



**CIPRIANI COLLEGE**  
OF LABOUR AND CO-OPERATIVE STUDIES



**TENSION IN THE CARE ECONOMY DUE TO  
TEACHER BURNOUT**

# WORK MATTERS

**COLUMN**

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# Tension in the Care Economy due to Teacher Burnout

Jada Phillip, Researcher, Elma Francois Institute, CCLCS

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The care economy consists of a range of activities that include paid and unpaid work which focuses on the overall well-being of people. It includes the social work, healthcare and education sectors of an economy which, although important, is often overlooked. An efficient care economy supports an equitable society through economic activity and job creation (especially for women) and sustains current and future human activity. It is noticeable that teachers are not as passionate or enthusiastic about their duties as they once were and according to SchoolsThtaLead (2024) at the end of the 2020–2021 school year, 8% of public-school teachers left the profession. Teachers are at the frontline of the care economy as they not only educate the younger generation, but they play a pivotal role in shaping who they become. However, in recent times, there are numerous elements that are causing a mass burnout amongst our teachers, and these include excessive workloads, challenging student behaviours and a lack of support.

For teachers to carry out a successful day of learning, a daily workplan must be scheduled for each class and this is only achieved with advanced planning. This planning consists of creating teaching material, classroom activities, homework, quizzes and grading papers. Within the 7-hour school day, teachers are mostly involved with in-person teaching therefore, most of the work mentioned above are completed on the personal time of teachers as teachers work an estimated 53 hours a week. This is simply unacceptable and unhealthy when it comes to having a work-life balance, therefore resulting in massive burnout amongst teachers. As a society, we were all once mentored by our teachers who encouraged us to take paths that will lead to success and they looked out for our mental health and wellbeing, noticing any negative attributes that may have affected us. As a result, any burnout that teachers feel can be transferred to the classroom and ultimately

disrupt the flow of the care economy in this regard. UNESCO (2025) stated AI has the potential to address some of the biggest challenges in education today, innovate teaching and learning practices, and accelerate progress towards SDG 4. However, rapid technological developments inevitably bring multiple risks and challenges, which have so far outpaced policy debates and regulatory frameworks. Therefore, with proper training/practice, AI can alleviate some stress amongst teachers by replacing manual tasks however excessive training may further contribute to their burnout.

Student behaviours have increasingly worsened over the past few years according to EducationWeek (2025) nearly half of teachers, school leaders, and district leaders this school year, 48 percent, said in the survey that students' behavior was a lot worse when compared to their pre-pandemic behavior. The main reason for this is the lack of accountability from students due to their home life as gentle parenting has taken over today's society.

Parents are now less stern or strict with their children and practice an approach of being one of their "friends", but as their change in behaviour demonstrates, this increases the stress placed upon teachers resulting in burnout. It is difficult as a teacher to add to the quality of a child's life if they are always opposing to corrected behaviours and encouraged by their parents who often also oppose the teachers for correcting them. When parents encourage this disrespect towards teachers, the care economy essentially cracks open as teachers are no longer in the position to add to the quality of life to the student

As discussed above, the care economy is reliant on early childhood development making teachers a crucial part of this system, unfortunately, teachers often face a lack of support from all areas of the process being the school, government, parents and students. Governments of each country face an important task

of supporting teachers in carrying out their roles, whether by policy or material, however these promises are often unkept and it is repeatedly left up to the teacher to solve these issues. School boards should also be held responsible for their lack of support towards teachers, as they often take “sides” in situations with students to prevent any loss of reputation for the school. Eventually, teachers become aware of the challenges put against them and become discouraged from performing their best as they feel unappreciated and as a result, students then become collateral.

To conclude, the care economy is non-operational without teachers and their contributions to our children. Excessive workloads, challenging student behaviours and a lack of support all contribute to teacher burnout, and this can only be resolved with the help from students and the immediate contributors. Therefore, the care economy will continue to suffer once educators are overlooked.