

## IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHER HEALTH: AN ESSAY ON THE MAIN RISKS AT WORK

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**Abstract:** Introduction: Universities are considered by Motta (2014) conducive environments for the development of occupational diseases in professors, as there is a race for serial production of research and scientific publications, with the goal of achieving the excellence required by graduate programs, in particular. As a consequence, we have a teacher directly exposed to constant mental and physical pressure, which leads to early illness (CASSANDRE, 2011). Goal: This research aimed to present the state of the art of research on the subject of worker's health. Methodology: This is an art essay, which addresses a literature review on the topic of worker health, the research used articles published in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO) as a database and the following descriptors were used: worker and teachers. A total of 80 articles were analyzed, of which only 9 articles were selected based on the inclusion criteria. Results: The regulation of the time dedicated to work proved to be fundamental, constituting inspection devices that reduce or eliminate the excesses and overloads of teachers in the home environment. (PINHO, et al., 2021) Final considerations: As possible consequences of the teacher's health problems are early retirement and abandonment of the profession. It is necessary to investigate the causal circumstances and the appropriate intervention, in appropriate situations of repair, in the environment, organization and work conditions of the educators, resulting, consequently, in the improvement of the ability to work.

**Keywords:** Teacher; Worker's health; University.

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching at a higher level requires new teaching strategies from the professional, as well as new attitudes towards the student

and the university. (CORRAL-MULATO; BUENO, 2009). The productivity goals, belonging to globalization always linked to industries, mainly, are observed in universities. There is a race for serial production of research and scientific publications, with the aim of achieving the excellence required by graduate programs. As a result, a professor is directly exposed to constant mental and physical pressure, which leads to early illness (CASSANDRE, 2011).

Educational environments, especially universities, are considered conducive to the development of occupational diseases in teachers. Several factors, in addition to those described above, may still be related, such as excessive computer use, excessive working hours and extended work at home, and low wages (MOTA; MUNARO; VILELA, 2014).

The second major cause of work disability among Brazilian university professors, as pointed out in the results of this study, was Mental and Behavioral Disorders. Cassandre (2011) states that the psychic suffering of this working class may be related to the demands of academic productivity, as well as to the management model adopted by public and private institutions. According to the author, it is possible to compare the physical and manual effort with the intellectual work of the teacher, which, although not at first palpable, suffers from demands so that it becomes, at least, registered. The university professor does not sell his manual work, but sells his mind and intellect. The author also states that the form of university management, based on productivity, is very close to what is considered capitalist management; teachers are pressured to produce and record this production in the form of scientific publications, while their mental and physical health collapses.

This essay addresses the literature on the health of university teaching workers,

the research used the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) as a database, as a database it was selected: articles. The following descriptors were used: worker and faculty health. The inclusion criteria were: articles in Portuguese, available in full and free of charge, which addressed the occupational health of teachers.

A total of 80 articles were analyzed, of which only 9 articles were selected based on the inclusion criteria.

## DEVELOPMENT

The selected articles were published between the years 2010 to 2021, three of them highlight occupational risks and occupational health regulations, mainly related to regulatory standards. Two of the articles focused on faculty risk factors; another four lectured on mental health.

Of the articles that address the topic of mental health of teachers. Ferreira et al. (2015) present a study which showed that teachers with different levels of the effort component had different prevalence of mental disorders, meaning that teaching work conditions, such as demands and obligations, can predispose workers to unfavorable responses. The effort component included questions that evaluated the feeling of feeling pressured due to workload, level of responsibility at work, frequency with which they are pressured to work after hours, increase in work demand over time.

Servilha et al. (2010) elucidates the anxieties as well as the first authors, but they relate the Burnout Syndrome. It defines it as an occupational disease and it is a type of stress linked to the work activity present in professionals involved in the care activity, in a direct, continuous and highly emotional way, which causes emotional exhaustion, that is, lack or lack of energy, enthusiasm and feeling of depletion of resources; depersonalization,

as they start to treat work-related objects as objects, and restriction of personal fulfillment at work accompanied by negative self-evaluation.

