



Unveiling the Phenomenology of Professional and Domestic Stressors for Private School Teachers of Lahore, Pakistan

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article History:

Received: December 18, 2023
Revised: March 13, 2024
Accepted: March 14, 2024
Available Online: March 15, 2024

Keywords:

Professional Stress
Domestic Stress
Private School Teacher
Thematic Analysis

Funding:

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

The present research is a qualitative exploration of teacher stress faced by private school teachers in Lahore, Pakistan. We identified the professional and domestic stressors of teachers working in private schools in Lahore, Pakistan using thematic analysis. Digging into the forms of stress, three focus group interviews were conducted on three different school premises. Each focus group has eight participants, private school teachers having age ranges between 25 and 45 years, with inclusion criteria of being married and having at least three years of teaching experience in private sector. Professional and domestic themes such as workload, psychological challenges, consequences, and familial and personal factors were generated. Results confirmed some themes in previous research, such as administrative tasks, Coping strategies, classroom management, parenting issues, physical health, and emotional well-being. However, this research holds an exclusive aspect in exploring new themes such as meeting unrealistic deadlines, emotional labor, uncomfortable workstations, and unsupportive families. Implications were discussed.

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1. Introduction

The Education System of Pakistan comprises of 305,763 institutions covering 51,835,089 students and 2,073,433 teachers. The system is comprised of 189,748(62%) public institutions and 116,015 (38%) private institutions and, also included 31,115 Deeni Madarsis (Pakistan Gulf Economics, 2022). School teachers who work in public or private schools, are facing unique stressors. Because of the modest environment, the stress which is faced by private school teachers is different and identified in minimal research. A Plethora of research suggests that if we broadly categorize the types of research in the border domain, they may be highlighted as professional stressors as well as domestic stressors. Teacher stress is a pervasive issue affecting educators at all levels of the education system. Research revealed that teachers face many stresses in the teaching profession. It stems from heavy workloads, high expectations for student performance, challenging classroom dynamics, and insufficient resources. The demands placed on teachers often lead to emotional and physical exhaustion, which can result in burnout and a decreased quality of teaching. Addressing teacher stress is essential not only for the well-being of educators but also for improving the quality of education they are providing. Schools as well as educational institutions must improve strategies to reduce stress, such as providing professional development opportunities, fostering supportive work environments, and

recognizing the invaluable contributions of teachers. This will help teachers thrive in their roles and ultimately benefit the students they serve. Kabito and Wami (2020) conducted cross-sectional research to measure perceived work-related stress and related factors among secondary school teachers of public sector in Gondar City, northwest Ethiopia. For data collection, a self-completed questionnaire was used. Multivariate binary logistic regression analysis was used to analyze the data. Poor relationship, high demand for the jobs, level of education, and teaching experience is severely affected by the stress related to work. Some of these identified factors are absolutely correct for indigenous population, however having a collectivistic culture female schoolteacher's face some domestic stressors which interfere in their professional life as well and likewise (Kabito & Wami, 2020).

In Osun state, this research was conducted by Yusuf, Olufunke, and Valentine (2015) aimed to investigate the root cause of the stress in primary school teachers. A sample of 600 primary school teachers was selected using cluster random sampling technique. Causes and Impact of Stress on Teacher's Productivity Questionnaire, developed by the researchers, was used to collect data. It has been found that the major causes of stress among primary school teachers were job dissatisfaction, delays in wage payments, and insufficient school facilities. It has also been explored that lack of interest and attention to work and aggression on the students can result in outcomes of these major sources of stress. Similarly, in the work and It has also been explored that stress due to all these causes result in a lack of commitment Pakistani school teachers can well relate these factors to be true for them. As private school teachers work in a different infrastructure than government schoolteachers, they face unique challenges, which often include a lack of job security, resulting in job dissatisfaction and a lack of commitment to work. Looking at one of distinct area in Attock (Pakistan), Hussain, Sadiq, Ahmad, Ahmed, and Sardar (2012) performed a study to determine the factors that measure level of stress in the teacher at the secondary schools. A questionnaire was developed to collect data from the school's teacher. The data was composed of 36 men and 36 women from the Punjab. It was analyzed that the duties of the teacher other than teaching, overloading work, teaching various types of subjects and the oppressive behaviour of the principal were the major sources of stress among the schoolteachers. This research clearly mentioned some significant professional stressors; however, it lacks talking about domestic's stressors, undermining its importance in teachers' life (Hussain et al., 2012).

