



## Anxiety and Burnout among Teachers in Digitalized Education: A Cross-Sectional Study

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### Abstract

**Background:** Recent developments in the digitalization of teaching methods have raised work demands that teachers need to adapt to, which can affect their overall psychological well-being. This study explores the relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers working with digitalized education models and tools. **Objectives:** This study explores the relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers working with digitalized education models. It also explores whether there are differences in anxiety and burnout levels based on gender and geographical regions. **Methods:** A cross-sectional quantitative study was used. The sample consisted of 1,000 full-time public-school teachers working in four cities in Albania. Anxiety was evaluated using the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), and burnout was evaluated using the Exhaustion at Work Scale, including both psychological and physical exhaustion. A descriptive test, an independent samples t-test, a Pearson correlation test, a one-way ANOVA test, and linear regression analysis were used for data extraction. **Results:** The results showed no significant differences in anxiety or burnout levels by gender or geographic region. However, Pearson correlation analysis showed a statistically significant positive association between anxiety and burnout ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which means that higher levels of anxiety correlate positively with professional exhaustion. Also, when conducting a regression analysis, it was significant that anxiety predicted burnout ( $p < 0.001$ ), explaining ~6% of the variance. **Conclusion:** The study provides new perspectives on teacher well-being in an Albanian context and further emphasizes the need to address anxiety as a component to education policy to counteract occupational burnout among digitally advanced learners.

**Keywords:** Anxiety; Burnout; Physical Exhaustion; Psychology; Technology

### Introduction

Technology is continuously developing and becoming a more common part of our everyday lives. Particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, digital tools have become more institutionalized in different fields. This also applies to teaching, a profession that is continuously being affected and adapted to digital education models year by year. The educational routine nowadays fully incorporates technology teaching practices such as virtual classrooms, digital platforms, or online assessment systems (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Ngongpah & Oni, 2025).

However, even though there are clear benefits for teachers, such as enhanced information access and the possibility of an interactive learning environment, it creates new psychological and work-related demands (Dhayinta *et al.*, 2025; Saboor *et al.*, 2024; Beames *et al.*, 2023). The digitalization of education has added to the complexities of such efforts through which teachers may regulate class dynamics and instruction as well as build technological competency, new innovation strategies of

practice, and shifting institutional responsibilities (Najmudin *et al.*, 2025; Antonietti *et al.*, 2022). Such increased professional responsibilities could place even more psychological stress on educators working in high-digital-age contexts where the change is accelerating and does not have systemic support.

Anxiety is among the most common psychological reactions to uncertain, competitive, and helpless situations (Bonfim *et al.*, 2022). At work, chronic anxiety can disrupt focus, reduce job satisfaction, and affect health. There may be increased anxiety in education as well due to technological demand, performance appraisal, workload, and continuous adaptation demands (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Saboor *et al.*, 2024). Burnout is one of the possible long-term effects of chronic occupational anxiety (Dhayinta *et al.*, 2025; Beames *et al.*, 2023).

Burnout is an acute and chronic stress-related syndrome common in careers that require a high degree of interpersonal contact over a long time, such as education or health care. It is characterized by physical as well as cognitive fatigue and loss of drive and productivity in the professional domain. Burnout might play a role in the digitally changing aspect of our educational facilities, with burnout occurring in teachers under persistent emotional strain and near-constant contact with information, physical demands, and the increasing requirements with technology and cognitive demand, which have been reported to be damaging (Yang *et al.*, 2025; Saboor *et al.*, 2024).

Digitalization of education is an area that has progressed in Albania over the last years (OECD, 2024; UNESCO, 2021), especially in urban and rural public schools across Albania (Osmani & Tartari, 2024). Digital reform is an emerging framework for modernizing practices, yet its implications for the psychosocial functioning of teachers are unexamined (IIEP-UNESCO, 2024). Accordingly, the correlation of anxiety with occupational burnout becomes critical so that supportive educational policies that take into consideration the well-being of teachers are able to be developed in order to secure their effectiveness in an era of constant technological transformation.

This study therefore examines the relationship between anxiety and burnout for Albania's teachers in a digitalized teaching mode. The second aim of the current study is to determine whether anxiety and burnout are moderated by gender and geography (urban versus rural). This study proposes empirically adding to the growing literature on teacher well-being in digitally transforming educational systems through a quantitative cross-sectional design with standardized psychological instruments.

