



Global Trends in Trauma-Informed Teacher Education: A Secondary Survey-Based Analysis of Teacher Well-being and Pedagogical Readiness

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Abstract: The increasing worldwide emphasis on trauma-informed education highlights the importance of examining the intersections between teacher health, professional readiness, and institutional supports in modern teacher education systems. This study aims to map global trends in trauma-informed teacher education by providing a comparative analysis of secondary survey data from large, verified datasets, including: the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2018, 2024), the Global Reports from the UNESCO-Teacher Task Force (2021, 2024), UNICEF's Education in a Post-COVID World (2021) and Education International's Global Report on the Status of Teachers (2022). This study takes a meta-analytic and comparative approach to analyze how these surveys attend to teacher strain, emotional adjustment, and readiness to engage with trauma-informed pedagogy across OECD and Global South contexts.

According to the commentary, OECD countries are starting to implement whole-school well-being policies and professional development in trauma-informed practices, while the majority of countries within the Global South are still very much in the early stages of conceptualizing and implementing whole-school policies. The paper showcased a growing "trauma preparedness gap," a term that signifies unequal access to psychosocial training, relevant institutional support, and resources for educators in low- and middle-income countries. As we see in this cross-national synthesis, there is an urgent need for some international policy alignment, equitable levels of professional training and practice sharing, and sustainable emotional support structures in teacher education programs that will foster trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and inclusive classrooms globally.

Keywords: Trauma-informed pedagogy, teacher education, secondary survey analysis, teacher well-being, OECD, Global South, UNESCO, TALIS, emotional resilience, comparative education.

Introduction

In recent years, educational systems worldwide have become increasingly aware of the significance of trauma in educational settings. Trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) refers to an

instructional and institutional approach to teaching and learning that recognizes the significant impact of trauma on students and educators while focusing on safety, trust, collaboration, empowerment, and cultural responsiveness (Brunzell et al. 2019). As classrooms become more diverse and complex, teachers are teaching students who have been impacted by social, emotional, and psychological challenges related to being impoverished, displaced, victimized by violence, and, related to the pandemic, experiencing a public health crisis. The impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the focus on these realities, thus it is even more critical to practice trauma-informed approaches in educational settings (UNICEF 2021). However, the capacity for teachers to enact trauma-informed practice depends largely on the extent to which teacher education systems engage, or can engage, trauma-informed frameworks into their policy, processes, and professional learning.

When we talk about trauma informed education, we often think of developing a safe space for students, but it's just as important to consider a space for psychological safety and resilience for teachers. There is increasing data from numerous studies documenting escalating levels of teacher burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma across the world (OECD 2020). In particular, teachers frequently experience ongoing, chronic emotional exhaustion and institutional deprivation (McLure, et al., 2017), which strains their ability to create and sustain supportive classrooms. In reports the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) administered by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2018 and 2024, one-third of teachers within the sampled participating countries reported frequently experiencing high levels of stress and lacking training in socio-emotional or trauma-informed practices (OECD 2020). These reports convey a larger global gap between trauma-informed policies and practices and policies on training educators to consider trauma-informed practices in teacher education policy.

Even though Western and OECD countries have taken steps to embed trauma-informed practices in professional development and policies, the Global South continues to face barriers in terms of understanding the concept, institutional support, and availability of resources. For example, much of the teacher education systems in low- and middle-income countries remain largely focused on cognitive pedagogy and content, neglecting the emotional and psychosocial aspects of learning, and culturally based taboos around mental health/mindfulness in education may amplify the trauma-related invisibility in teacher preparation programs. In sum, current trauma-informed teacher education status reveals vast inequities within nations with existing teacher well-being systems and those experiencing core educational struggles.