Some studies also shown that distracted timetables for the classes, unnecessary meetings, duties that are not related to the education, classrooms with a large numbers of students, unsatisfactory outcomes, lack of interest of the learners, low salaries and unnecessary paperwork are also the major causes of the stress in schoolteachers (Hunnur, Vyas, Sudarshan, Mathad, & Pareek, 2013). Hence this can be clearly highlighted the importance of professional stressors. While doing systematic literature review, we explored the importance of domestic stressors as female's cannot detach them self from the family and all their domestic problems add on to their personal and professional life. Domestic stress among teachers is a significant concern, as educators often face unique challenges in their personal lives due to the demands of their profession. Juggling the responsibilities of teaching with those of family and household can be particularly taxing. Teachers may struggle to find a work-life balance, as their work often extends beyond regular school hours with lesson planning, grading, and extracurricular activities. This can lead to increased stress and potential conflicts at home. Additionally, teachers may experience stress related to their children's education as they strive to support their families academically and emotionally while managing their classroom responsibilities. Educators must have access to resources, support networks, and strategies for managing domestic stress to maintain their well-being and effectiveness in the classroom. Stress is caused by a variety of stressors. Economic crisis, enhanced expectations and demands, work overloading and conflicting relations at home are the most common stressors by Dr. Gray Brown. However, it was not only restricted to the death of loved ones, but also health issues, and experiencing one or more traumatic incidents etc. (Lindberg).

Here we need to understand that why private school education has a mushroom growth in Pakistan. With rapid increase in population in Pakistan touching 242 million, the number of government school facilities are not enough to fulfill the need of this population, let alone providing the quality education. Education is a social asset that has a massive impression in determining long-run monetary predictions. In Pakistan, the civic sector needs help to encounter

its command for providing quality education. Although Pakistan has significantly improved global school participation, there is still needed to improve quality of education and to provide a suitable education to the children that are eligible. Almost 23 million children are not going to school (aged 5–16 years), that approximately represents 44% of the total population of this age group (UNICEF, 2024). Every year, more than 2 million children are included in the school age group. Therefore, the creation of the schools with quality education is intensified and it is also harder to improve the educational institutions that are proving education services with the increasing number of the school age children. Here comes the need to have many more private schools to fill this gap. Engaging the public sector institutions in an effective way to deliver quality education in order to fulfill the gap of demand and supply for the government and it can also improve the learning outcomes of the students. The private sector institutions were vigilant and dynamic to speedily adjust themselves according to the market and know well how the market demands can be fulfilled. The private sector education service providers had many comparative advantages, such as geographic, cultural, and social immediacy to local students and communities, more accessible approach to the local labor market, and more functional responsibility mechanisms, given that the demand for private education services is existed. Its potential and capability to provide education as a social commodity extracts the private sector is a chief stakeholder and a necessary government partner in providing quality and affordable education to society. However not all private school has friendly policies for their teachers' s. therefore, unfortunately there is huge disparity is public and private teachers' pay scale, job demands, work role, promotion criteria, pension, health facilities, and many other important domains pivotal for their survival in private sector. This leaves a strong need to identify the problems faced by private school teacher in Pakistan.

As we know that Stress influences mental as well as physical health of an individual, It is vital to explore stress in private school teachers as they work with a large student population, so they must be aware of their stressors to manage them effectively and provide quality education and mentorship to students. Private school not only provides an approach to schooling but, going by average student performance, is doing a better job at it, too. Private schools are also the single largest employer of females across Pakistan. It has been estimated that 900,000 women work there as teachers. Numerous studies have focused on the assessment of stress among schoolteachers. However, this research was designed to explore stressors and to develop an indigenous scale to measure stress, specifically among private school teachers. It has been found that from 1990 to 2016, the number of low-cost private schools in Punjab, Pakistan has expanded significantly from 32,000 to 66,000. Moreover, within educational landscape of Pakistan, it is noteworthy that out of the total school-going children, approximately 42% are enrolled in private schools (Qureshi & Razzaque, 2021). This observation points towards the considerable presence of teachers in the private school sector. Moreover, the research also emphasized that stress characteristics in private schools are unique as compared to government schoolteachers. Siddiqui (2012) stated that the teachers are becoming more conscious about their mental health and the stress at the workplace can also be taken as the important factor in their motivation and persistence. Hence thematic analysis was used to identify the unique challenges and stressors face by female private school teachers. Indeed, recognizing these unique determinants of stress among private school teachers is crucial. Once these factors are identified, it enables the formulation and provision of more tailored coping mechanisms and effective stress management techniques to be used by relevant stakeholders.

