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### **Burnout among special education teachers and the role of Individual, Interpersonal, and Organizational risk and protective factors**

#### **Abstract:**

Burnout is commonly characterized by the three dimensions of Maslach and Leiter's model, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of professional accomplishment. While burnout affects individuals in all professions, teachers are recognized as being at particular risk, a fact explained in the literature by the high level of relational demands inherent to the profession. During the pandemic and subsequently, these demands have even increased. Several studies have focused on the influence of individual, interpersonal, and organizational factors predicting teacher burnout risk. Yet, less is known about special education teachers working in inclusive and non-inclusive settings and how the pandemic has particularly affected their burnout risk. Thus, this study aimed to examine (1) whether burnout risk among special education teachers has increased since the pandemic and (2) whether it is related to individual, interpersonal, and organizational variables, including factors related to the pandemic. A cross-sectional study was conducted in May 2022 among a sample of special education teachers in Switzerland ( $n = 358$ ) and compared to a similar study from 2014 ( $n = 162$ ). We used a logistic regression approach to predict risk status for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment by individual, interpersonal, and organizational variables. Results indicate that for emotional exhaustion, individual teaching satisfaction and health are most important, whereas for depersonalization individual teaching satisfaction, good relationships with parents, and working in an inclusive setting decrease burnout risk. An inclusive setting, however, increases the risk of lower personal accomplishment. Implications for practice will be discussed.

#### **Biography**

**Verena Hofmann** is a researcher and lecturer at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. She obtained her PhD in Special Education in 2016 and has been teaching at the Department of Special Education since 2015. Her teaching focus is on statistical methods. In 2023, she received her habilitation in Special Education at the University of Fribourg. Her research interests include burnout in special education teachers and students, speech therapy and language development as well as health, social behavior, and competence development in individuals with intellectual disabilities and other forms of special needs.