So, this study is looking at global trends of teacher education related to trauma-sensitive practices by exploring all the data generated from secondary survey-based sources or reports. Secondary data is different than primary field based research in that they are not report on local contexts, but instead rely on data generated from across countries and regions to see what is happening at the macro-level to identify trends in teacher well-being, trauma preparedness, and pedagogical readiness to support student wellbeing. The study leverages large scale and validated secondary sources - the OECD TALIS survey, UNESCO's Global Report on Teachers, UNICEF's Education in a Post-COVID World, and Education International's Global Status of Teachers - to provide a comprehensive overview of the international experience of teachers. The exploration is ultimately about patterns and identifying both achievements and gaps in global teacher education system with regard to trauma-informed practices in education. Trauma-informed pedagogy is not just the latest buzz, it is a fundamental element of equity and social equity in all schools. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasizes that inclusive, equitable quality education means the emotional safety and mental health of students and teachers is being prioritized. Therefore, educating and empowering educators to understand trauma is not a minor issue; it is foundational to creating equitable, supportive classrooms for all students. As we share trauma-sensitive practices across nations, we can also

consider how wealthy countries and developing nations can shift away from quick-fix strategies to sustainable support systems resulting in transformative change in education. Therefore, this research is basically a systematic, survey-based study of trauma-informed teacher preparation in a global context. The study is attempting to address three overarching questions: (1) How do international teacher surveys and global reports reflect teacher well-being and preparedness for trauma-informed teaching practice? (2) What cross-national trends emerge between OECD and Global South countries regarding trauma-informed practice? (3) What are the implications of the global secondary data that can be used to inform future policy and practice of teacher education?

This paper, addresses the scholarly gap, contributing to a growing field of global education research that brings together large-scale empirical data, trauma theory, and professional learning of teachers. It promotes trauma-informed pedagogy, not just as a teaching practice based on compassion, but as a key global competency for 21st century educators.

Review of Literature

Over the last couple of decades there has been a huge expansion of the literature on trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) and teacher education which represents a paradigm shift within educational psychology and reform in teacher education globally. In this section we will synthesize research across four main overlapping elements - trauma theory within education, teacher wellbeing, cross-national pedagogical reform, and data from survey-based research - to contextualize the global trends identified from a variety of secondary data sources including OECD TALIS, UNESCO Teacher Task Force Reports, UNICEF Post-COVID studies, and Education International Global Reports.

1. Conceptual Foundations of Trauma-Informed Pedagogy

Trauma-informed pedagogy rests on the notion that trauma can have a substantial impact on learning, behavior, and relationships in educational contexts, be it either individual trauma or collective trauma. Brunzell et al. (2019) very succinctly state that, trauma-informed pedagogy "is a strength-based framework that is based on an understanding of, recognizing, and responding to the impact of trauma in order to facilitate recovery and promote learning." Some of the earliest trauma-informed systems research work was from, SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), who outlined the "Four Rs", Realize, Recognize, Respond and Resist re-traumatization (SAMHSA, 2014). In educational settings this demonstrates necessary attention on safety, trustworthiness, collaboration, empowerment, and cultural humility and sensitivity (Carello and Butler, 2015).

Teacher education programs are the main ways trauma-informed principles are incorporated into daily practice. Research has consistently found that trauma-informed teacher education necessitates the integration of three overlapping components: (1) teachers' conceptual knowledge of trauma and how it impacts development and pedagogy, (2) trauma-sensitive instructional and relational strategies, and (3) systematic support for teachers' emotional health and professional resilience (Carello and Butler 2015; Brunzell, Stokes, and Waters 2019). However, the global context of teacher education shows significant inequalities. In a number of high-income countries, trauma-informed approaches are incorporated into teacher education programs within formal frameworks for teacher professional development and school-level wellbeing initiatives (UNESCO 2021). Teacher education systems in many parts of the Global South, on the other hand, face issues with institutional capacity, limited psychosocial resources and policy alignment, leading to the incredibly limited cross-over of trauma-informed pedagogy into pre-service and in-service formats (Pillay 2020; UNICEF 2021).

2. Teacher Well-being and Global Stress Patterns

A growing amount of survey-based research emphasizes teacher well-being as an important factor of educational quality. The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2018) done by the OECD in 48 countries found 26% of teachers stated they experienced stress "a lot" in the course of their work with the highest rates in England, Japan, and Korea (OECD 2020). A similar finding is documented in UNESCO's Global Report on Teachers (2021) which mentioned that burnout and mental distress of teachers increased 'almost 40% as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis' (UNESCO 2021). Teacher stress is also strongly associated with feelings of professional ineffectiveness and not receiving support from administration, as well as feeling unprepared in training on emotional or trauma-informed pedagogy (Viac & Fraser 2020).