### ***Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Variables***

#### ***Anxiety***

Conceptual definition: Anxiety involves people having feelings of tension, worry, and physiological arousal in response to worries about possible threats or future uncertainty.

Operational definition: Anxiety was measured by the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), a 21-item Likert scale-based self-report questionnaire assessing the severity of anxiety symptoms (Beck *et al.*, 1988). Higher scores are associated with more severe anxiety.

#### ***Burnout (work stress or occupational fatigue)***

Conceptual definition: Burnout is a condition related to stress that is often present within interpersonal work (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Operational definition: Burnout was measured with the Exhaustion at Work Scale and was adapted for the Albanian environment. It consists of two scales in its assessment: (1) Psychological exhaustion and (2) Physical exhaustion (Hock, 1988). High scores reflect high levels of occupational exhaustion.

#### ***Digitalized teaching context***

Conceptual definition: Digitalized teaching refers to the use of digital tools, online platforms, and technology-based strategies in the teaching-learning processes via technology, as well as in online educational institutions. Digitalized teaching enables students and staff members to share and manage instructional resources and information across various online applications, leveraging digital platforms.

Operational clarification: Digitalization is not a stand-alone variable but rather refers to the context in which teachers were engaged in their professional work when data were collected.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***Occupational stress and burnout in teaching***

Teaching is generally known as a demanding profession both emotionally and cognitively. Taking into account the workload teachers have, it can be said that it is a relatively challenging profession that can include work-related stress. Occupational stress is theorized to occur when the demands of a job exceed the employee's resources to meet said duties (Dehghan, 2021; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Furthermore, if this stress continues, and the demands exceed someone's capabilities, and there is no institutional support, this stress can then evolve into burnout.

According to burnout theory, people in helping professions are more susceptible to developing prolonged work-related stress (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). While burnout in general is conceptualized as a syndrome caused by prolonged stress that leads to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced work performance, this study operationalizes it as physiological and psychological exhaustion, which closely aligns with the exhaustion domain of the classical burnout models.

Due to continuous interpersonal interactions, performance, and student-related responsibility, teachers can be especially vulnerable to developing work-related stress (Bello Piguave *et al.*, 2025; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). If adequate institutional support is not provided for, this psychological strain can then lead to professional exhaustion and burnout. Considering the important part teachers play, the entire education system can then suffer if burnout is common amongst teachers.

### ***Anxiety as a psychological risk factor***

Anxiety is a response to a perceived psychological or physiological threat or a response to future-related uncertainty. It is characterized by a heightened psychological and physiological arousal (Bello Piguave *et al.*, 2025; Spielberger, 1983). While anxiety is part of the psyche and can heighten alertness and performance in short-term situations, if it becomes prolonged and chronic, it can take a toll on cognitive functioning, emotional regulation, and work performance.

In professions related to education, anxiety can have many factors, such as workload, managing the classroom, or administrative and performance-related duties. The introduction of digital teaching methods can thus intensify work-related anxiety, as it can increase complexity, uncertainty, and a teacher's fear of digital impotence (Kim *et al.*, 2022; Dehghan, 2021).

Previous research studies have suggested that persistent anxiety contributes to increasing emotional fatigue and raises the possibility of developing burnout syndrome (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022; Kim & Wang, 2018). As such, anxiety may act as an early indicator of burnout. Studying the relationship between both can give a full picture of a teacher's occupational functioning in digital settings and help review the possible institutional interference to reduce stress and anxiety, thus reducing the chances of burnout.

### ***Digitalization as a contextual stressor***

Digitalized education is the systemic integration of different tools such as online platforms and instructional digital practices within the classroom (Saboor *et al.*, 2024; Althubyani, 2024). Digital teaching is seen as beneficial and progressive and as the correct way to move forward; however, it can also be an added stressor, especially for teachers not familiar with technology.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model theorizes that burnout develops when work demands and duties start to exceed an individual's capabilities and resources (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Kim & Wang, 2018). In this framework, digitalization can be seen as an increase in job demands since it requires adaptation to technology, training, adapting to a different institutional model, etc. If the institution does not provide adequate support, training, and infrastructure, digital teaching can become overwhelming.

