teaching

profession. However, being unprepared may not be the primary contributing factor in light of other factors and themes emerging from the data, as discussed below. As noted, many teachers highlighted the negative impact of ongoing systemic issues and a lack of resources.

Other important factors emerged with open-ended survey questions, allowing the participants to freely express their thoughts on contributing factors to compassion fatigue. Indeed, participants noted several contributing factors that they believed contributed to burnout: unrealistic expectations (18.5%, n=28), lack of adequate support (10.6%, n=16), issues related to time management and parental involvement (i.e. both with 7.3%, n=11), and the need for more counsellors and smaller class sizes (6.6%, n=10). Workload emerged as the most common theme, with participants citing the growing professional responsibilities associated with dense curriculums, large class sizes, and unrealistic stakeholder expectations. Respondents also mentioned challenges in setting appropriate personal boundaries and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Therefore, the inability to effectively manage life and work balance stems from a more deeply rooted issue. Overall, findings suggest that the difficulties teachers face require a comprehensive approach that prioritizes their well-being and acknowledges the complexity of their work.

7.2 Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight critical areas for improving teacher preparedness and retention, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions at both pre-service and in-service stages. The following recommendations are proposed to address these challenges and foster meaningful, sustainable improvements in the teaching profession. Although data regarding where the participants undertook their teacher training programs, the research setting has a single

university, and in this jurisdiction, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador regulates teaching. Consequently, the study recommendations will address these organizations.

7.2.1 Enhancing Teacher Training Programs

Though many early career teachers did say they learned competencies well at their post-secondary institution, there were still gaps to address. To bridge the gap between theory and practice, teacher education programs at MUN could integrate more mandatory, skills-focused courses that address real-world teaching scenarios. These courses should emphasize key areas such as classroom management, ethical responsibilities, conflict resolution, work-life balance, and employability skills. Though there are courses such as a methodology course, ED 4005 – Effective Teaching and Learning Environments, that focus on conducive learning environments encompassing management strategies (MUN Calendar, 2023), a greater number of practical application courses developed with the input of current practicing public school teachers may better serve the needs of new professionals. Opportunities for experiential learning, such as simulated classrooms, role-playing activities, and problem-solving workshops, should be prioritized to prepare pre-service teachers for the complexities of modern classrooms. While valuable, internships and observation placements are often insufficient; these should be reviewed and structured to allow trainees to take on full teaching responsibilities under supervision (Ogakwu et al., 2022; Strang, 1995).

A heightened emphasis on practical skills within training programs is significant. Based on early-career teachers' self-reports, programs should incorporate training in ethical expectations, union resources, and conflict resolution strategies. As Strang (1995) observed, teachers often rate competencies such as classroom and time management highly, yet gaps in practical preparation can lead to stress and feelings of inadequacy. Addressing these gaps

through more robust, hands-on training would better equip new teachers to navigate the challenges of their profession.

7.2.2 Strengthening Post-Graduation Support

Post-graduation support is essential for recent graduates transitioning from theory to practice. Professional development (PD) initiatives should address practical skills such as time management, emotional regulation, handling diverse student needs, and establishing boundaries to prevent burnout (Ogakwu et al., 2022). Additionally, professional development should include self-care strategies to foster resilience and long-term well-being among teachers. Sorensen (2021) highlights the value of professional development opportunities in supplementing gaps in teacher training, particularly for early-career educators.

Formal mentorship programs, both digital and in-person, are critical for supporting beginning teachers. These programs should connect recent graduates with experienced mentors who can offer personalized advice, share resources, and assist with problem-solving. Digital mentorship platforms could enhance accessibility, allowing mentees to seek support in real-time and build professional networks. Urbani et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of peer-to-peer mentorship in reducing stress and attrition. Furthermore, mentorship programs must ensure that mentors are trained, confident, and equipped to provide empathetic and practical guidance. The teaching union (NLTA), the Government of NL, and MUN can share responsibility for these mentorship programs. A new teacher induction support program in NL had been a joint venture between these three bodies; however, it ended due to poor implementation (Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, 2005). As Stapp, Prior, and Harmon (2019) suggest, mentorship can help early-career teachers overcome challenges that lead to compassion fatigue and resignation.

7.2.3 Addressing Workload Imbalances

Excessive workloads are a significant contributor to teacher burnout and attrition. Policymakers within the Government of NL should prioritize reducing these burdens by reallocating non-teaching responsibilities, increasing access to support staff, and ensuring manageable class sizes. Ogakwu et al. (2022) emphasize that many teachers struggle to achieve a healthy work-life balance, often taking work home, which reduces opportunities for rest and rejuvenation. Younghusband's (2005) NL study provided insights into the stress factors impacting teachers and highlighted the need for systemic changes to enhance teacher well-being and retention in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Professional development programs can also address self-regulation and social support systems, equipping teachers with tools to manage their limits, practice self-empathy, and establish healthy boundaries. Stone's (2015) research highlights the need to involve teachers in policy creation to ensure interventions are both practical and widely supported. A collaborative approach involving teachers, unions, and policymakers is essential to ensure that workload reforms are effective and sustainable.

7.2.4 Promoting Collaborative Policymaking

The disconnect between educational policy and classroom realities has been a persistent challenge. Stone (2015) notes that policy changes often fail without teacher buy-in, as top-down reforms may not align with the practical needs of educators. Collaborative approaches are essential to ensure that interventions address systemic challenges without exacerbating teacher frustrations. Research and petitions supported by teachers, unions, and political figures could facilitate positive change, ensuring that policies are evidence-based and grounded in the realities of the teaching profession.

7.2.5 Summary

Improving teacher preparedness and retention requires a multifaceted approach that begins with enhancing teacher training programs and extends through comprehensive post-graduation support. Integrating more practical training through Memorial University of Newfoundland's (MUN) mentorship programs through collaboration between MUN and the Government of NL and developing policies from the Government of NL that address workload imbalances, educational institutions and policymakers can create a supportive framework for early-career teachers. These recommendations, rooted in the findings of this study, aim to empower educators, reduce burnout, and improve long-term retention, ultimately contributing to better outcomes for both teachers and students (Ogakwu et al., 2022; Sorensen, 2021; Stapp, Prior, & Harmon, 2019; Stone, 2015; Strang, 1995; Urbani et al., 2017).

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Further research should focus on designing mentorship programs that address the overwhelming experience experienced by early career teachers. These programs could involve various mentorship pairings, such as veteran teacher-to-early career teacher, teacher educator-to-early career teacher and peer-to-peer mentoring. Additionally, exploring professional development opportunities for substitute teachers, cooperating teachers, and beginning teachers is crucial. Routine collection of census data, compiled into visual reports, can provide accurate employment statistics to the educational community. This research should aim to find solutions to compassion fatigue and burnout, offering practical support through organized means.

Validation through active community support, as suggested by Figley (1995), can help diffuse trauma. Further research into unrealistic expectations would help frame petitions to policymakers, ultimately aiming to create psychologically safe classrooms for both children and

adults. This further research could take the form of a longitudinal study beginning with teachers early in their careers to track changes and deepen the understanding of results. One suggestion learned from analyzing the results of this study would be to make future research surveys short and digestible so as not to lose participants in lengthy and time-consuming work. The goal is to address teacher burnout and retain quality educators, ensuring a lifelong, fulfilling career for teachers and mentors alike.

7.4 Summary

Study findings suggest that a lack of preparedness does not solely cause teacher burnout and compassion fatigue *but is also rooted in a broader set of systemic issues* that adversely impact all teachers, especially those professionals in the early stages of their careers. These include unrealistic expectations, lack of support, time management challenges, issues related to parental involvement, and heavy workloads. The data suggests that these factors contribute significantly to teachers' struggles with managing personal boundaries and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Reducing teacher burnout requires a comprehensive approach that addresses these systemic challenges and prioritizes teacher well-being. With the participants noting that they are losing hope, these systemic challenges must be addressed soon to ensure the well-being of teachers in the early stages of their careers.

References

Adler, R. H. (2022). Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, *38*(4), 598–602. https://doi.org/10.1177/08903344221116620

Albaba, M. B. (2017). Teacher Learning during Transition from Pre-service to Novice EFL Teacher: A Longitudinal Case Study. *Novitas-ROYAL*, *11*(2), 142-154.

