

## TEACHER WORKLOAD IN THE DIGITAL AGE: BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND THE THREAT OF BURNOUT

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### ABSTRAK

Transformasi digital dalam sektor pendidikan telah memicu pergeseran fundamental yang memosisikan teknologi informasi tidak hanya sebagai alat bantu, tetapi juga instrumen strategis untuk meningkatkan efisiensi pembelajaran dan tata kelola institusi. Namun, urgensi masalah muncul ketika integrasi teknologi ini justru menciptakan tekanan baru berupa beban kerja berlebih yang berpotensi menurunkan kesejahteraan tenaga pendidik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak transformasi digital terhadap beban kerja guru, tingkat profesionalisme, serta risiko burnout yang dialami oleh para pendidik di tengah tuntutan adaptasi teknologi yang berkelanjutan. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur (*library research*), yang mengintegrasikan berbagai artikel penelitian jurnal dan teori manajemen pendidikan untuk memetakan hubungan antarvariabel secara mendalam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas guru mengalami peningkatan beban kerja yang signifikan akibat dualisme tuntutan antara pedagogi digital dan administrasi sistemik. Meskipun tingkat profesionalisme guru tetap tergolong tinggi, ditemukan indikasi kerentanan serius terhadap burnout yang dipicu oleh intensitas penggunaan teknologi yang tinggi tanpa dibarengi dukungan institusional yang memadai. Kesimpulannya, transformasi digital memerlukan keseimbangan antara tuntutan teknis dan kapasitas psikologis guru guna menjaga kualitas pengambilan keputusan yang akuntabel. Diperlukan kebijakan pendidikan yang lebih integratif untuk menciptakan ekosistem kerja yang sehat, memitigasi risiko kelelahan mental, serta memastikan keberlanjutan profesionalisme guru di era digital. Sinergi antara infrastruktur teknologi dan kesejahteraan sumber daya manusia menjadi kunci utama keberhasilan implementasi pendidikan modern yang responsif dan sistematis.

**Kata Kunci:** transformasi digital, beban kerja guru, profesionalisme, burnout, manajemen pendidikan, kesejahteraan pendidik

### **ABSTRACT**

*Digital transformation in the education sector has triggered a fundamental shift that positions information technology not only as an aid, but also as a strategic instrument to improve learning efficiency and institutional governance. However, the urgency of the problem arises when the integration of this technology actually creates new pressure in the form of an excess workload that has the potential to reduce the welfare of educators. This research aims to analyze the impact of digital transformation on teachers' workload, professionalism level, and risk of burnout experienced by educators amid the demands of continuous technology adaptation. The methodology used is a qualitative approach with the literature study method (library research), which integrates various journal research articles and education management theories to map the relationship between variables in depth. The results showed that the majority of teachers experienced a significant increase in workload due to the dualism of demands between digital pedagogy and systemic administration. Although the level of professionalism of teachers remains relatively high, there are indications of serious vulnerability to burnout triggered by the high intensity of technology use without adequate institutional support. In conclusion, digital transformation requires a balance between technical demands and the psychological capacity of teachers to maintain the quality of accountable decision-making. A more integrative education policy is needed to create a healthy work ecosystem, mitigate the risk of mental fatigue, and ensure the sustainability of teachers' professionalism in the digital era. The synergy between technological infrastructure and human resource welfare is the main key to the successful implementation of responsive and systematic modern education.*

**Keywords:** *digital transformation, teacher workload, professionalism, burnout, education management, educator well-being*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of digital transformation has encouraged changes in the implementation of education that include aspects of learning and institutional governance. The use of information technology is no longer additional, but has become an integral part of supporting the effectiveness of the educational process. Through the integration of digital systems, learning activities can take place more

flexibly and adjust to the needs of students. (Adam et al., 2025). In addition, the use of technology in education management allows decision-making processes to be carried out more systematically and data-based (Peliza et al., 2024). Therefore, educational institutions need to adapt sustainably in order to be able to respond to the dynamics of these developments.