Digital transition in schools started to grow rapidly, especially during the global pandemic period, leaving the education system forever changed at a very rapid pace (Bello Piguave *et al.*, 2025; OECD, 2021).

Thus, teachers were faced with a change that at first was uncertainty and now is a continuous part of their daily work.

### ***The relationship between anxiety and burnout***

A positive correlational relationship between anxiety and burnout is reported throughout empirical research (Dehghan, 2021; Maslach & Leiter, 2016). While anxiety is an immediate psychological distress, burnout is a more chronic, work-related manifestation of stress exposure over a long time. Hence, this study suggests that anxiety can function as a predictor for burnout.

Psychological resources such as emotional regulation abilities, coping mechanisms, etc., can be depleted by continuous worries, tension, and emotional distress (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2009; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This, if persistent over time, can become exhaustion, lowered motivation, and less work engagement. Therefore, high levels of anxiety are expected to have a positive relationship with occupational exhaustion.

This research paper is built on the theoretical assumption that by analyzing if anxiety can predict burnout in teachers using digitally advanced methods, effective interventions can be implemented to decrease the general level of anxiety and subsequently burnout.

### ***Gender and geographic context***

When it comes to gender differences in anxiety and burnout levels in teachers, there have been mixed findings (Agyapong, *et al.*, 2022; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). While some studies have suggested that female teachers are more vulnerable to anxiety and burnout, an almost equal number of studies have found no significant differences. Furthermore, in regard to demographic differences, the geographical context-related differences (rural vs. urban) have been found, mostly related to workload, access to digital resources, and institutional support (Althubyani, 2024; OECD, 2021), which can influence psychological outcomes for anxiety and burnout in teachers working in digital environments.

### ***Aim of the study***

This study aims to explore the relationship between anxiety and burnout among teachers in digitalized teaching and also to determine if there are significant gender and/or region-based (urban-rural) variations in anxiety and burnout.

### ***Objectives of this study***

1. To measure differences in anxiety and burnout based on gender and region (urban/rural).
2. To analyze the relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers involved in digital teaching.
3. To assess the extent to which anxiety predicts burnout levels in teachers working within a digitalized educational environment.

### ***Research questions***

This study analyzes the association between anxiety and burnout in teachers engaged in digitalized teaching and inspects if they differ according to gender and geographic area.

Research questions are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between anxiety and burnout among teachers engaged in digitalized teaching, and do these variables differ according to gender and geographic area?
  - 1.1. Are there significant differences in anxiety and burnout levels between male and female teachers?
  - 1.2. Are there significant differences in anxiety and burnout levels between teachers working in urban and rural areas?
  - 1.3. Is there a significant relationship between anxiety and burnout among teachers working in digitalized teaching?

1.4. To what extent does anxiety predict burnout in teachers working within a digital teaching environment?

## **Methodology**

### **Research design**

This chapter describes methodological aspects of the study, including explanation of instruments, sample used, size of sample, and how sample was chosen. The study outlines objectives and research questions that illustrate variables not only based on theoretical literature but also through the application of questionnaires in the field. This enables the analysis of the statistical data to provide descriptive and analytical analysis for the study. The study has a quantitative cross-sectional design focused on analyzing the relationship between anxiety and occupational burnout in teachers that are engaged in digital education practices. Based on the findings, the study aims to offer further recommendations that can alleviate and further investigate the problem at hand.

### **Sample and participants**

The sample for this study consisted of full-time teachers working in public schools in Elbasan, Tirana, Vlora, and Durrës. These specific cities were chosen because of their dense population and the high number of schools, making it more efficient to randomly select among schools and teachers. The criterion for choosing participants in the study was working full time in a public school. Initially n=1009 teachers participated, but the final database consisted of n=1000 complete responses. The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (Yamane, 1967).

### **Study instruments**

Data for this study were collected using a questionnaire consisting of three separate sections:

*Section 1:* demographic data that include general information, such as age, gender, and place of birth (rural/urban).

*Section 2:* Anxiety was assessed using the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), a 21-item self-report measure rated on a 4-point scale assessing symptom severity (Beck *et al.*, 1988).

*Section 3:* Burnout was assessed using the Exhaustion at Work Scale by Hock (1988), adapted for use in the Albanian context. This instrument includes two subscales:

A – Psychological worries related mainly to forgetfulness, low motivation, weariness, anger, anxiety, etc.