American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed., text rev.). American Psychiatric Publishing.

Anderson, L., & Olsen, B. (2006). Investigating early career urban teachers' perspectives on and experiences in professional development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *57*(4), 359–377. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487106291565

Anderson, S. K., & Terras, K. L. (2015). Teacher perspectives of challenges within the Norwegian educational system. *International Education Journal*, *14*(3), 1–16.

Andrews, B. D., & Quinn, R. J. (2004). First-year teaching assignments a descriptive analysis. *The Clearing House*, *78*(2), 78–83. https://doi.org/10.3200/TCHS.78.2.78-83

Anthony, C. J., & DiPerna, J. C. (2017). Identifying sets of maximally efficient items from the academic competence evaluation scales-teacher form. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *32*(4), 552–559. https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000205

Audit Scotland. (2006). *A mid-term report: A first stage review of the cost and implementation of the teachers' agreement A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century.* Audit Scotland. https://audit.scot/docs/central/2006/nr_060511_teachers_agreement.pdf

Azeem, M. S., Hussain, A. I. (2021). Impact of teachers' burnout on the academic achievement of students in government high and higher secondary schools for boys in district peshawar khyber pakhtunkhwa. *Dialogue (Dera Ismāīl Khān, Pakistan)*, *16*(1), 1-9.

Bennett, S. V., Brown, J. J., Kirby-Smith, A., & Severson, B. (2013). Influences of the heart: novice and experienced teachers remaining in the field. *Teacher Development*, *17*(4), 562–576. https://doi-org.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/10.1080/13664530.2013.849613

Biesta, G. (2010). Pragmatism and the philosophical foundations of mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research* (2nd ed., pp. 95–118). SAGE Publications.

Bloom, B.S. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives, handbook: the cognitive domain. David McKay, New York.

Brook Lapping Productions. (2006). Classroom management. [Video/DVD] Teachers TV/UK Department of Education. Retrieved from https://video-alexanderstreet-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/watch/classroom-management

Brown, A. L., Lee, J., & Collins, D. (2015). Does student teaching matter? Investigating teacher candidates' sense of teaching efficacy. *Teaching Education*, *26*(1), 77–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2014.957666

Brown, B. (2018). *Dare to lead : brave work, tough conversations, whole hearts*. Random House.

Bullough, R. V., & Baughman, K. (1997). First-year teacher" eight years later: An inquiry into teacher development. Columbia University Press.

Bush, L. E. (2019). *Teaching well: How healthy, empowered teachers lead to thriving, successful classrooms*. Pembroke Publishers.

Canter, L. (2010). *Assertive discipline: positive behavior management for today's classroom.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Carroll, A., Flynn, L., O'Connor, E. S., Forrest, K., Bower, J., Fynes-Clinton, S. York, A. Ziaei, M. (2021). In their words, they are listening to teachers' perceptions about stress in the workplace and how to address it. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *49*(4), 420–434. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2020.1789914

Çelik, H., & Zehir Topkaya, E. (2024). Preservice english teachers' preparedness to teach: stakeholders' perceptions in teaching practicum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *75*(1), 92–106. https://doi.org/10.1177/00224871231185369

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (n.d.). *Talking about mental illness.* https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/guides-and-publications/tami-teachers-guide.pdf?la=en&hash=5EBB718748F98F85CF147246E6830D383D907B5E

Chandler, D., & Munday, R. (2020). *A dictionary of media and communication* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Clack. G., Cluett. E., Klas. L., & Netten, J. (1994). *Graduate survey faculty of education 1986-1990.* St John's, NF: Memorial University Press.

Clandinin, D. J., Downey, C. A., & Schaefer, L. (2014). *Narrative conceptions of knowledge: towards understanding teacher attrition* (1st ed., Vol. 23). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3687201423

Clarke, A., Triggs, V., & Nielsen, W. (2014). Cooperating teacher participation in teacher education: a review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, *84*(2), 163–202. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654313499618

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *104*(4), 1189–1204

Collier, D., & Mahoney, J. (1996). Insights and pitfalls: selection bias in qualitative research. *World Politics*, *49*(1), 56–91. https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.1996.0023

Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.

Cruz, B. C., & Patterson, J. (2005). Cross-cultural simulations in teacher education: developing empathy and understanding. *Multicultural Perspectives (Mahwah, N.J.)*, *7*(2), 40–47. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0702_7

Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher education around the world: What can we learn from international practice? *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *40*(3), 291–309. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2017.1315399

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: what teachers should learn and be able to do* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Davis, J. R. (2018). *Classroom management in teacher education programs*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://link-springer-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-319-63850-8.pdf

Day, C. (2008). Committed for life? Variations in teachers' work, lives, and effectiveness. *Journal of Educational Change*, *9*(3), 243e260. https://doi.org/10.1007/ s10833-007-9054-6

Delaney, J. (2007). *Legal dimensions of education : implications for teachers and school administrators*. Detselig Enterprises.

Drisko, J. W. (2024). Transferability and generalization in qualitative research. *Research on Social Work Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1177/10497315241256560

Du Plessis, A. E., Cullinan, M., Gramotnev, G., Gramotnev, D. K., Hoang, N. T. H., Mertens, L., Roy, K., & Schmidt, A. (2020). The multilayered effects of initial teacher education programs on the beginning teacher workforce and workplace: Perceptions of beginning teachers and their school leaders. *International Journal of Educational Research*, pp. 99, 1–18. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.09.010

DuBois, A. L., & Mistretta, M. A. (2020). *Overcoming burnout and compassion fatigue in schools : a guide for counsellors, administrators and educators*. Routledge.

Elliot, J. G. (2009). The nature of teacher authority and teacher expertise. *Support for Learning*, *24*(4), 197–203. https://doi-org.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/10.1111/j.1467-9604.2009.01429.x

Elston, D. M. (2021). Participation bias, self-selection bias, and response bias. *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaad.2021.06.025

Faez, F., & Valeo, A. (2012). TESOL Teacher education: novice teachers' perceptions of their preparedness and efficacy in the classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *46*(3), 450–471. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.37

Falloon, G. (2020). From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *68*(5), 2449–2472. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4

Figley, C. R. (Ed.) (2002). *Treating compassion fatigue* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

Flores, C. (2019). Beginning teacher induction in Chile: Change over time. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *97*, 1–12. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.06.001

Gelatt, H. B. (1989). Positive Uncertainty: A New Decision-Making Framework for Counseling. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *36*(2), 252–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.36.2.252

Glazerman, S., et al. (2010). *Impacts of comprehensive teacher induction: Final results from a randomized controlled study (NCEE 20104027).* National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S., Washington, DC, https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104027/pdf/20104027.pdf.

Glickman, C. G. & Bey, T. M. (1990). Supervision. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research in teacher education* (pp. 549–566). New York: Macmillan.

Gold, E., Smith, A., Hopper, I., Herne, D., Tansey, G., & Hulland, C. (2010). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (mbsr) for primary school teachers. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *19*(2), 184-189.

Hagger, H., Mutton, T., & Burn, K. (2011). Surprising but not shocking: The reality of the first year of teaching. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *41*(4), 387–405. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2011.624999

Hancock, C. B., & Scherff, L. (2010). Who will stay and who will leave? Predicting secondary English teacher attrition risk. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(4), 328–338.

Heikonen, L., Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Toom, A., & Soini, T. (2017). Early career teachers' sense of professional agency in the classroom: associations with turnover intentions and perceived inadequacy in teacher-student interaction. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *45*(3), 250–266. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2016.1169505

Helms-Lorenz, M., B. Slof and W. van de Grift (2013). "First year effects of induction arrangements on beginning teachers' psychological processes," European Journal of Psychology of Education, Vol. 28/4, pp. 1265–1287, http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10212-012-0165-y.

Johnson, D. G. (2011). *Why are they leaving: A collective case study of teacher attrition during the first five career years*. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.