Developing countries, on the other hand, offer little empirical evidence of teacher well-being condition due to the lack of national surveys. However, regional studies in India, South Africa and Brazil present relative similarities of high emotional exhaustion and little psychosocial support (Azim Premji Foundation 2021; UNESCO 2022). Considering these findings, the global conversation around trauma informed education cannot be removed from the socio-economic conditions that already shape teachers' working conditions.

3. Post-COVID Educational Realignments

The COVID-19 pandemic sparked an unprecedented reconstruction of emotional wellbeing in education. UNICEF, in their statement on Education in a Post-COVID World (2023) emphasized the role of well-being, "resilience" of teachers as an essential lever in recovery of education, and included trauma-informed practice as one of the ten pillars in post crisis reconstruction. Similarly, the Global Report on the Status of Teachers reported by Education International (2022) expressed that teachers were feeling greater psychological stress, lack of digital education training to continue teaching and learning online, and feeling neglected by educational systems across the world. The difference was countries that had trauma-informed practice and/or protocols to engage their educational communities in educational programming (Australia, Canada, Finland) swiftly adapted and embedded psychosocial interventions and social support from education staff (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2021).

In the context of the Global South, teacher education programs have faced a multitude of challenges including barriers to mental health care, tenuous digital infrastructures, and systemic inequities that were exacerbated. The pandemic's educational disruption strengthened these challenges and created some openings to present trauma-informed instruction in teacher education programs, largely through the sponsorship of donors or NGOs (UNESCO 2023). The initiatives outlined above have yet to become an integrated whole, but are yet another initial signal that trauma-informed practices are starting to seep into teacher education dialogue and practice, and globally.

4. Policy and Curriculum Integration

At the policy level, trauma-informed teaching connects with the larger goals of inclusive and fair education. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE 2022 Draft) in India and similar frameworks in the UK and Australia highlight the importance of teacher well-being, social-emotional learning (SEL), and inclusive teaching methods. However, as Rose and Norwich (2018) point out, the application of trauma-informed principles in policy documents often stays more talk than action. Few systems offer clear assessment indicators or funding for teacher mental health and trauma training.

The framework, given in OECD's TALIS 2024 framework, mentioned factors related to teachers' emotional well-being, professional identity, and coping strategies. This depicts the

increase in awareness about trauma-informed elements in international survey design (OECD 2024). Similarly, UNESCO's Teacher Task Force 2024 Report calls for "teacher professional learning communities" as ways to establish psychosocial and trauma-responsive teaching practices. These changes indicate a slow shift toward a global agreement on the need for emotionally aware teacher education.

5. Gaps and Emerging Directions

Although progress has been made, significant gaps still exist. First, trauma is defined in culturally specific ways, but the lack of agreement makes it hard to measure comparisons. Second, most international surveys, including TALIS, measure concepts such as teacher stress, teacher workload, and teacher well-being. However, these surveys do not include a clear measure of teachers' knowledge of trauma or their readiness to use trauma-informed practices (OECD 2020). Third, studies on trauma experiences mostly focus on Western contexts, which limits the voices and viewpoints from the Global South. More scholars are calling for models of trauma-informed education that acknowledge collective trauma, social-political trauma, and intergenerational trauma (Samaras and Gannon 2021).

New scholarship calls for incorporating trauma-informed practice into pre-service teacher education, not just as a method of intervention in-service. Carello and Butler (2015) put special emphasis on infusing trauma-informed practice into teacher preparation programs, so that future educators understand trauma, their ethical responsibilities, and emotionally safe pedagogy before entering their classrooms. Moreover, the growth of open-access datasets from UNESCO, OECD, etc., creates additional opportunities to conduct secondary analyses to examine structural inequities in support systems of teachers. By merging datasets, researchers will be able to understand how teacher well-being, professional identity and readiness for trauma are co-evolving in context, globally speaking.

In conclusion, evidence from the literature suggests three clear themes: (1) the increasingly central role of teacher well-being for educational quality; (2) unequal access to global trauma-informed policies and training; and (3) the emergent possibility of large-scale surveys and meta-analytic methods to generate trends for systems. This review lays the empirical and conceptual groundwork for the study to follow, which uses a comparative, survey-based procedures to address a study of global trauma-informed teacher education.

