



Work-Life Balance and Burnout in Faculty

What is this Research About?

Burnout is an increasingly common challenge for instructors to manage as the boundaries between work and personal life become blurred. When work and life are out of balance, it can be especially harmful to faculty's physical and psychological health. Work environments with excessive workloads, time demands, high expectations, and overall lack of support can put pressure on how individuals manage their personal and work responsibilities. In this study, the researchers investigated the relationship between work-life balance and how it can influence burnout in Canadian nursing faculty.

What did the Researchers Do?

The researchers surveyed 645 nursing instructors across Canadian universities. The study was conducted through an online national survey sent to faculty members in Canada, spanning different academic settings. A majority of the participants were full-time faculty at mid-sized or large universities who had been in their positions for over 10 years. The survey explored aspects such as how faculty felt about their work-life balance, how they were experiencing burnout (including emotional exhaustion and cynicism), their intentions to leave work, and overall career satisfaction.

What did the Researchers Find?

The study found robust associations between having a dysfunctional work-life balance and experiencing burnout. Feeling that work interfered with one's ability to meet personal life demands was connected to exacerbated burnout, with emotional exhaustion and feelings of cynicism towards work being notable characteristics of burnout. In particular, emotional exhaustion was linked with elevated feelings of cynicism, higher intention to leave their jobs, and reduced career satisfaction within instructors. Overall, the interplay between poor work-life balance and burnout is linked with numerous negative outcomes both for individuals and organizations, including concerns of psychological wellbeing, job satisfaction, and turnover rates.

SoTL

Snapshot

A synopsis of a scholarship of teaching and learning journal article

➔ How to Implement this Research in Your Classroom

Systemic changes designed to address concerns related to promoting a healthy work-life balance are imperative to mitigate burnout, encourage educator job satisfaction, and reduce faculty turnover. Flexible work practices, setting clear limits on weekly work hours and availability, and prioritizing faculty well-being can make a significant difference to reduce burnout. Interventions should focus on enhancing workplace wellness and norms to create healthy boundaries between work and personal life. Overall, these findings help us understand how universities can promote personal health, workplace wellness, and a positive work environment for faculty members.

➔ Citation

Boamah, S. A., Hamadi, H. Y., Havaei, F., Smith, H., & Webb, F. (2022). Striking a balance between work and play: The effects of work-life interference and burnout on faculty turnover intentions and career satisfaction. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(2), 809. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19020809>

➔ Keywords

Post-Secondary Education
Work-Life Balance
Burnout

Instructor Wellbeing
Career Satisfaction
Work Environment



OFFICE of
TEACHING AND LEARNING