Joinson, C. (1992). Coping with compassion fatigue. *Nursing (Jenkintown, Pa.)*, *22*(4), 116–121. https://doi.org/10.1097/00152193-199204000-00035

Kirk, D., Macdonald, D., & O'Sullivan, M. (2006). *Handbook of physical education*. SAGE Publications Ltd, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608009

Koehler, M. J., Mishra, P., Kereluik, K., Shin, T. S., & Graham, C. R. (2013). The technological pedagogical content knowledge framework. In M. Spector, D. Merrill, J. Elen, & M. J.

Bishop (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology* (4th ed., pp. 101-111). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-3185-5_9

Korpershoek, Harms, T., de Boer, H., van Kuijk, M., & Doolaard, S. (2016). A meta-analysis of the effects of classroom management strategies and classroom management programs on students' academic, behavioral, emotional, and motivational outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, *86*(3), 643–680. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315626799

Krathwohl, D. R. (2002). A revision of Bloom's taxonomy: an overview. *Theory Into Practice*, *41*(4), 212–218. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4104_2

Kutsyuruba, B. (2012). Teacher induction and mentorship policies: The pan-Canadian overview. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education, 1*(3), 235-256. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/20466851211279484

Kyllonen, P. (2013). Soft skills for the workplace. *Change*, *45*(6), 16–23. https://doi-org.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/10.1080/00091383.2013.841516

Leugers, L. (2018). *The effects of mentoring and induction programs and personal resiliency on the retention of early career teachers*. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.

Lloyd, M., & Sullivan, A. (2012). Leaving the profession: the context behind one quality teacher's professional burn out. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *39*(4), 139–162.

Madigan, D. J., & Kim, L. E. (2021). Towards an understanding of teacher attrition: A meta-analysis of burnout, job satisfaction, and teachers' intentions to quit. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *105*, 103425-. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103425

Maich, K., Belcher, C., & Hardy, M. (2019). Teachers as zookeepers? How picture books describe classroom management. *Exceptionality Education International, 29*(1), 5–18.

Manuel, J., & Carter, D. (2016). Sustaining hope and possibility : Early-career English teachers' perspectives on their first years of teaching. *English in Australia*, *51*(1), 91–103. https://doi.org/10.3316/aeipt.213196

Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior, 2*(2), 99–113. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030020205

McHolm, F. (2006). Rx for compassion fatigue. *Journal of Christian Nursing*, *23*(4), 12–21. https://doi.org/10.1097/00005217-200611000-00003

McMahon, M., Clarke, A., Mena, J., Clarke, A., & Mena, J. (2021). The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) in Scotland: Adoption, Evolution, Revolution. In *Teacher Induction and Mentoring* (pp. 51–65). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-79833-8_3

Memorial University of Newfoundland. (2020). *Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary) Conjoint with the Diploma in Technology Education*. Retrieved from https://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=EDUC-0184

Memorial University of Newfoundland. (2020). *Bachelor of Education (Primary // Elementary) as a First Degree.* https://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=EDUC-0079

Mena, J., & Clarke, A. (Eds.). (2021). *Teacher induction and mentoring: Supporting beginning teachers* (1st ed.). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-79833-8

Mena, J., Peinado, C., Hernández, I., Mifsud, D., Day, S. P., Mifsud, D., & Day, S. P. (2023). Pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs on their role as teachers during the practicum. In *Teacher Education As an Ongoing Professional Trajectory* (pp. 71–96). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28620-9_4

Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide (Version 3). (n.d.). Teen mental health. http://teenmentalhealth.org/product/mental-health-high-school-curriculum/

Merz, S. (2014). Teaching the soft skills: three students break it down. *Educational Horizons, 93*(2), 18-20. Retrieved August 6, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/24635456

Miller, K., & Flint-Stipp, K. (2019). Preservice teacher burnout: secondary trauma and self-care issues in teacher education. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *28*(2), 28–45.

Morgan, M. (2011). Resilience and recurring adverse events: Testing an assets-based model of beginning teachers' experiences. *Irish Journal of Psychology*, *32*(3–4), 92–104. https://doi.org/10.1080/03033910.2011.613189

Naibaho, L., Gunawan, R., Sunarto, Tyas, E. H., & Nadeak, B. (2021). Early career teachers' soft skills and achievement. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education, 12*(10), 491-496. https://qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/login?url?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/early career-teachers-soft-skills-achievement/docview/2623612157/se-2

Nandamuri, P. P., & Rao, K. V. (2012). An analysis of the impact of professional training on the performance of teachers. *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, *6*(3), 20-27. https://search-proquest-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/docview/1614145494?accountid=12378

Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association. (2024, February). Teacher think tank - recruitment and retention questionnaire. https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/What-We-Heard-Recruitment-and-Retention-Online-Questionnaire.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education. (2021, June). Education action plan. https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/Education_Action_Plan_Update.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Health and Community Services. (2017, December 11). *Towards Recovery: The Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for NL.* https://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/mentalhealth_committee/mentalhealth/pdf/mentalhealth_addictions_plan.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. (2006). *Teacher mentoring handbook: A resource for schools and districts*. https://www.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/public/documents/tchrmntr_hdbk.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. (2021). *Handbook for beginning teachers*. https://www.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Handbook-for-Beginning-Teachers-Sept2021.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. (2024, March). NLTA media statement re: government's failure to address issues in education. https://www.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MEDIA-STATEMENT-March-26-2024-NLTA-Media-Statement-Re-Gov%E2%80%99s-Failure-to-Address-Issues-in-Education.pdf

Norman, P., & Feiman-Nemser, S. (2005). Mind activity in teaching and mentoring. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(5), 679–697

O'Neill, S., & Stephenson, J. (2012). Does classroom management coursework influence pre-service teachers' perceived preparedness or confidence? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(8), 1131–1143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.06.008

OECD. (2018). *Education at a glance 2018: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en.

OECD. (2020). *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, TALIS. OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en.

Ogakwu, N. V., Ede, M. O., Amaeze, F. E., Manafa, I., Okeke, F. C., Omeke, F., Amadi, K., Ede, A. O., & Ekesionye, N. E. (2022). Occupational health intervention for work–life balance and burnout management among teachers in rural communities. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *50*(7), 2923–2937. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22806

Ollison, J. (2019). *Improving teacher retention by addressing teachers' compassion fatigue*. University of the Pacific, Doctoral Dissertation. https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uop_etds/3602

Onchwari, J. (2010). Early childhood inservice and pre-service teachers' perceived levels of preparedness to handle stress in their students. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *37*(5), 391–400. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-009-0361-9

Orchard, E. L., & Instanley, C. W. (2020). "Head" and "heart" work: Re-appraising the place of theory in the "academic dimension" of early career teacher education in England. *Studia Paedagogica (Brno)*, 25(2), 139–159. https://doi.org/10.5817/SP2020-2-7

Osborne, A. G., & Russo, C. (2011). *The legal rights and responsibilities of teachers: issues of employment and instruction* (1st ed.). Corwin Press. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452275284

Pan, H. L. W., Chung, C. H., & Lin, Y. C. (2023). Exploring the predictors of teacher well-being: an analysis of teacher training preparedness, autonomy, and workload. *Sustainability*, *15*(7), 5804-. https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075804

Perla, L., Agrati, L. S., Amati, I., Clarke, A., Mena, J., Clarke, A., & Mena, J. (2021). What remains of mentor. Investigation on the Former Trainees Involved in Mentoring Program

at the University of Bari, Italy. In *Teacher Induction and Mentoring* (pp. 243–265). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-79833-8_10

Raab, R. R. (2018). A statistic's five years: a story of teacher attrition. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *24*(8), 583–591. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417729849

Regalado, A., Mena, J., & Gratacós, G. (2021). Resilience as a crucial training topic in teacher induction plans: a systematic literature review. In J. Mena & A. Clarke (Eds.) *Teacher Induction and Mentoring* (pp. 163-182). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi-org.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/10.1007/978-3-030-79833-8_4

Rockoff, J. (2008). "Does mentoring reduce turnover and improve skills of new employees? Evidence from teachers in New York City". NBER Working Paper Series, No. 13868, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, http://www.nber.org/papers/w13868.

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4E [Fourth edition]). SAGE Publishing Inc.