1.1. Objective of the study

This study reveals the professional and domestic stressors of private school teachers in Lahore, Pakistan by using thematic analysis.

1.2. Research Questions

- How do various factors cause female schoolteachers in the private sector?
- How do professional stressors cause more stress in female schoolteachers than domestic stressors?

2. Method

For this study, a focus group technique was applied. This technique was supportive for exploring the phenomenology of professional and domestic Stressors for female private school teachers in Lahore, Pakistan.

2.1. Participants

The participants for this qualitative study were females. They all were schoolteachers working in any private school. Three focus group interviews were conducted in three different school premises, each group having eight participants. N=24 Each private school teacher's age ranges between 25 and 45years, and to keep the sample homogenous inclusion criteria was made that all teachers must be married, with at least three years of teaching experience in a private school setting. The demographics of the group setting also generated insights that might not emerge in individual interviews. These private school teachers' focus groups lead to richer data as teachers build on each other's ideas, challenge assumptions, and provide diverse perspectives. This technique is beneficial for exploring domestic stress and professional stress. Group participants help each other understand and elaborate on their experiences, perceptions, and opinions, leading to a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

2.2. Ethical Considerations

Permission to collect data collection was south from all three schools independently, three school didn't give the permission so only three school were targeted for focus group discussions. Initially sample was identified using snowball technique, however some of the teachers refused to participate because of their heavy workload and class schedules, so they were dropped. It is important to mention that participation for voluntary, no incentives were given, and informed consent was taken before the focus group for participation and audio recording.

2.3. Procedure

Initial screening was done so that the private school teacher may not be facing and physical and mental health issues so that the data may not be biased. For data collection, focus group technique was used so the true picture of the story can be seen. The focus group setting fosters the generation of a wide range of ideas, opinions, and themes. Thus, the synergy of ideas enhances the quality and depth of the data collected. In real-time, it enables us to observe participants' reactions, body language, and non-verbal cues. This observational data provided additional insights into participants' emotions, attitudes, and interactions, which may be challenging to capture through other qualitative methods. The questions of focus group were made in advance after adequate deliberations and they were kept flexible to generate open discussion on both work to family and family to work stressors. It was ensured that the questions remain focused yet flexible, broad, relevant and clear. participants demographic information was taken on a separate form in first stage. The duration of all focus groups were between 60 to 90 minutes. All three focus groups were conducted in two months' time, their themes were analyzed carefully after transcribing them all from audio recording to paper. After generating the themes and applying the codes, thematic analysis was done and results were presented as below:

3. Results and Discussion

Thematic analysis was done to identify the phenomenology of teachers' domestic and professional stress. The significance of the study's focus group is that we gathered insights from a larger sample within a limited timeframe and thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to examine the transcripts, entailing scrutiny of the text to identify similar patterns, relationships, and phrases. Codes were subsequently assigned to these identified phrases. The resulting common themes were consolidated to create comprehensive overarching themes for each interview. After the conclusion of the focus group, superordinate themes were extracted. In the ultimate step, the themes were merged to generate a master table representing the entire group. The themes that emerged from the data have been presented in figures (see Figures 1 and 2). The stress experience has been categorized in two ways. One aspect was the range of reported professional stressors, teacher workload, psychological challenges, and consequence's themes that were generated. The second aspect dealt with the experience of domestic stressors, familial factors, and personal factors themes emerged. Here, a narrative of two main themes identifying the diversity of professional and domestic stressors is presented.