B – Physical worries, expressed through loss of appetite, muscular shaking, excessive fatigue, headaches, etc.

### **Data analysis procedure**

Data was coded and entered into a statistical database for further analysis. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS-26, while Excel was used for organization and initial processing. Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted. Descriptives were used to summarize demographic data and characteristics as well as the key variables. Furthermore, inferential statistics were used to examine relationships between variables and group differences. Specifically, an independent t-test was used to analyze differences in anxiety and burnout levels across gender and geographical area. Secondly, Pearson correlation analysis was used to assess the relationship between anxiety and burnout levels. Thirdly, analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was used to examine differences in burnout for anxiety severity levels (as per the 4 levels of BAI). Lastly, linear regression was used to analyze the predictive role of anxiety on burnout levels. Regarding the sample size, as mentioned above, Yamane's formula was used with a 95% CI and 5% error margin.

The data collection process adhered to ethical standards in order to obtain accurate results and minimize the possibility of response bias. Also, each subject was informed that he was free to participate

or not in completing the questionnaire. He was also assured that confidentiality would be maintained. For each statistical analysis, a clear and complete argument is given, adhering to the criteria defined for each step of the analysis and tests used in the study.

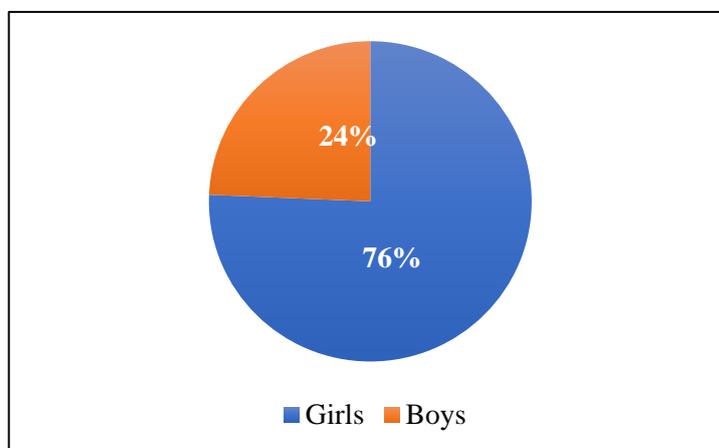
## Results and Discussion

### **Demographic characteristics of the participants**

#### *Gender and age*

The final sample consisted of 1000 full-time teachers working in public schools across four Albanian cities that had implemented digitalized educational practices. Of the participants, 76% (n=760) were female and 24% (n=240) male, as shown in Figure 1. The sample shows that there are more females than males.

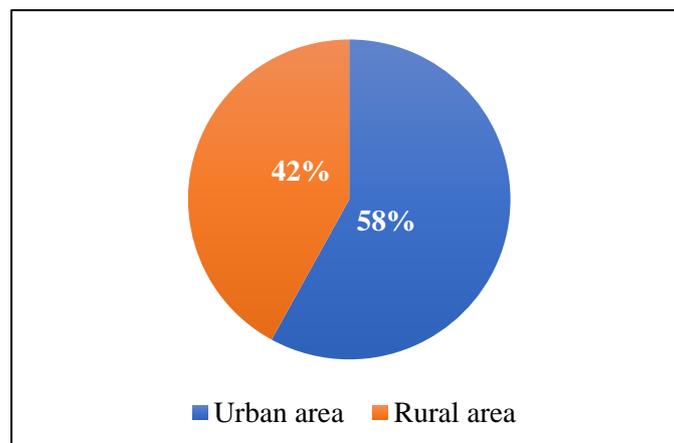
This gender distribution reflects the broader demographic pattern observed in the teaching profession, where women often represent a larger proportion of educators in primary and secondary education systems (Touloupis *et al.*, 2026).



**Figure 1: Distribution of teachers by gender (N=1000)**

#### **Geographic area**

In order to provide a clear picture of the area distribution, descriptives on the geographic area of the participants are provided in the figure below. Results show that 58% of teachers live in urban areas and 42% of teachers live in rural areas, as shown in Figure 2. More teachers worked in urban areas.