Schaufeli, W. B., & Salanova, M. (2007). Efficacy or inefficacy, that's the question: Burnout and work engagement, and their relationships with efficacy beliefs. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, *20*(2), 177e196. https://doi.org/10.1080/ 10615800701217878

Schleicher, A. (2011). *Building a high-quality teaching profession: Lessons from around the world* (1st ed., Vol. 9789264113046). OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264113046-en

Senler, B. (2016). Early career science teachers' self-efficacy: The role of attitude, anxiety and locus of control. *The Australian Journal of Education*, *60*(1), 26–41. https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944116629807

Sims, S., & Jerrim, J. (2020). *TALIS 2018: Teacher working conditions, turnover and attrition* (Statistical Working Paper). UK Department for Education. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/talis-2018-teacher-working-conditions-turnover-and-attrition

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2017). Dimensions of teacher burnout: relations with potential stressors at school. *Social Psychology of Education*, *20*(4), 775–790. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-017-9391-0

Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, *41*(3), 681–714.

Spalding, D. (2014). *How to teach adults: Plan your class, teach your students, change the world, expanded edition*. ProQuest Ebook Central https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca

Stapp, A., Prior, L., & Harmon, C. (2019). The relationship between a university-based mentorship program and first-year teachers' performance. *Northwest Journal of Teacher Education*, *14*(1). https://doi.org/10.15760/nwjte.2019.14.1.7

Stone, E. (2015). If not us, then who? *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, *51*(3), 126–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2015.1056664

Strang, H.R. (1995). *An analysis of self-ratings of teaching competencies and stressors of student teaching interns* (Master's thesis). Memorial University of Newfoundland. The Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Strike, K. A., & Soltis, J. F. (2009). *The ethics of teaching* (5th ed.). Teachers College Press.

Subramaniam, I. (2013). Teachers' perception on their readiness in integrating soft skills in their readiness to integrate soft skills in teaching and learning. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME), 2*(5), pp. 19-29. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9f22/080bf3e8cf61dd58a56a8e3292b2d54e0e13.pdf

Sydnor, J. (2017). "I didn't realize how hard it would be!": Tensions and transformations in becoming a teacher. *Action in Teacher Education*, *39*(2), 218–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2016.1226202

Taylor, L., McLean, L., Bryce, C. I., Abry, T., & Granger, K. L. (2019). The influence of multiple life stressors during Teacher Training on Burnout and Career Optimism in the first year of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 86, 102910. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102910

Tiilikainen, M., Toom, A., Lepola, J., & Husu, J. (2019). Reconstructing choice, reason, and disposition in teachers' practical theories of teaching (PTs). *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *79*, 124–136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.12.011

Urbani, J. M., Roshandel, S., Michaels, R., & Truesdell, E. (2017). Developing and Modeling 21st-Century Skills with Preservice Teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly (Claremont, Calif.)*, *44*(4), 27–50.

Venegas-Muggli, J. I. (2020). Reliability and structure validity of a teacher pedagogical competencies scale: a case study from chile. In *Quantitative Psychology* (Vol. 322, pp. 285–298). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43469-4_22

Weiss, E. M., & Weiss, S. (2001). Doing reflective supervision with student teachers in a professional development school culture. Reflective Practice, 2(2), 125-154. https://doi: 10.1080/14623940120071343

Whalen, C., Majocha, E., & Van Nuland, S. (2019). Novice teacher challenges and promoting novice teacher retention in Canada. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *42*(5), 591–607. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2019.1652906

Wheeler. A.E., & Knoop, H.R. (1982). Self. teacher and faculty assessment of student teaching performance. *Journal of Educational Research,* 75 (3). 178–181.

Willcox, L. (2017). Vulnerability in the art room: Explorations of visual journals and risks in creating a psychologically safe environment. *Art Education, 70*(5), 11–19. https://qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/login?url?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/vulnerability-art-room-explorations-visual/docview/1933237902/se-2

Williams III, J. A., Hill-Jackson, V., Caldwell, C., & Craig, C. J. (2022). Teacher recruitment and retention: local strategies, global inspiration. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *73*(4), 333–337. https://doi.org/10.1177/00224871221118155

Willis, L., Shaukat, S., & Low-Choy, S. (2022). Preservice teacher perceptions of preparedness for teaching: Insights from survey research exploring the links between teacher professional standards and agency. *British Educational Research Journal*, *48*(2), 228–252. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3761

Appendices

Appendix A

Teacher Burnout Questionnaire

Start of Block: Please Click Link

Please Click Link Informed Consent Form for Online Questionnaire

---

Q35 Please select 'I agree" if you have read the Implied Consent Form for Online Questionnaire and agree to complete this survey.

○ I agree (1)

End of Block: Please Click Link

Start of Block: PART A

PART A - 1. Which completed degrees do you hold (check all that apply to you)?

- ☐ Bachelor of Arts (1)
- ☐ Bachelor of Education (Prim/Elem) (2)
- ☐ Bachelor of Education (Post-Secondary) (3)
- ☐ Bachelor of Special Education (4)
- ☐ Conjoint (5)
- ☐ Bachelor of Science (6)
- ☐ Bachelor of Education (Secondary) (7)
- ☐ Master of Education (8)
- ☐ Diploma (9)
- ☐ Other (specify) (10)

_____

2 How many years have you been teaching?

- ○ 0-5 (1)
- ○ 6-10 (2)
- ○ 11-15 (3)
- ○ 15+ (4)

---

3 Select your identified gender.

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Non-binary / third gender (3)
- ○ Prefer not to say (4)

---

4 Where do you teach?

- ○ Rural (1)
- ○ Urban (2)

---

5 What age group do you currently teach (check all that apply to you)?

- [ ] Primary (1)
- [ ] Elementary (2)
- [ ] Junior High (3)
- [ ] High School (4)

PART B Several teaching competencies are listed below. Please indicate your perception of your present skill level using the following scale.

Classroom Competencies

	Poor (1) (1)	Fair (2) (2)	Satisfactory (3) (3)	Good (4) (4)	Excellent (5) (5)
(1) Establish a positive learning environment climate (1)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.1) Implementation of methods that promote creativity and student autonomy (2)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.2) Embody professionalism (3)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.3) Emphasize the ability to manage class work (4)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.4) Emphasize the ability to be open (5)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.5) Emphasize the ability to be flexible (6)	○	○	○	○	○
(1.6) Possess effective time management (7)	○	○	○	○	○
(2) Establish classroom expectations (8)	○	○	○	○	○
(2.1) Bring awareness to fair and positive classroom expectations (9)	○	○	○	○	○
(2.2) Communicate classroom expectations (10)	○	○	○	○	○
(2.3) Identify circumstances when classroom expectations are not met (11)	○	○	○	○	○

(2.4) Handle circumstances when classroom expectations are not met (12)	○	○	○	○	○
(3) Disturbances are limited (13)	○	○	○	○	○
(3.1) Implement methods that reduce disturbances (14)	○	○	○	○	○
(3.2) Handle disturbances effectively (15)	○	○	○	○	○
(3.3) Regain classroom cooperation efficiently (16)	○	○	○	○	○
(4) Manage classroom conflicts (17)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.1) Recognize classroom conflict (18)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.2) Am able to implement discipline fairly and effectively (19)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.3) Have adequate resources to manage classroom conflict (20)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.4) Have adequate administrative support to manage classroom conflict (21)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.5) Know fair and effective discipline measures (22)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.6) Implement fair and effective discipline (23)	○	○	○	○	○
(4.7) Know how to successfully navigate parental communication (24)	○	○	○	○	○

PART B Government Expectations

	Poor (1) (1)	Fair (2) (2)	Satisfactory (3) (6)	Good (4) (3)	Excellent (5) (4)
(5) Understand the legislation regarding my position (1)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.1) Understand relevant law (2)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.2) Understand relevant law regarding sexual harassment law and policies (3)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.3) Understand relevant law regarding physical abuse pertaining to my position as a teacher (4)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.4) Understand your rights within the union (5)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.5) Understand the code of ethics and how it affects me (6)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.6) Understand the duties of my union and how they aid me (7)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.7) Understand my rights in the collective agreement (8)	○	○	○	○	○

(5.8) Know who to contact regarding conflicts with administration (9)	○	○	○	○	○
(5.9) Know what supports are available to me (10)	○	○	○	○	○
(6.0) Meet professional responsibilities (11)	○	○	○	○	○
(6.1) Follow policies, procedures and curricula of school district (12)	○	○	○	○	○