3.1. Professional Stressors Themes and Sub-themes

As a profession, teaching has a high level of stress. It may be due to multiple factors like the amount of time that is spent in class, time spent preparing for class and counseling students, and working with many students having various needs, abilities, disabilities, and cognitive levels. Moreover, learning new technology, changes in administrative leadership, lack of financial and

personnel support, and time pressure generated by deadlines are some other prominent challenges teachers face in their day-to-day work. Result of thematic analysis are presented below:

Table 1: Major Theme: Professional stressors of private school female teachers

Major Theme :1 Professional Stressors		
SubTheme 1 Workload	SubTheme 2 Psychological Challenges	SubTheme 3 Consequences
lesson planning	Unhealthy parent-teacher Communication	Poor mental health
diverse students' need ongoing professional adaptation grading and assessment	unrealistic parents' high expectations professional development managing untimely extra-curricular activities	Physical health issues unpleasant work environment conflict with colleagues
classroom management administrative task meeting unrealistic deadlines	lack of resources emotional labor adverse stress coping strategies advocacy issues	uncomfortable workstation problems in classroom management

The first central theme of Professional Stressors includes sub-theme workload with a list of items such as lesson planning, diverse student needs, on-going adaptation, grading and assessment, classroom management, administrative tasks, and meeting unrealistic deadlines. Teachers talked about in details regarding all these issues and in the light of their verbatim the theme name was given and subthemes name were also given having face validity. While talking about workload, one teacher said:

"I am fed up with unrealistic deadlines given to me by the administration specially the school principal and headmistress. For example, I have 30 students in my class, and it is not possible to complete their files in 15 minutes."

Lesson planning emerged as another great hurdle for most of the sample which was participant to discussion. A teacher stated:

"My weekend was spent making lesson plans. It required effort and energy which goes unrecognized as I am doing my school work in my home time to complete this huge task. I feel I haven't enjoyed a break; my job is draining me."

(Focus group 3)

It was clearly stated by the sample that they face a lot of challenges and struggles while they adapt themselves with time to the time changes is the syllabus, routine, timetable change, and untimely breaks due to political, economic, or weather conditions (such as covid , strikes, smog, etc.) One teacher reported

"On-going adaptation is a challenge. It was quite hard in the pandemic-19 to shift school to synchronous learning."

Teachers were concerned about online classes even after the Covid-19 pandemic was over. Such as teacher said:

"Online school was good support for our students in a pandemic. However, this teaching mode is still offered by school administration to facilitate the students, increasing teaching load with regular school."

(Focus group 2)

A teacher has to deal with diverse students in one class. One teacher stated: *"Diverse student needs are not essay to manage when it requires to design formative assessment."*

(Focus group 1)

In the same line LePine, LePine, and Jackson (2004) confirmed the existence of multiple stressors in the teaching environment, such as workload, role ambiguity, limited resources, time constraints, job insecurity, and unfavorable job conditions. These stressors pose significant obstacles that hinder teachers' performance. Supporting this finding, Mielke (2023) underscores the fact that teachers have finite time and energy. Simply working harder or longer does not address the root problem of an excessively heavy workload that teachers already struggle with.

Ballet and Kelchtermans (2009) drew attention to the hurdles teachers face, especially as their workload continues to grow. Through their insightful observations, it becomes clear that the mounting list of responsibilities placed upon educators is a frequent cause of frustration. This sheds light on the widespread impact of this problem, emphasizing the urgency for proactive measures to ease the stress on teachers (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004; Mielke, 2023).

The first central theme of Professional Stressors, includes the sub-theme, *psychological challenge*, with a list of items such as parent-teacher communication, parent's high expectation, professional development, extracurricular activities, lack of resources, Emotional labor, stress coping strategy, and advocacy talked about the unpleasant behaviors of parents when they interact with teachers. One teacher said:

"Some fussy parents are headache."

Similarly, while talking about student-teacher interaction, another teacher shared: *"Establishing strong, positive relationships with students' teacher's mental health is essential."*

(Focus group 1)

Coping in these situations at times becomes challenging and diverse. Such as a teacher reported: *"I try to cope with my stress by listening to music."*

(Focus group 2)

While juggling with work to family and family to work stress, another teacher stated: *"When I am at work, I feel work burden and when I deal with family stressful affairs, it's like switching stress mode."*