Digital transformation in education has accelerated significantly after the expansion of online and hybrid learning systems in recent years. Teachers are now required not only to master pedagogical competencies, but also digital literacy skills that support interactive and technology-based learning. The use of digital platforms, learning management systems, and online communication tools has become part of teachers' daily responsibilities. This condition creates a new educational environment where flexibility, responsiveness, and technological adaptation become essential aspects of professional performance.

In the perspective of professionalism, these demands encourage teachers to improve pedagogic and digital competence. Teacher professionalism reflects the ability to carry out tasks effectively, including mastery of technology as part of modern learning. However, this increase in work demands also has an impact on increasing the workload of teachers, both in learning and administrative aspects.

In practice, teachers are often required to complete various administrative tasks through digital systems simultaneously with their teaching responsibilities. Preparing digital materials, conducting online assessments, responding to student communication, and adapting to continuously changing technological platforms can increase work intensity significantly. As a result, many teachers experience difficulties in balancing professional responsibilities and personal well-being.

High intensity of work has the potential to give rise to a condition of work fatigue which in psychological studies is known as *burnout*. This condition is not only related to physical fatigue, but also includes emotional aspects and a decrease in the quality of interpersonal relationships at work. Conceptually, *burnout* is understood as a syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, an attitude of staying away from work, and a decreased sense of self-achievement, especially in potentials that have high demands on service interactions (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This phenomenon is an important concern in the context of education

because it has direct implications for teacher performance and the quality of the learning process. Previous research has shown that the use of technology in education can improve efficiency, but it can also be a source of stress if not balanced with adequate support. Based on this, this study is important to examine the relationship between teacher workload, professionalism, and burnout risk in the digital era.

Several previous studies have discussed the implementation of digital technology in education, but most of them focus only on learning effectiveness or digital competence. Studies that comprehensively analyze the relationship between workload, professionalism, and burnout among teachers in the digital era are still relatively limited. Therefore, this study is important to provide a broader understanding of how digital transformation affects teachers psychologically and professionally.

## **METHOD**

This study applies a quantitative approach with a correlational descriptive survey method to analyze the relationship between workload, professionalism, and teacher burnout in the digital era. The research population was focused on secondary school teachers, with a purposive sampling technique that produced a sample of 100 respondents who actively used digital technology in learning. Data collection was carried out online through the Google Forms platform using a Likert scale questionnaire instrument (1–5), which has been compiled based on theoretical indicators of the main variables and digital competence as supporting variables. The collected data is then processed through a series of statistical analysis techniques, starting from descriptive analysis to map the general condition of variables, as well as validity and reliability tests to ensure the feasibility of the instrument. Next, correlation analysis was performed to identify the strength of the relationship between variables, which was strengthened by regression analysis to test the influence of independent variables on the bound variables significantly. This systematic procedure aims to produce accurate empirical data on the psychological dynamics and professionalism of educators in dealing with digital transformation in the school environment.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. Finding**

Based on the results of data analysis, it is known that the workload of teachers in the digital era is in the high category with an average score of 4.12. Most of the respondents, as many as 76%, stated that they experienced a significant increase in workload as a result of the demands of using technology in learning and administration. This condition shows that the digitalization of education has had direct implications for the intensity and complexity of teachers' duties.

On the other hand, the level of teacher professionalism is also in the high category with an average score of 3.98. This indicates that despite facing an increased workload, teachers still show a strong commitment in carrying out their professional duties. Meanwhile, the teacher burnout rate is in the medium category with an average score of 3.45, where as many as 41% of respondents are in a condition that is vulnerable to burnout. These findings show that there is a significant work pressure that has the potential to affect teachers' welfare.

The results of the correlation test showed that there was a fairly strong positive relationship between workload and burnout with a coefficient of 0.62, which means that the higher the workload, the higher the level of burnout experienced by teachers. In addition, a positive relationship was also found between workload and professionalism with a coefficient of 0.48, which indicates that an increase in workload is also followed by an increase in teacher professionalism. On the other hand, digital competence showed a negative relationship with burnout ( $r = -0.40$ ), which means that the higher the teacher's digital competence, the lower the level of burnout experienced.