PART B Disposition

	Poor (1) (1)	Fair (2) (2)	Satisfactory (3) (3)	Good (4) (4)	Excellent (5) (5)
(7.0) Maintain professionalism (1)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.1) Respect for staff and students (2)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.2) Feel respected by staff (3)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.3) Feel respected by students (4)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.4) Communicate concerns with administration effectively (5)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.5) Maintain a healthy work/life balance (6)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.6) Maintain healthy relationships with administration (7)	○	○	○	○	○
(7.7) Maintain healthy relationships with colleagues (8)	○	○	○	○	○

PART B Technology

	Poor (1) (1)	Fair (2) (2)	Satisfactory (3) (3)	Good (4) (4)	Excellent (5) (5)
(8.0) Understand how to deliver instruction through technology (1)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.1) Understand how to use educational technology (2)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.2) Understand how to troubleshoot issues with educational technology (3)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.3) Engage students through use of educational technology (4)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.4) Develop educational instruction using technology (5)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.5) Establish rapport with students using technology (6)	○	○	○	○	○

(8.6) Have access to technology support (7)	○	○	○	○	○
(8.7) Understand new and emerging technologies (8)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.0) Virtual and blended learning (9)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.1) Understand how to use best practices to instruct virtually (10)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.2) Understand how to use best practices to instruct in a blended environment (11)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.3) Provide support for all issues arising for students (12)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.4) Receive effective support from administration (13)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.5) Provide engaging lessons (14)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.6) Engage all students in lessons (15)	○	○	○	○	○

(9.7) Recognize students who present with learning issues (16)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.8) Differentiate instruction to accommodate student's identified needs (17)	○	○	○	○	○
(9.9) Understand all mandated instructions (18)	○	○	○	○	○

PART B Teaching Theory and Practice

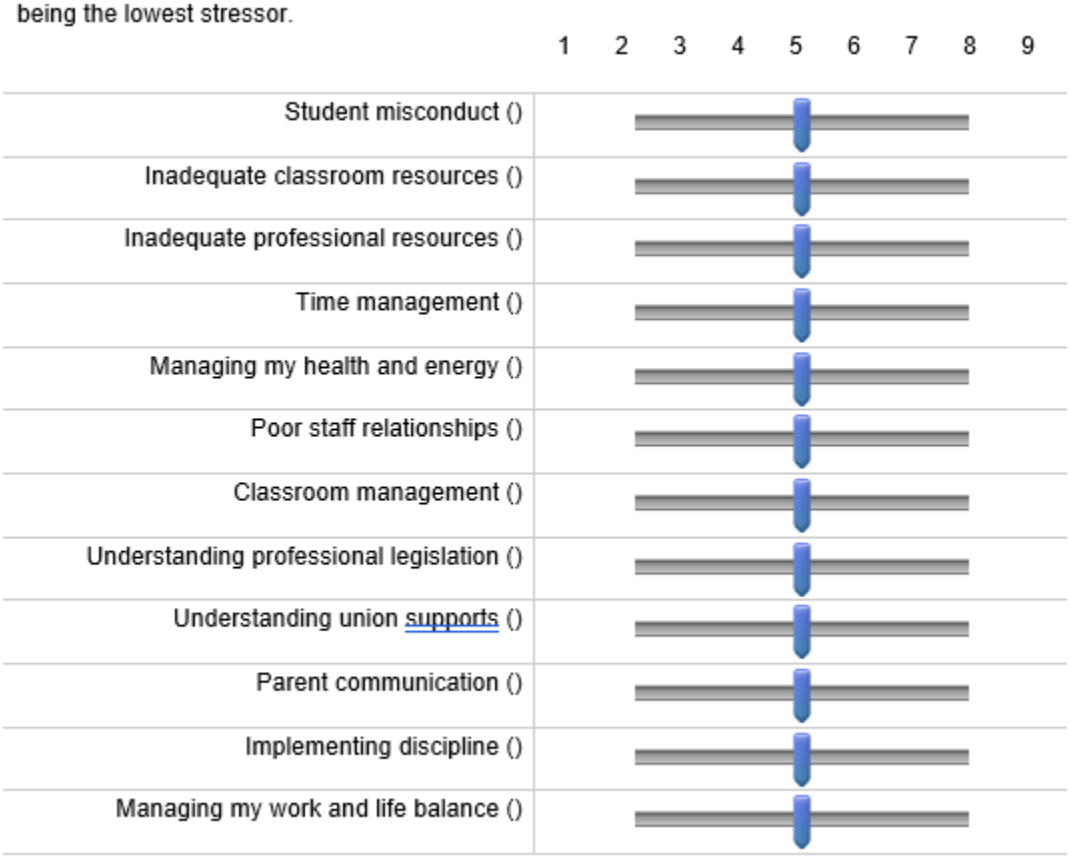
	Poor (1) (1)	Fair (2) (2)	Satisfactory (3) (3)	Good (4) (4)	Excellent (5) (5)
(10.0) Understand motivation strategies for students (1)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.1) Understand new and emerging teaching strategies (2)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.2) Understand how to implement inclusive classroom strategies for effective learning (3)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.3) Engage all students in lessons (4)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.4) Identify supports to implement varied instruction (5)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.5) Recognize students who require instructional intervention (6)	○	○	○	○	○
(10.6) Implement effective varied instruction for appropriate students (7)	○	○	○	○	○

(11.0) Am able to plan effective lessons (8)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.1) Conduct engaging lessons (9)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.2) Have adequate materials to develop engaging lessons (10)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.3) Have adequate support to develop engaging lessons (11)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.4) Have adequate time to develop engaging lessons (12)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.5) Have adequate time to meet professional goals (13)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.6) Establish boundaries between planning at work and planning at home (14)	○	○	○	○	○
(11.7) Collaborate and share resources with colleagues (15)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: PART B

Start of Block: Block 3

PART C Please rate these 12 stressors on a scale from 1-9, 9 being the highest stressor, 1 being the lowest stressor.



End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: PART D

PART D –

1 In your opinion, what factors contribute to compassion fatigue or teacher burnout?

2 In your opinion, what could be done to reduce compassion fatigue?

3 As a new graduate, did you feel your teaching practicum provided enough practical experience to prepare you for the real classroom?

4 As a new graduate, do you feel you were competently prepared to balance life and work? Why, or why not?

5 Do you feel there were competencies you had to learn 'on the job'? Explain.

6 Do you feel your co-workers helped you learn teaching competencies?

7 Which competencies did you feel you learned adequately in your post-secondary program?

8 What role has professional development played in learning teaching competencies?

9 How did the public health measures due to COVID-19 affect your teaching?

10. In your opinion, has virtual or blended learning been a contributing factor to compassion fatigue?

11. Is there anything that you would like to add?

End of Block: PART D

Appendix B

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Have you experienced compassion fatigue as a teacher? If so, what contributed to that burnout?
2. Have you seen other teachers experience compassion fatigue? If so, what do you think contributed to their burnout?
3. Do you feel you were adequately trained in post-secondary to manage classroom behaviours?
4. Do you feel you were adequately trained in post-secondary to understand relevant law, legislation and your collective agreement?
5. What teaching competencies (i.e., skills and knowledge) do you see as being important for a teacher to master?
6. Which competencies did you learn on your practicum?
7. Which competencies did you learn on the job?
8. Do you feel comfortable asserting yourself to administration when you see an issue?
9. Do you feel there is applicable professional development occurring to keep your skills and knowledge relevant?
10. Do you understand all relevant law applicable to your position as a teacher?
11. Do you understand how the collective agreement affects you?
12. Do you know what services your union offers?
13. How has COVID impacted your feelings toward your teaching career?
14. Is there anything you would like to add?

Appendix C

Office of the Registrar
Faculty of Education (2022/2023)

9 Program Regulations

The admission/readmission regulations for each degree and diploma program listed below can be found at **Admission/Readmission Regulations for the Faculty of Education**.

In addition to meeting Program Regulations for the student's program of admission/readmission a student must also meet ***UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS***.