Data Sources and Methodology

In this research, secondary data-based meta-analytic and survey synthesis design is used to chart global trends in trauma-informed teacher education. Instead of creating primary data, this study uses large-scale, peer-reviewed and publicly available datasets and reports on teacher well-being, professional development and trauma readiness. The datasets, which will be discussed in the next section, were selected for their international wide scope, methodological rigor, and reference to teaching's affective and psychosocial aspects.

1. Data Sources

a. OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018 and 2024 Framework

The TALIS 2018 dataset (OECD, 2020) provided information from over 260,000 educators and school leaders in 48 countries and their professional well-being, workload, and teaching context. The 2018 cycle was not focused on "trauma-informed practice" specifically but did include some proxy measures of stress, job satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion that are thought to reflect an underlying conceptual spectrum with underlying readiness for trauma. The TALIS 2024 conceptual framework (OECD, 2024) that was developed to support the next rounds of data collection provides similar but qualitatively extending measures that provide

indicators of self-efficacy, emotional support, SEL practices, and coping strategies for teachers. These construct would not directly measure trauma-informed practice, however, serve as valid indirect counter vector to measure the diffusion of trauma-informed principals across practices.

b. UNESCO Global Teacher Task Force Reports (2021, 2024)

The UNESCO Teacher Task Force Reports feature important secondary datasets in the context of global teacher policy advances and workforce well-being indicators. The 2021 report, *The State of the World's Teachers*, features cross-national indicators on teacher mental well-being support, inclusion of well-being in teacher policy, and professional learning opportunities. The 2024 update will contribute additional regional data on psychosocial support systems and resilience-building interventions in particular parts of the Global South (UNESCO 2024).

c. UNICEF: Education in a Post-COVID World (2023)

This dataset combines information from national ministries, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and international NGOs focused on education. It includes survey findings about teacher burnout, psychosocial strain, and readiness of institutions to support crisis-informed instruction, which provides useful information about building an understanding of trauma in a post-pandemic world (UNICEF 2023).

d. Education International's Global Report on the Status of Teachers (2022)

Based on union surveys and national teacher associations in 120 countries, this report examines teacher workload, emotional distress, and policy-level responses to professional stress. The inclusion of which provides a triangulated perspective that links grassroots teacher sentiment to institutional response (Education International 2022).

All these datasets are publicly available and professor-mediated, ensuring transparency, replicability, and scholarly quality.

2. Methodological Framework

a. Design

In this research, a mixed-method secondary analysis was employed, utilizing a synthesis of quantitative survey data alongside a thematic meta-synthesis of qualitative data. Data were analyzed from global survey repositories (OECD, UNESCO, and UNICEF) and then compared and aligned against peer-reviewed literature to ensure the foundation of all data was aligned to trauma-informed pedagogy (SAMHSA, 2014; Brunzell et al., 2019).

b. Data Selection Criteria

Data sources were included if they met the following three criteria:

1. The dataset or report was published between 2018-2024 by a recognized international institution (OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF, Education International).
2. The data source provided indicators for stress and well-being, preparedness for professional work, or psychosocial support, that were either teacher reported or anti-policy level.
3. The data source included disaggregated data (by country or region) to illustrate differences between the OECD and Global South contexts.

c. Analytical Procedures

A two-stage analytical procedure was employed:

1. **Quantitative Synthesis:** Statistical information (i.e. levels of teacher stress, and levels of availability of mental health resources) were collated from the datasets and assembled into tables to explore differences by geographic location. As per TALIS (2018), 26% of teachers experienced high-stress levels whereas according to the report by Education International (2022), that percentage was 41% in low and middle-income countries.
2. **Qualitative Meta-Synthesis:** The textual data from the policy documents and the open-ended survey data were coded based on NVivo thematic categories, namely teacher

emotional wellness, institutional readiness, policy support, and trauma-informed competency. From these codes, themes were created that showcased “trends of trauma preparedness.”

d. Validation and Reliability

To increase ends of validity, the study involved triangulation or comparing the study findings by themes across at least two different independent datasets. Comparing data from OECD and UNESCO datasets in the form of qualitative case studies provided an opportunity to confirm the quantitative case study findings output from the data were in alignment with the narratives at a policy/discourse level. Reliability was enhanced by very strict inclusion criteria and by focusing only on institutional reports that could be publicly verified.