**Figure 2: Geographic distribution of teachers by school location (Urban vs. Rural; N=1000)**

**Inferential analysis**

The inferential analysis section is focused on conducting the statistical procedures in order to answer the main research question of this study: 1. “What is the relationship between anxiety and burnout among teachers engaged in digitalized teaching, and do these variables differ according to gender and geographic area?”

*Group differences in anxiety*

This section reports the t-tests and analysis of variance for demographic comparison. This section is in line with objective 1 of the study, “To measure differences in anxiety and burnout based on gender and region (urban/rural),” and research question 1.1, “Are there significant differences in anxiety and burnout levels between male and female teachers?” and research question 1.2, “Are there significant differences in anxiety and burnout levels between teachers working in urban and rural areas?” To accurately measure this research question, both t-tests and ANOVAs are reported for demographic comparisons.

*Gender differences in anxiety*

In pursuit of analyzing the gender differences in anxiety levels, as per research question 1.1, an independent t-test was conducted to analyze gender differences in anxiety levels. As shown in Table 1, Levene’s test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met ( $p > 0.05$ ). The results showed no statistically significant difference in anxiety between female teachers (M = 2.14, SD = 0.553) and male teachers (M = 2.10, SD = 0.554),  $t(998) = 0.918, p = 0.356$ .

This finding is consistent with previous studies reporting that gender differences in anxiety among teachers are not always statistically significant and may depend more on institutional or occupational conditions than gender itself (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

*Geographical differences in anxiety*

In line with research question 1.2, to analyze whether anxiety levels would differ in a statistically important portion between teachers living in rural and urban areas, a second independent samples t-test was conducted. As shown in Table 1, Levene’s test confirmed equality of variances ( $p > 0.05$ ). Although the mean anxiety score was slightly higher among urban teachers (M = 3.16, SD = 0.444) compared to rural teachers (M = 3.14, SD = 0.580), this difference was not statistically significant,  $t(998) = -0.697, p = 0.486$ .

**Table 1: Independent samples t-test and ANOVA results for anxiety by gender and geographic area**

	N	Mean (M)	(SD)	Levene’s Test			ANOVA	
				t	df	p	F	p
<b>Gender</b>								
Female Teachers	760	2.14	0.553					
Male Teachers	240	2.10	0.554	0.918	998	0.356		
<b>Geographic Area</b>								
Urban Teachers	580	3.16	0.444	-0.697	998	0.486	0.486	0.486
Rural Teachers	420	3.14	0.580					

Furthermore, one-way ANOVA confirmed the absence of statistically significant differences between groups,  $F(1, 998) = 0.486, p = 0.486$ . The findings indicated that anxiety levels did not vary significantly across geographic areas.

**Relationship between anxiety and burnout**

This section reports the Pearson correlation and analysis of variance for the relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers engaged in digital education systems. This section is in line with objective 2 of the study: “To analyze the relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers involved in digital teaching,” and research question 1.3: “Is there a significant relationship between anxiety and

burnout among teachers engaged in digitalized teaching?” To accurately measure this research question, both Pearson correlation coefficients and frequencies in percentages are reported.

**Descriptive statistics of burnout components**

*Distribution of psychological exhaustion symptoms*

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of psychological exhaustion symptoms experienced by teachers. Most respondents reported experiencing most psychological symptoms “never” or “1–2 times in 6 months.” This includes experience of forgetfulness, according to 50.7% of respondents, and never experiencing loss of consciousness, described by 76.7% of respondents. Fewer teachers reported experiencing some symptoms at greater rates.

**Table 2: Frequency distribution of psychological exhaustion symptoms among teachers (percentages)**

	Never	1-2 times in 6 months	Every month	Every week	Every day	Total
Forgetfulness	50.7	29.7	12.3	5.5	1.8	100.0
Loss of Consciousness	76.7	18.3	1.6	2.1	1.3	100.0
Decrease in Motivation	54.5	30.8	2.1	8.9	3.7	100.0
Anxiety	54.2	27.9	9.8	5.1	3.0	100.0
Annoyance or anger	21.9	44.0	21.4	10.6	2.1	100.0
Decline in humors for a long time/Depression	70.3	19.6	4.2	4.2	1.7	100.0
Great desire to stay in bed in the morning	43.4	25.1	13.3	10.5	7.7	100.0
Decrease in sexual interest	55.6	25.9	14.0	2.1	2.4	100.0
Tendency to eat/drink or smoke more than usual	68.2	17.3	8.4	3.0	3.1	100.0

Significantly, 10.5% of respondents expressed a great desire to stay in bed every week, and 7.7% experience this each day. Similarly, 10.6% of respondents reported annoyance or anger weekly. These findings imply that symptoms of psychological exhaustion are not homogeneous among teachers.