9.1 Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)

- The full-time, 51 credit hour Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary) is a second degree program offered in three consecutive semesters (12 months) and commences in the Fall semester of each year.
- A student must complete the 51 credit hours in the academic semesters, sequence and course load as set out in **Table 1 Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)** below. A student must also have complied with the **Regulations for Readmission and Advancement for this program**.

Table 1 Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)

Term	Required Courses
Fall - Semester 1	ED 4005 ED 406T ED 4240 ED 4260 Two methodology courses from: ED 4120, 4121, 4142, 4154, 4161, 4174, 4175, 4180, 4181, 4190, 4203. These methodology courses must be chosen to match the academic disciplines under which the applicant was admitted. Those with a Geography discipline are required to successfully complete either ED 4180 or 4174. Those with a Social Studies discipline (Business Studies, Canadian Studies, Economics, History, Newfoundland and Labrador Studies, and Political Science) are required to successfully complete ED 4180. Those with first and second academic disciplines in Social Studies are required to successfully complete ED 4180 and 4181. Those with first and second academic disciplines in sciences (Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Environmental Science, General Science, Physics) are required to successfully complete ED 4174 and 4175. ED 5000 (non-credit) This semester will follow a schedule that falls outside the normal teaching semester. Consult the Office of Academic Programs for applicable dates.
Winter - Semester 2	ED 407T ED 4350 or 3 credit hours in Institutes in Intermediate and Secondary Education ED 5000 (non-credit) This semester will follow a schedule that falls outside the normal teaching semester. Consult the Office of Academic Programs for applicable dates.
Spring - Semester 3	ED 4242 ED 4381 ED 4390 ED 4427 ED 4950 ED 5000 (3 credit hours) Courses may be offered in Spring, Intersession and/or Summer Session

Appendix D

9.5 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree

- The Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree is a 150 credit hour program.
- The 150 credit hours must include: 75 credit hours in non-education courses including the courses required for admission, courses required to complete a focus area listed under **Table 6 Focus Areas for Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary)** below, and Human Kinetics and Recreation 2001; and 75 credit hours in Education courses as set out in **Table 5 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree**.
- Following admission, a student will normally progress in attaining the 150 credit hours required for the Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree, in the academic terms, sequence and course load as set out in **Table 5 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree**. In particular, a student must have all non-education requirements completed prior to Professional Year; must enrol full-time during the Professional Year; and may enrol in the extended internship only after successful completion of the Professional Year.

Table 5 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a First Degree

Term	Required Courses
	60 credit hours in courses required for admission
Fall - Semester 1	ED 3617 ED 4240 Human Kinetics and Recreation 2001 6 credit hours in non-Education courses
Winter - Semester 2	ED 3312 ED 3940 ED 4242 ED 401T 6 credit hours in non-Education courses
Fall - Semester 3 (Professional Year)	One of ED 2520 or 3920 is required for students with a music focus area in place of ED 3151 and 3212 (course to be determined in consultation with the Office of Academic Programs, Faculty of Education) ED 3050 is required for students with a French focus area in place of ED 3151 and 3212. ED 3151 ED 3212 ED 3273 ED 3274 ED 3322 ED 3942 ED 3953 ED 402T ED 5001 (non-credit)
Winter - Semester 4 (Professional Year)	ED 3120 ED 3543 ED 3962 ED 4206 ED 4391 ED 4427 ED 403T ED 5001 (non-credit)
Fall - Semester 5	ED 404T
Winter - Semester 6	ED 2051 ED 3131 (ED 2515 instead of ED 3131 is required for students with a Music focus area) ED 3484 ED 3566 ED 3574 ED 4381 ED 5001

Table 6 Focus Areas for Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary)

English (24 credit hours) 6 credit hours in English at the 1000 level English 2390 or 3395 3 credit hours chosen from English 2000, 2001, 2005-2007, 3200, 3201, 3205 3 credit hours chosen from English 2002-2004, 2010 or the former 2020, 2350, 2351 6 credit hours chosen from English 2146, 2150, 2151, 2155, 2156, 2160, 3145, 3147-3149, 3152, 3155-3158 3 additional credit hours in English at the 2000 level or above	**Folklore (24 credit hours)** Folklore 1000 Folklore 2100, 2300, 2401, 2500 9 credit hours in Folklore at the 3000 or 4000 level
French (36 credit hours) The equivalent of a major in French with a maximum of 6 credit hours at the 1000 level. An average of at least 65% in the 36 credit hours. At least eight weeks at an approved Francophone institution in a French-speaking area or have acquired equivalent work experience in a Francophone environment. It is recommended that a student successfully complete at least one of French 2900, 3650, 3651, 3653, 3654. An applicant with French as focus area must have written the DELF Tout Public (Level B2) and achieved an overall grade of at least 70%, with no less than 60% in any one skill area of the exam. This focus area is typically not available in the Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree Conjoint with Certificate in STEM. Education. For further information contact the Office of Academic Programs.	**Geography (18 credit hours)** Geography 1050, 2001, 2102, 2195, 2302, and 2425
History (18 credit hours) 3 credit hours in History at the 1000 level 9 credit hours in History at the 2000 level 6 credit hours in Newfoundland and Labrador History at the 3000 level	**Interdisciplinary Studies (18-24 credit hours)** Non-Education courses for cohorts in special offerings of the program approved by the Faculty of Education. For information on Interdisciplinary Studies Focus Areas students should contact the Undergraduate Admissions Office, Faculty of Education.
Linguistics (18 credit hours) Language 2800 or Linguistics 1100 or 2800 (Language 2800 or Linguistics 2800 is recommended) Linguistics 1103 Linguistics 1104 Linguistics 2210 6 credit hours chosen from Linguistics 3000, 3100, 3104, 2120 or the former 3155, 3201, 3210, 3500, 3850	**Mathematics (18 credit hours)** No more than 6 credit hours in Mathematics at the 1000 level and at least 3 credit hours in Mathematics at the 3000 level.
Music (18 credit hours) Music 1106 or 1120 3 credit hours chosen from Music 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 3 credit hours chosen from Music 2021, 2022, 2023, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2619 (admission to 2612, 2613 and 2619 is by audition only) 6 credit hours chosen from Music 3014, 3015, 3016, 3017, 3018, 3019, 4040 3 additional credit hours from the courses in 2nd and 4th clauses above	**Physical Education (18 credit hours)** Human Kinetics and Recreation 1000, 2210, 2300 9 credit hours chosen from Human Kinetics and Recreation 2002, 2310 or 2311, 2320, 2600, 2601, 3330, 3340, 3400, 3490
Religious Studies (18 credit hours) Religious Studies 1000 3 credit hours chosen from Religious Studies 2013, the former 2130, the former 2140, 2330, 2340 3 credit hours chosen from Religious Studies 2400, 2410, 2420, 2425, 2430 3 credit hours chosen from Religious Studies 2350, 2610, 2810, 2811, 2812, the former 2820, 2830 6 credit hours in Religious Studies at the 3000 level or above	**Science (18 credit hours)** At least 6 credit hours in each of two subject areas selected from Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Environmental Science, Ocean Sciences, or Physics. At least 6 credit hours used to meet this requirement must have a laboratory component. Chemistry 1900 may be used to satisfy 3 credit hours of the laboratory requirement.
Theatre Arts (18 credit hours) For information on the Theatre Arts Focus Area contact the Undergraduate Admissions Office, Faculty of Education.	**Visual Arts (18 credit hours)** Courses in Art History may be used to satisfy this requirement in whole or in part. For information on the Visual Arts Focus Area contact the Undergraduate Admissions Office, Faculty of Education.

Appendix E

9.6 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree

The Grenfell Campus offering of this program is currently under review and may not be available for intake at this time. For further information contact the Office of Academic Programs.

- The Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree is a 72 credit hour program intended for students who have completed an appropriate Bachelor's degree. This program is offered in a five semester, full-time format and commences in the Fall semester of each year.
- In addition to meeting these regulations, students must also meet ***UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS*** **- General Academic Regulations (Undergraduate) - Second Degree**.
- The Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree requires 72 credit hours normally completed in the academic terms, sequence, and course load as set out in **Table 7 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree**.