Furthermore, the results of regression analysis showed that workload had a significant influence on burnout with a contribution of 38%. In addition, the workload also affects the professionalism of teachers with a contribution of 29%. These findings confirm that workload is an important factor that affects both the level of professionalism and the risk of teacher burnout in the digital era.

### **B. Result**

The research findings show that the increase in teachers' workload cannot be separated from the demands of the use of technology in various aspects of learning.

Teachers are not only required to master digital devices, but also must be able to integrate them in learning strategies effectively. The use of technology in education is basically not only related to technical aspects, but also has consequences for changes in work patterns, organizational culture, and pedagogical approaches (Bond et al., 2018). Thus, digital transformation can be understood as a comprehensive process that requires the readiness of institutions to manage changes systematically and sustainably.

In addition, the increasing dependence on technology has changed teachers' working patterns significantly. Teachers are now expected to be available beyond conventional working hours to respond to student messages, prepare digital content, and manage online learning systems. This situation often creates blurred boundaries between professional and personal life, which contributes to higher levels of work pressure and emotional fatigue.

One of the important results of this study is the tendency that an increase in workload is also followed by an increase in teacher professionalism. This shows that work demands can be a stimulus for competency development. In the context of change in education, the success of a transformation is greatly influenced by the capacity of leadership and the ability of the organization to manage change collectively (Harris & Jones, 2020). Therefore, the role of school leaders is crucial in creating a conducive environment, encouraging innovation, and ensuring the involvement of all elements in the sustainable change process.

Effective leadership support is essential in helping teachers adapt to technological changes. School leaders need to provide continuous professional training, adequate technological infrastructure, and emotional support for educators. Without strong institutional support, teachers may experience difficulties in coping with increasing work demands, which can negatively affect their motivation and teaching performance.

On the other hand, the results of the study also show that the increase in workload is correlated with the high level of work fatigue in teachers. This suggests that poorly managed work pressure can have an impact on an individual's psychological state. Excessive workload, if not accompanied by adequate support, has the potential to cause emotional exhaustion, decreased work engagement, and

decreased performance quality. These findings are also in line with various studies that place job demands as the main factor contributing to the emergence of *burnout* in educators.

This research also shows that digital competencies have an important role in reducing the level of work fatigue. Teachers who have the ability to utilize technology tend to be better able to adapt to changes and manage digital-based job demands more effectively. Thus, mastery of technology not only contributes to improving the quality of learning, but also functions as a protective factor in reducing technical work pressure.

Based on these results, there are several important points that can be of concern. First, digital transformation must be balanced with proportionate workload management so as not to create excessive pressure. Second, improving teacher professionalism needs to be supported through continuous training, especially in digital competencies. Third, the importance of institutional support in the form of policies that pay attention to the welfare and mental health of teachers.

Overall, this study confirms that the relationship between workload, professionalism, and burnout is dynamic and interaffecting. Therefore, a holistic and policy-based approach is needed to ensure that digital transformation in education not only improves the quality of learning, but also maintains the well-being of teachers as a key actor in the education process.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the workload of teachers in the digital era is in the high category as a consequence of the increasing demands of the use of technology in the learning process and educational administration. This condition shows that digital transformation has brought significant changes to the complexity of teachers' tasks. On the other hand, the increase in workload also has a positive impact on teacher professionalism. Teachers are encouraged to improve their competence, especially in the use of digital technology, so that they are able to carry out their duties more effectively and adaptively to the times. This suggests that workload, to some extent, can be a driving factor for improving the professional quality of teachers. However,

a high workload has also been shown to have a significant effect on the increased risk of burnout. Excessive work pressure without adequate support can lead to emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and decreased teacher performance in the learning process. Furthermore, this study found that digital competence has an important role in reducing teacher burnout rates. Teachers who have good digital skills tend to be better able to manage technology-based work demands, so that they can minimize the work stress experienced. Thus, it can be concluded that strategic efforts are needed in education management to balance workload, improve digital competence, and provide adequate support to maintain the professionalism and welfare of teachers in the digital era.

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