Previous research has also suggested that burnout symptoms often appear in varying degrees across educators, with some experiencing only mild symptoms while others report more frequent psychological exhaustion (Yao & Abdullah, 2025).

*Distribution of physical exhaustion symptoms*

Table 3 shows the distribution of the symptoms of physical exhaustion. Similar to psychological symptoms, most teachers reported that they experienced most physical symptoms infrequently. But specific physical symptoms came up more often. For example, 9.2% of teachers stated they felt excessive fatigue or exhaustion each day, and 10.8% once a week.

**Table 3: Frequency distribution of physical exhaustion symptoms among teachers (percentages)**

	Never	1-2 times in 6 months	Every month	Every week	Every day	Total
Loss of appetite	51.5	35.3	8.1	3.7	1.4	100.0
Muscle tremors	62.1	25.3	6.0	3.7	2.9	100.0
Sharp pain or pain sensation in various parts of the body	36.7	35.0	17.1	5.8	5.4	100.0
Feeling of excessive fatigue or exhaustion	29.1	30.5	20.4	10.8	9.2	100.0
Tendency to sweat or fast heart rate	51.4	27.9	10.9	5.7	4.1	100.0
Problems with digestion/gastrointestinal worries	47.7	24.7	12.1	10.1	6.4	100.0
Inability to sleep	56.3	32.1	12.4	5.6	4.6	100.0
Troubled breathing or suffocation	56.1	33.2	5.8	3.2	1.7	100.0
Headache/and or migraine	45.3	35.2	17.5	8.4	3.6	100.0

A significant number of respondents also mentioned experiencing gastrointestinal problems and body pain on a weekly basis. On the whole, the majority of the teachers reported low physical symptoms, but some reported recurring physical exhaustion symptoms.

These physical symptoms are frequently reported in burnout research, where prolonged occupational stress has been linked to fatigue, headaches, and other stress-related health complaints (Madigan *et al.*, 2023).

**Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive association between anxiety and burnout ( $r = 0.25, p < 0.001$ ), as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Pearson correlation between anxiety and burnout (N = 1000)**

Variable 1	Variable 2	r	p
Anxiety	Burnout	0.25	< 0.001

This indicates a modest relationship, suggesting that higher anxiety levels are moderately associated with higher levels of occupational exhaustion in teachers engaged in digitalized education models. Similar relationships between anxiety and professional exhaustion have been reported in previous studies examining teacher well-being and occupational stress (Adabi & Ghafournia, 2020).

From a theoretical perspective, prolonged anxiety can gradually reduce psychological resources, which may increase vulnerability to burnout over time (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

**Anxiety as a predictor of burnout levels**

This section reports the psychological and physical exhaustion frequencies in teachers engaged in digital education systems. This section is in line with objective 3 of the study: “To assess the extent to which anxiety predicts burnout levels in teachers working within a digitalized educational environment.” and research question 1.4: “To what extent does anxiety predict burnout in teachers working within a digital teaching environment?” To accurately measure this research question, both Pearson correlation coefficients, one-way ANOVA, and regression analysis are reported.

To further analyze the differences in anxiety and burnout levels across several categories, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. As shown in Table 5, results indicated statistically significant differences in burnout across anxiety levels,  $F(3, 993) = 11.034, p < 0.001$ . This finding supports the presence of meaningful variation in burnout depending on the severity of anxiety symptoms.

**Table 5: One-way analysis of variance examining differences in burnout across anxiety severity levels**

	df	F	p
Between groups	3	11.034	< 0.001
Within groups	993		
<b>Total</b>	996		

Finally, in order to analyze if anxiety significantly predicts burnout levels, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The results, as shown in Table 6, indicated that anxiety was a statistically significant predictor of burnout ( $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that higher levels of anxiety are associated with higher levels of occupational exhaustion among teachers.