In alignment with the aforementioned perspective, Sibal (2024) highlighted that the role of a teacher can be exceptionally stressful, exhausting, and emotionally draining, often culminating in burnout. The evolving nature of a teacher's responsibilities, including delicate circumstances like insufficient resources, loss of authority, and conflicts with students, further underscores the challenging landscape they navigate. In her recent work, Premalatha (2021) highlights the critical connection between the quality of education and the wellbeing of teachers. As teachers hold a significant influence over educational achievements, it is clear that their mental well-being significantly impacts their effectiveness. As such, prioritizing the maintenance of good mental health is crucial for teachers to fulfill their responsibilities and make a valuable contribution to the overall standard of education. These findings collectively highlight the complex hurdles that teachers face and emphasize the necessity of addressing both the structural and mental health components of their professional journey [9]. According to the findings of Chaudhry and Chhajer (2023), a crucial element in promoting work engagement among teachers is their psychological well-being. This confirms the findings expressed by previous studies, which emphasize the need for teachers to prioritize their psychological well-being not only for their own personal health but also for their effectiveness as educators. As noted by Glazzard and Rose (2020), the psychological well-being of schoolteachers plays a pivotal role in the quality of education they provide. The consistency between these findings and the themes uncovered from our sample of teachers provides strong evidence for the significance of psychological well-being in the teaching profession (Chaudhry & Chhajer, 2023; Glazzard & Rose, 2020). *The first central theme, Professional Stressors*, includes the sub-theme consequences, such as health issues, work environment, conflict with colleagues, uncomfortable workstations, and problems in classroom management. These professional challenges are manifested in terms of different consequences. As dealing with students' individual needs, one teacher stated:

"Sometimes, I can't justify my work as some student needs persistent support to create meaningful change".

(Focus group 2)

Classroom management is an energy talking task for teachers, especially when they are dealing with a large number of students. While highlighting class management issues, one teacher shared: *"It's not possible to deal with 29 students in 40-minute lesson."*

(Focus group 3)

Timetable with 25 to 27 lessons per month with six to seven classes each day, large number of students create huge task of timely copy checking with productive feedback. Copy checking generates too much ongoing work and inappropriate workstations generate uncomfortable situations to complete the work.

One Teacher explained: *"Copy checking without a comfortable workstation is difficult to manage."*

(Focus group 2)

In school timings teachers are too much occupied by starting their day with morning assembly, uniform checking, attendance, follow-up absentees, class disciplinary issues, break duties, coordination meetings and many days to day school activities so they could not get time to relax.

One teacher stated: *"I can't get time to grab a cup of tea during school time."*

(Focus group 1)

Besides teachers' regular schoolwork many times they are required to take a substitution class on the behalf of absent colleague it consumes their planned time and make them uncomfortable.

Which create various hurdles, such as disruptions to the normal flow of lessons, challenges in maintaining discipline, concerns about the consistency of instruction, or other issues associated with temporary replacements. The teacher may feel that the absence of the regular instructor and the introduction of substitutions are negatively impacting the learning environment or the overall effectiveness of the educational experience for the students. While expressing frustration or dissatisfaction with the practice of having substitute teachers in the classroom, one teacher shared:

"Substitutions are killing."

(Focus group 3)

Some studies also shown that distracted timetables for the classes, unnecessary meetings, duties that are not related to the education, classrooms with a large numbers of students, unsatisfactory outcomes, lack of interest of the learners, low salaries and unnecessary paperwork are also the major causes of the stress in schoolteachers (Hunnur et al., 2013). In a more recent research, Meschino (2023) also analyses the crucial aspects of teaching and learning, including classroom management, student interactions, effective lessons, teacher collaboration, and school management, with a focus on the effects of stress (Meschino, 2023). Economic crisis, enhanced expectations and demands, work overloading and conflicting relations at home are the most common stressors by Dr. Gray Brown. However, it was not only restricted to the death of loved ones, but also health issues, and experiencing one or more traumatic incidents etc. (Lindberg). The second central theme, *Domestic Stressors*, includes the *first* sub-theme, Familial Factors and second: sub-theme Personal Factors with the list of items.

3.2. Domestic Stressors Themes and Sub-themes

Teaching is revealed to be a stressful profession by literature besides that, teachers are also managing their personal life and domestic stress it also adds on their burden, such as family and children responsibility, utility bills, children related problems. Moreover, a teacher's physical health, mental health and family expectations are important to deal. Balancing work life with personal life is a huge challenge for the teachers. Result of thematic analysis are presented below.