3. Scope and Limitations

The research paper looks at trends globally at a macro level, and not at localized studies. While secondary-data analysis spans a wider scope and is more reliable, it limits causal inference. It is also worth mentioning that many of these datasets (e.g., TALIS 2018) use self-reported data, which may not provide sufficient information related to the level of trauma exposure, and national differences in definitions or scopes of "teacher well-being" may impact comparability. Nonetheless, these limitations are offset with the data availability and the consistency of trends on a global level emerging around the world.

In summary, the method ensures that the research is based on genuine secondary data and has been associated with analytical rigor through meta-synthesis and triangulation. Both analytical techniques, taken together, create an empirical basis for understanding the ways in which trauma-informed teacher education accelerates in global and regional contexts.

Analysis and Findings

This section consists of a cross-national synthesis of secondary survey data on teachers' emotional readiness, well-being, and support for trauma-informed practices. This analysis reports data from OECD TALIS (2018), UNESCO Global Teacher Task Force Reports (2021; 2024), UNICEF Education in a Post-COVID World (2023) and Education International Global Report on the status of Teachers (2022) and identifies three overarching trends; (1) rising teacher emotional burden and stress globally; (2) inconsistency of policy development of trauma-informed practice; and (3) widening equity gaps in relation to professional development and psychosocial support for teachers.

1. Global Patterns of Teacher Stress and Emotional Well-being

The OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2018) is the most comprehensive study on teacher wellbeing. Of the 48 countries surveyed, 26% of teachers surveyed reported experiencing "a lot" of stress, while 18% reported low satisfaction with their job (OECD, 2020). The stressors mentioned were "administrative workload," "behavioral problems with students," and "a lack of recognition." Teachers in England, Japan and Korea reported the highest levels of stress (above 45%). Similar findings were reported by Education International Global Report (2022), as 41% of teachers in low- and middle-income countries reported experiencing stress.

The UNESCO Teacher Task Force Report (2021) further highlighted that nearly 60% of teachers worldwide reported inadequate access to psychosocial support or counseling services within their institutions. In the South Asian context, India and Bangladesh were categorized as “moderate-risk” systems, with limited formal mechanisms for trauma-informed training or teacher well-being monitoring.

A comparative synthesis of OECD and Global South contexts reveals clear differences. In OECD systems, mental health and trauma-informed teaching approaches are embedded in teacher professional development policies. By contrast, Global South countries are too often reliant on a set of processes that involve interventions from outside donors or NGOs instead of governmental authority. For example, Australia has launched the Be You program (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2021), which incorporates trauma-informed mental health practices and modules into teacher pre-service education programs. By contrast, teacher well-being efforts in India are dispersed and inconsistent: initiatives, such as those piloted through the NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement) program exist, but these initiatives are isolated and lack enduring psychosocial orientation (Ministry of Education, 2022). Survey evidence from multiple countries confirms a “teacher well-being gap” between high-income and low-income education systems with regard to addressing emotional and trauma-informed dimensions of teaching.

2. Trauma-Informed Policy Integration and Institutional Readiness

The degree to which trauma-informed pedagogy is explicitly incorporated into national teacher education systems varies greatly. Preliminary policy mapping undertaken by the UNESCO Teacher Task Force (2024) shows that just 34% of the countries sampled have explicit national standards for teacher education and training discussing trauma, emotional resiliency, or psychosocial wellbeing. Only Australia, Canada, Finland, and New Zealand are systemic mentions, while most African and South Asian systems are developing or in pilot systems.

The TALIS 2024 conceptual framework recognizes variables that directly relate to "self-efficacy of teachers in providing emotional support" and "when and how the teacher is part of social-emotional learning," both of which identify variables that are conceptually consistent with trauma-informed practice. The OECD working papers (OECD 2024) report pilot data that suggest educators with access to a sustained network of emotional support report significantly less burnout and improved retention - indicating that institutional readiness may facilitate sustainable trauma-informed practice.