Table 7 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree

Fall - Semester 1 **Learning and Teaching Learners**	ED 3312, 3617, 401T, 4240, 4381, 5001 (non-credit) HKR 2001
Winter - Semester 2 **Learning and Teaching Curriculum**	ED 3273, 3322, 3940, 3962, 402T, 4242, 5001 (non-credit)
Intersession - Semester 3 **Learning and Teaching Integration**	ED 2051, 3120, 3566, 3574, 4206, 4391
Fall - Semester 4 **Learning and Teaching Frameworks**	ED 3131, 3151, 3212, 3274, 3543, 3942, 3953, 403T, 5001 (non-credit)
Winter - Semester 5 **Learning and Teaching Identity**	ED 404T, 4427, 5001

9.6.1 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree, French as a Second Language Option

- The Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree, French as a Second Language Option, is a 75 credit hour program intended for students who have completed an appropriate Bachelor's degree. This program is offered in a five semester (plus August institute), full-time format and commences in August of each year.
- A student will normally attend full-time and complete the required 75 credit hours in the academic terms, sequence, and course load as set out in **Table 8 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree**, French as a Second Language Option.
- In addition to meeting these regulations, students must also meet ***UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS*** **- General Academic Regulations (Undergraduate) - Second Degree**.

Table 8 Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) as a Second Degree, French as a Second Language Option

Three Week August Institute	ED 4155
Fall - Semester 1 **Learning and Teaching Learners**	ED 3312, 3617, 401T, 4240, 4381, 5001 (non-credit) HKR 2001
Winter - Semester 2 **Learning and Teaching Curriculum**	ED 3273, 3322, 3940, 3962, 402T, 4242, ED 5001 (non-credit)
Intersession - Semester 3 **Learning and Teaching Integration**	ED 2051, 3120, 3566, 3574, 4206, 4391
Fall - Semester 4 **Learning and Teaching Frameworks**	ED 3050, 3131, 3274, 3543, 3942, 3953, 403T, 5001 (non-credit)
Winter - Semester 5 **Learning and Teaching Identity**	ED 404T, 4427, 5001

Appendix F

Recruitment Document

Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN COMPASSION FATIGUE IN TEACHERS

2022

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of compassion fatigue in teachers related to a lack of preparedness.

If you volunteer to be in this study, your participation will consist of an online questionnaire and/or interview.

Your participation would involve 1 (one) online questionnaire delivered by Qualtrics which will take approximately 20 minutes of your time and/or 1 (one) phone interview which will take approximately 20-30 minutes of your time.

No personally identifying features will be published with this data; however, if you choose to include detailed personal anecdotes, through direct quotes, informed readers may be able to discern your identity.

You are able to withdraw your participation up to two weeks after your participation with the phone interview, however the online questionnaire is completed anonymously.

If you choose to participate, you will be adding a current voice to the existing research on compassion fatigue among teachers, creating a potential for change

If you would like to participate in the interview portion, please contact Collette Garland, Faculty of Education at (709) 683-3027 or email: capg30@mun.ca to arrange a time.

If you would like to participate in the online questionnaire, please click on this link or QR Code:
https://mun.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efmuTzfeGEVC2G2

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research,such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861

Appendix G

Consent Form for Online Questionnaire

Informed Consent Form – Online Questionnaire

Title: Teacher Burnout: Does a Lack of Preparedness Contribute to Compassion Fatigue in Teachers

Researcher(s): Collette Garland, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, capg30@mun.ca

Supervisor(s): Dr. John Hoben, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, jlhoben@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project titled, *"Teacher Burnout: Does a Lack of Preparedness Contribute to Compassion Fatigue in Teachers."*

This form is part of the process of informed consent. The following information will help you understand what this research is about, and what your participation will involve. This form explains how you can withdraw at any time, no question is mandatory to answer and what the risks and benefits are to agreeing to participate in this research. Take your time to read this carefully and to understand the information provided. If you have any questions about the research or the process, please contact the researcher, Collette Garland, for more information before you consent.

Understand that if you choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences for you now or in the future. If you choose to participate and would like to withdraw before completion, there will be no negative consequences now or in the future.

Introduction:

My name is Collette Garland and I am a master's student in the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am completing my M. Ed in Educational Leadership Studies. As part of my Master's thesis, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. John Hoben.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the contributing factors to compassion fatigue, or burnout, in teachers and whether there is a link to a lack of preparedness.

What You Will Do in this Study:

Participants will be asked to answer a series of short survey questions and short answer questions surrounding the topics of compassion fatigue for teachers, soft skills of teaching, classroom management, behavior management and social and emotional challenges.

Length of Time:

Response times will vary. It is estimated that participants can except to take between 20 to 30 minutes on their surveys, depending on how in-depth they choose to answer the short answer questions.

Withdrawal from the Study:

- Once participants participate in and complete the Qualtrics online questionnaire, the participants data is then anonymous and cannot be identified to be removed.
- To withdraw from the Qualtrics survey before completing, one would close down their browser.

Possible Benefits:

Participating in this research will benefit the scholarly community since it will add to the existing knowledge regarding challenges faced by early career teachers. The research could also contribute to positive change for future teachers as it may make policy makers to recognize a way to reduce the ever-present fact of compassion fatigue in teachers. This could benefit existing and future teachers along with their students.

Possible Risks:

Participating in this research may bring to the surface suppressed emotional trauma or stressors. These psychological/emotional risks will be minimized by your choice to skip any question you find triggering, and the option to withdraw from the research survey at any time. If your identity is discerned by an informed reader, there may be social or reputational risks involved. If an informed reader discerns your identity, there may be social or reputational risks involved. These social or reputational risks may include embarrassment within one's professional

or social group or stigmatization by colleagues. Also, should participants require them, resources will be available that specialize in mental health treatment, such as the NLTA employee assistance program which provides counselling to staff members.

NLTA employee assistance program, http://www/nlta.ca/employee-assisstance-program/

CHANNAL Warm Line - 1-855-753-2560 or in St. John's (709) 753-2560

Bridge the App - https://nl.bridgethegapp.ca/adult/

Mental Health Crisis Line, 24 hour Toll Free – 1-888-737-4668

Confidentiality:

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. To meet ethical standards set forth by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research, participants' identities, personal information and data will be kept confidential and kept from unauthorized access, use or disclosure. Any quotes or data will be published in an anonymized manner; however, an informed reader may be able to identify a detailed personal direct quote from a participant. Consent forms and surveys will be stored separately so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any completed set of responses.

Anonymity:

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics such as names or identifying descriptors in survey responses.

All data will be anonymized. Codes, instead of names, will be used on transcripts. The codes will be stored separately than the transcripts of the interviews with separate keys and password protected hard drives.

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. You will not be identified in publications without your explicit permission.

No personally identifying features will be published with this data; however, if you choose to include detailed personal anecdotes, through direct quotes, informed readers may be able to discern your identity.

Use, Access, Ownership and Storage of Data:

- All data will be securely stored.
- Transcripts and codes will be stored on password protected hard drives in separate locations in locked, fireproof boxes in the home of the researcher.
- The separate locations for the transcripts and codes will have separate keys.

- Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data.
- The data will be kept for five (5) years, as per the policies of Memorial University of Newfoundland. After this time, the data will be destroyed.
- This is the link to the Privacy Policy with Qualtrics - https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/getting-started/data-protection-privacy/

"Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research".

Reporting of Results:

- A report of the data will be compiled and sent to the participants.
- Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library and can be accessed online at: http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses.
- All data will be reported only in a summarized form with no names of participants published.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

As no contact information will be collected, results will not be directly shared with participants.

Questions:

At any point before, during or after your participation in this research you are welcome to ask questions. Please contact myself, Collette Garland, via email at capg30@mun.ca or my supervisor, Dr. John Hoben at jlhoben@mun.ca.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have any ethical concerns about this research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact Theresa Heath, Ethics Officer of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

By completing this *survey* you agree that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been advised that you may ask questions about this study and receive answers prior to continuing.
- You are satisfied that any questions you had have been addressed.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation from the study by closing your browser window or navigating away from this page, without having to give a reason and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that this data is being collected anonymously and therefore your data **cannot** be removed once you submit this survey.

By consenting to this online survey, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Please retain a copy of this consent information for your records.