Koga et al. (2015) also related the burnout syndrome to one of the main risks for teachers. They highlighted as risks; hostile work environment, high number of students, suffering violence in the work environment and other work factors increase the frequency of higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low professional fulfillment (dimensions of Burnout Syndrome) among teachers.

Ferreira et al. (2015) also associate their results with other research, one by professors at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, who reported that working conditions are becoming increasingly unhealthy, competitive and stressful. And that of university workers in the UK, where they were assessed for depression and anxiety.

The social elite, as defined by Rodrigues (2020), on how professors are known, work in environments constituted by social rules and values under the historical determination of new managerial standards in the context of the public university. It can be seen precariousness, intensification and prolongation of the working day that is processed under the parameters of the managerial organization of work. In his study, reports of suffering and complaints alluding to physical and mental health were observed; work overload and lack of time for rest and leisure; workers also showed sleep deprivation, constant tiredness and lack of memory. Therefore, defining the main risks related to this class, which corroborate with the other articles.

Still on mental health, but in a more comprehensive way, the study by Macaia and Fischer (2015), addresses the return after removal due to mental disorders of teachers,

relating to the same risks already mentioned by other authors and research, evaluated the sick teacher he needs to return to the same environment that made him ill, thus generating new anguish and the same initial risks.

The precariousness of university infrastructure relating to teaching working conditions is a topic of broad approach, especially when talking about public universities. Souza (2020), held a dialogue between teachers addressing the topic described, the participants reported on the political context of the country, as well as the ordering of public policies for higher education. In the view of the professors and the literature addressed for the study, that the policies do not generate adequate funding by establishing the numerical growth of universities in Brazil and the opening of new vacancies for students, without the equivalent creation of vacancies for professors; on the contrary, there has been an increase in funding, which has resulted in the abandonment of the physical infrastructure of the campuses. The professors interpreted that the process of precariousness of the university is not only a matter of lack of resources.

Rodrigues (2020), point out, like the study above, the educational reforms that have taken place in higher education in recent years have made the working conditions of university professors increasingly precarious. The physical expansion of public universities through the creation of new buildings and new campuses was not accompanied by the necessary expansion of public investments in education. In practical terms, it was found that successive budget cuts hit the federal university system, causing the scrapping of existing facilities and structures, thus harming the health of workers in these places.

The occupational health of teachers was already of great concern, but over the last two years, during epidemics, psychological and psychosocial impacts are usually more prevalent than the infection itself, and its consequences are much longer lasting. And teaching became more exposed to occupational risks, taking into account the new requirements, increased workload, isolation, lack of support; thus strongly affecting general health conditions, especially mental health and sleep quality. In relation to sleep quality, teachers develop high cognitive demands, poor sleep quality can directly affect performance and professional satisfaction, producing various diseases and intense mental suffering. (PINHEIRO, 2021).

By associating work with domestic and family demands, the new working conditions increased the deprivation of teacher sleep time, since, in order to cope with activities and work commitments, teachers extended their night shifts. Thus, it is essential to regulate the time dedicated to work, constituting inspection devices that reduce or eliminate the excesses and overloads of teachers in the home environment. (PINHEIRO, 2021).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As possible consequences of the teacher's health problems are early retirement and abandonment of the profession. Given the above, it is necessary to investigate the causal circumstances and the appropriate intervention, in appropriate situations of repair, in the environment, organization and work conditions of the educators, resulting, consequently, in the improvement of the ability to work.

Approaching the new context in which teaching is found in a pandemic season, the aforementioned consequences became more evident and the risks were hidden, but still existing. Given that in the midst of remote

teaching, it is not possible to measure and monitor the well-being of workers in the current scenario, remote work. In this context, the research that will be carried out with the exposed theme will bring a new look at the health of teachers in times of remote work.

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