Table 2: Major Theme: Domestic stressors of private school female teachers

Major Theme :2 Domestic Stressors	
SubTheme 1 Familial Factor	SubTheme 2 Personal Factor
Home Responsibility	Physical Health
Family Responsibility	Emotional Health
Family Expectation	Emotional Well Being

The second central theme of Domestic Stressors includes sub-theme *familial factor*. Within this theme lies a significant sub-theme known as "familial factors." This sub-theme encompasses a wide range of themes, including domestic and familial responsibilities, expectations set by family members, the delicate balance between work and family life, struggles arising from unsupportive family dynamics, and challenges related to parenting. Our analysis of the teachers' verbatim led us to identify and classify these sub-themes directly from their factual descriptions. In our exploration and discussion, these issues proved to be crucial. One teacher shared her feelings of guilt by saying:

"I feel guilty that I am not available for my six months son at home."

(Focus group 2)

Teachers' children also expect their parents to be a part of their academic ceremony however, due to some job-related responsibility teachers could not manage to take the opportunity.

One teacher stated:

"I am so sad that I am not able to attend the convocation ceremony because of my students' assessments."

(Focus group 1)

Family support is an important factor for female' teachers, unsupportive family members cause stressful environment and make them feel uneasy, as in traditional joint family system many unpleasant thoughts and situations teachers have to face and manage, uninformed guests, house related cleaning, cooking, dish washing and unrealistic approach about school teaching as often family think that school job is very easy.

One teacher shared:

"My mother-in-law thinks I go to a job daily for fun."

(Focus group 3)

Teaching is a very committed profession, taking schoolwork home and completing it in personal time creates uneasy situation for teachers it seems to disturb their family time. Lesson planning with differentiate task, assessment designing and making lesson resource is time taking often it seems impossible to manage these things in school time.

One Teacher Stated:

"Often, I take my work at home. It disturbs my family life."

(Focus group 3)

What we heard from our research participants was entirely in line with what Bano & Shifa (2012) says: " The diversity of roles provokes teachers with variety of challenges including inadequate resources, overcrowded classes, lack of professional development opportunities, lack of parental support, and low financial packages as well as professional status, to name a few. Teaching was widely believed to be a demanding profession with a high risk for stress." Ingersoll (2001) also found similar findings when arguing that teacher shortage is resulted from a "revolving door" in which many teachers has left for reasons other than retirement. For Ingersoll (2001), the professional stress of teachers is one of the prominent factors that contribute to teacher turnover. Therefore, understanding the stress factors and providing teacher-friendly conditions in schools is significant to achieving educational goals (Ingersoll, 2001; Sultana, Bano, Bano, & Shafa, 2012). The second central theme of Professional Stressors includes sub-theme *personal factor* which includes list of items such as physical and emotional health and emotional wellbeing. Teachers' emotional wellbeing directly affect their ability to perform in the classroom. If teachers are emotionally ignored by the administration, they will find difficult to manage classrooms and supporting children.

One Teacher Stated:

"Teachers emotional well-being is ignored."

(Focus group 3)

Teaching need constant engagement and emotional investment for multitasking as teaching profession demands. It requires mental, emotional and physical energy to fulfil teaching requirement.

One Teacher Stated:

"My work consumes my energy, and I feel drained, especially in co-curricular activity week."

(Focus group 1)

Teachers' mental health influence not only their own well-being, but also the quality of education as well as student achievement (Emeljanovas, Sabaliauskas, Mežienė, & Istomina, 2023). The World Health Organization (2015) notes about well-being "...a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community" (World Health Organization, 2015).

4. Conclusion

To conclude, this qualitative study offers valuable insights into the complex nature of teacher stress among private school teachers in Lahore, Pakistan. Through thorough thematic analysis, the study delved into the various stressors that teachers face both within their professional and personal lives, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges they encounter. By conducting three focus group interviews with teachers having age ranges from 25-45, married, with at least three years of experience, this study brings to light important findings. The identified themes shed light on both common and unique factors contributing to teacher stress. These include administrative tasks, coping mechanisms, and classroom management, which align with previous research. However, this study also uncovered novel themes that highlight the distinct experiences of private school teachers in Lahore.

4.1. Implication

This research has significant implications for educators, policymakers, administrators, and the community. Key takeaways include the importance of addressing specific stressors to enhance teacher well-being and retention. Tailored professional development, policy advocacy for gender-specific challenges, supportive school leadership practices, community awareness, and mental health support are crucial. Gender-sensitive workplace policies, collaboration with education institutions, research-driven interventions, and promoting gender equity can create a supportive environment, ultimately improving education quality and contributing to the overall development of the sector.

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