**Table 6: Linear regression analysis predicting burnout from anxiety**

Predictor	r	R	p
Anxiety	0.25	0.06	< 0.05

Because the model included a single predictor, the regression coefficient (R) corresponds to the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.25$ ), yielding an  $R^2$  value of 0.06. This indicates that anxiety accounts for approximately 6% of the variance in burnout. Given the cross-sectional design of the study, these findings reflect association rather than causation.

These findings are also consistent with the Job Demands–Resources Model, which proposes that burnout develops when job demands exceed the available personal or organizational resources (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Kim & Wang, 2018).

### **Limitations**

The study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research employed a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between anxiety and burnout. Because the data were collected at a single point in time, it is not possible to determine whether anxiety leads to burnout or whether burnout may also contribute to increased anxiety among teachers.

The study relied on self-report measures, which may introduce response bias or social desirability effects, as participants might respond in ways they perceive to be more acceptable rather than fully accurate.

The sample composition can be termed as another limitation. The participants were teachers from only four cities in Albania, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to teachers in other regions or different educational contexts. Cultural, institutional, and regional differences could influence the relationship between anxiety and burnout.

The regression model explained only a relatively small proportion of the variance in burnout, suggesting that other important factors not included in the analysis may also contribute to teacher burnout.

The study focused mainly on anxiety as a predictor variable and did not examine other potentially relevant influences such as organizational support, workload, or digital competence, which could also play significant roles in shaping teachers' experiences of burnout.

### **Conclusion**

This research examined the relationship between anxiety and burnout for teachers enrolled in digitalized teaching and whether the two variables varied (or did not) by sex and by geography (urban versus rural). Key findings included numerous important implications.

It is important to note that there were no differences found in anxiety and burnout between genders. The psychological implications of technology adoption by teachers were the same across both males and females. Similarly, anxiety and burnout levels were found to be the same between rural-stationed and urban-stationed teachers. Although, some moderate differences in mean scores were observed, they were not statistically significant.

Another important finding was the statistically significant correlation between anxiety and burnout, as predicted in the theoretical framework and research questions. The correlation, however, was modest and had a modest effect on the results, suggesting that teachers with higher levels of anxiety were more likely to also report high levels of psychological and physical exhaustion.

The regression analyses indicated that anxiety is an important predictor of burnout levels. Anxiety was responsible for a variation of roughly 6 percent in burnout. This suggests that anxiety is a significant predictor, but given the modest percentage, burnout must be multidimensional and is affected by other factors, not only anxiety, such as workload, organizational support, digital effectiveness, and the climate of the workplace.

These results suggest that anxiety is an important psychological factor of teacher burnout in a digitalized education setting. But since the study used a cross-sectional design, any conclusions of causation cannot be drawn. The findings rather reflect associations rather than cause-and-effect relations. These results add to the increasing research in the field of teacher well-being in digital educational settings and highlight the need for psychological support structures in contemporary educational systems.

## Recommendations

Given the results of this study, particularly the positive relationship between anxiety and burnout in teachers working in a digitalized system, it is recommended that schools offer different tools to moderate stress. Such tools include stress management workshops, counseling, periodic mental health screenings, etc. It is important to note that early detection of anxiety can later help prevent work-related exhaustion and burnout.

Given the general framework of digitalized teaching in Albania, it is important to provide teachers, especially those of older generations, with trainings on how to best utilize technology. This can be done under a professional development initiative, which would help teachers to lower their anxiety related to technology developments and the overall educational system.

Anxiety was found to be a predictor for burnout; however, it was capable of explaining only 6% of the variance in psychological and physical exhaustion levels. This suggests that other factors also contribute to occupational exhaustion. Thus, school directors should consider other variables such as work distribution, exactions from digitalized teaching, etc., and continuously provide support and expertise to teachers.

Finally, the results from the present study should also be incorporated in future studies. Longitudinal study designs are suggested to investigate more generally the causal effects of anxiety and burnout over time. It is further suggested that future research should examine other possible predictors, including job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, digital competence, and work-life balance, as potential predictors of anxiety and burnout. Generalization to the study would be improved by expanding this sample (e.g., to other regions or even private schools). Qualitative methods can also offer additional insight into teachers' lived experience in the digitalized educational context.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that there are no conflicting objectives.

## Acknowledgement

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