Clicking 'I agree' **below and submitting this survey constitutes consent and implies your agreement to the above statements.**

Appendix H

Informed Consent Form for Phone Interview

Informed Consent Form – Phone Interview

Title: Teacher Burnout: Does a Lack of Preparedness Contribute to Compassion Fatigue in Teachers

Researcher(s): Collette Garland, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, capg30@mun.ca

Supervisor(s): Dr. John Hoben, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, jlhoben@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project titled, *"Teacher Burnout: Does a Lack of Preparedness Contribute to Compassion Fatigue in Teachers."*

This form is part of the process of informed consent. The following information will help you understand what this research is about, and what your participation will involve. This form explains how you can withdraw at any time, no question is mandatory to answer and what the risks and benefits are to agreeing to participate in this research. Take your time to read this carefully and to understand the information provided. If you have any questions about the research or the process, please contact the researcher, Collette Garland, for more information before you consent.

Understand that if you choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences for you now or in the future. If you choose to participate and would like to withdraw before completion, there will be no negative consequences now or in the future.

Introduction:

My name is Collette Garland and I am a master's student in the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am completing my M. Ed in Educational Leadership Studies. As part of my Master's thesis, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. John Hoben.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the contributing factors to compassion fatigue, or burnout, in teachers and whether there is a link to a lack of preparedness.

What You Will Do in this Study:

Participants will be asked to answer a series of short survey questions and short answer questions surrounding the topics of compassion fatigue for teachers, soft skills of teaching, classroom management, behavior management and social and emotional challenges. This interview will be held over the phone and will be audio-recorded

Length of Time:

Response times will vary. It is estimated that participants can except to take between 20 to 30 minutes on their surveys, depending on how in-depth they choose to answer the short answer questions.

Withdrawal from the Study:

- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time with no consequence now or in the future. Withdrawal can be made via email, in writing, or verbally at any time.
- Any data can be removed prior to all data being aggregated. After this time, it will not be possible to remove data as it will be anonymized. The final date to withdraw from this study will be 2 weeks after the interview, after which time the data will be aggregated.
- If the participant withdraws from the study, their data will be removed and all data (survey responses, transcripts, etc.) will be deleted.

Possible Benefits:

Participating in this research will benefit the scholarly community since it will add to the existing knowledge regarding challenges faced by early career teachers. The research could also contribute to positive change for future teachers as it may make policy makers to recognize a way to reduce the ever-present fact of compassion fatigue in teachers. This could benefit existing and future teachers along with their students.

Possible Risks:

Participating in this research may bring to the surface suppressed emotional trauma or stressors. These psychological/emotional risks will be minimized by your choice to skip any

question you find triggering, and the option to withdraw from the research survey at any time. If your identity is discerned by an informed reader, there may be social or reputational risks involved. If an informed reader discerns your identity, there may be social or reputational risks involved. These social or reputational risks may include embarrassment within one's professional or social group or stigmatization by colleagues. Also, should participants require them, resources will be available that specialize in mental health treatment, such as the NLTA employee assistance program which provides counselling to staff members.

NLTA employee assistance program, http://www/nlta.ca/employee-assisstance-program/

CHANNAL Warm Line - 1-855-753-2560 or in St. John's (709) 753-2560

Bridge the App - https://nl.bridgethegapp.ca/adult/

Mental Health Crisis Line, 24 hour Toll Free – 1-888-737-4668

Confidentiality:

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. To meet ethical standards set forth by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research, participants' identities, personal information and data will be kept confidential and kept from unauthorized access, use or disclosure. Any quotes or data will be published in an anonymized manner so that it will not be possible to identify participants. Consent forms and surveys will be stored separately so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any completed set of responses.

Anonymity:

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics such as names or identifying descriptors in survey responses.

All data will be anonymized. Codes, instead of names, will be used on transcripts. The codes will be stored separately than the transcripts of the interviews with separate keys and password protected hard drives.

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. You will not be identified in publications without your explicit permission.

No personally identifying features will be published with this data, however, if you choose to include detailed personal anecdotes, through detailed descriptions of specific situations, informed readers may be able to discern your identity.

Use, Access, Ownership and Storage of Data:

- All data will be securely stored.
- Transcripts and codes will be stored on password protected hard drives in separate locations in locked, fireproof boxes in the home of the researcher.
- The separate locations for the transcripts and codes will have separate keys.
- Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data.
- The data will be kept for five (5) years, as per the policies of Memorial University of Newfoundland. After this time, the data will be destroyed.

"Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research".

Reporting of Results:

- A report of the data will be compiled and sent to the participants.
- Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library and can be accessed online at: http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses.
- All data will be reported only in a summarized form with no names of participants published.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

At the end of the study, the data will be compiled into a report and sent to each participant.

Questions:

At any point before, during or after your participation in this research you are welcome to ask questions. Please contact myself, Collette Garland, via email at capg30@mun.ca or my supervisor, Dr. John Hoben at jlhoben@mun.ca.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have any ethical concerns about this research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact Theresa Heath, Ethics Officer of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study at any time without having to give a reason and will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collections, any data collected from you up to that point will be **destroyed**.
- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to 2 weeks after your interview.

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

- ☐ I have read what this study is about and understand the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
- ☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary and that I may end my participation.
- ☐ A copy of this informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands the nature of their participation in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____ _____

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Appendix I

Hello,

My name is Collette Garland, and I am a master's student working under the supervision of Dr. John Hoben in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. As part of my master's degree, I am conducting a research study on compassion fatigue in teachers and investigating whether it has a link to a lack of preparedness. Given your experience as a teacher, I feel that you are well suited to provide insight into this topic and I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

If you decide to volunteer for this study, your participation will consist of 1 (one) online questionnaire that will take approximately 20 minutes of your time. Also, there is 1 (one) phone interview that you can do instead of the online questionnaire or can do along with the online questionnaire and this structured phone interview will take approximately 20-30 minutes of your time. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

No personally identifying features will be published with this data, keeping you anonymous; however, if you choose to include detailed personal anecdotes, through direct quotes, informed readers may be able to discern your identity. This links to the Privacy Policy of the Qualtrics online questionnaire survey -https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/getting-started/data-protection-privacy/.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be adding your current voice and experience to the existing field of research surrounding compassion fatigue among teachers with a potential to create positive change.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861"

If you would like to participate in the online questionnaire, see the link and QR code below. If you would like to participate in the phone interview, please contact me to arrange a time. If you require additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please do not hesitate to contact me at capg30@mun.ca. You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. John Hoben, at jlhoben@mun.ca.

Questionnaire Link: https://mun.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efmuTzfeGEVC2G2

Questionnaire QR Code:

Sincerely,

Collette Garland

Appendix J

ICEHR Approval Letter

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864-2561 icehr@mun.ca
www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr

ICEHR Number:	**20220710-ED**
Approval Period:	May 10, 2022 – May 31, 2023
Funding Source:	
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. John Hoben Faculty of Education
Title of Project:	*Teacher Burnout: Does Lack of Preparedness Contribute to Compassion Fatigue in Teachers*

May 10, 2022

Ms. Collette Garland
Faculty of Education
Memorial University

Dear Ms. Garland:

Thank you for your correspondence addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) for the above-named research project. ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarifications and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* for **one year**. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project. If funding is obtained subsequent to ethics approval, you must submit a Funding and/or Partner Change Request to ICEHR so that this ethics clearance can be linked to your award.

The *TCPS2* **requires that you strictly adhere to the protocol and documents as last reviewed by** ICEHR. If you need to make additions and/or modifications, you must submit an Amendment Request with a description of these changes, for the Committee's review of potential ethical concerns, before they may be implemented. Submit a Personnel Change Form to add or remove project team members and/or research staff. Also, to inform ICEHR of any unanticipated occurrences, an Adverse Event Report must be submitted with an indication of how the unexpected event may affect the continuation of the project.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you submit an Annual Update to ICEHR before **May 31, 2023**. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer involves contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you are required to provide an annual update with a brief final summary and your file will be closed. All post-approval ICEHR event forms noted above must be submitted by selecting the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Researcher Portal homepage. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

James P. Drover

James Drover, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

JD/bc

cc: Supervisor – Dr. John Hoben, Faculty of Education