Policy integration is not homogeneous with respect to the Global South. For instance, India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states principles of holistic education and teacher well-being but has yet to anchor trauma-responsive frameworks in teacher education programs (NCTE, 2022 Draft). Similarly, the survey by Education International (2022) reveals that in sub-Saharan Africa fewer than 20% of teachers engage in a formal way with their professional learning that adopts trauma or psychosocial learning.

An identifiable trend across datasets is that institutional readiness is strongly correlated with teachers' well-being outcomes. Institutions that have organized support systems (e.g. Finland's induction programme based on mentorship) report broadly about teachers' emotional resilience and job satisfaction. Conversely teachers in low support settings report high chronic stress and attrition.

3. Professional Training and Trauma Preparedness

Across datasets, professional development emerges as the primary mediator of trauma-informed education. Limited access to continuing professional development (CPD) is identified as a barrier to trauma-responsive pedagogies in UNESCO Global Report on Teachers (2021). On a global level, only 54% of teachers reported taking PD about social-emotional or inclusive instructional strategies in the last two years.

Education International (2022) found that teachers who received any training on psychosocial support were 1.7 times more likely to use trauma-sensitive practices (i.e., emotional check-ins or peer mediation) than teachers who received no psychosocial support training. To add on,

less than 12% of teachers surveyed about psychosocial support across South Asia stated they even received training for psychosocial support (UNESCO 2023).

Furthermore, TALIS 2018 data indicated that teachers who reported strong collegial collaboration (professional learning communities, peer mentoring) reported higher levels of self-efficacy and lower stress. They suggest that trauma-informed readiness can exist as a collegial agreement of or shared interest of a group of teachers not as the inquiry of one teacher because trauma-informed readiness can be generated and energized as part of an institutional culture and a matter of professional solidarity.

For example, teacher education programs in Finland have courses dedicated to "pedagogical well-being" that focus on empathy, mindfulness and emotional intelligence (Sahlberg, 2021). Conversely, teacher education models in India mainly emphasize academic content over emotional-pedagogy, even though one can see some recently developed models, such as NISHTHA 3.0, adding courses regarding emotional skills and mental health (Ministry of Education, 2023). In short, the comparative synthesis indicates a dual global system; in OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) systems are on-boarding system-wide trauma-informed reform and in systems in the Global South, school systems are still at the piloting or policy drafting stage.

4. Regional Disparities and the Global South Context

The information reveals differences in how trauma-informed conversations are integrated into systems for teacher education in the Global South—specifically in India. While organizations such as UNESCO (2021), and Education International (2022), have expressed the need for psychosocial preparedness for teachers and teachers' education and development (e.g., some use teachers as a "catalyst" in planning), the implementation of this interacts with local real issues and resources, teacher workload, and the stigma attached to mental well-being.

In looking at India specifically, while emotional well-being is included in national policy (NEP, 2020), and while trauma-informed mental health is part of international and national documents and frameworks to some way, there is a complicated lack of trauma-informed training and preparedness in teacher education and preparation courses. Most well-being initiatives in India that focus on education have been reactive to crisis events, post-crisis counseling or support, and less pre-service or pedagogical. That said, there are changes underway in places like NCERT in their School Health and Wellness Programme (2021), and NISHTHA digital modules, which have self-care and empathy training modules.

Teacher education reform in the post-apartheid context of South Africa specifically incorporates trauma-informed approaches into their work to attend to intergenerational trauma (Pillay 2020). Likewise, the Indigenous teacher education programs in Canada also integrate trauma-sensitive frameworks based on cultural healing and relational pedagogy (Green 2023). Each comparison underscores the importance of the contextual and cultural specifics. Trauma-informed pedagogy should not be adopted in an identical form across contexts. Trauma-informed pedagogy must emerge from the local sociohistorical context of trauma and recovery.

5. Emerging Trends and Future Directions

Cross-analysis of all datasets points toward three emerging trends:

- 1. Institutionalization of Emotional Literacy:**

The OCED is formally institutionalizing emotional literacy as a key competency standard for teachers into policy. The socio-emotional indicators being added into TALIS 2024 are radically different than other teacher quality measures.

- 2. Policy Convergence Toward Well-being:**

UNESCO's 2024 report calls for the later policy with teachers to reflect the global commitment towards Sustainable Development Goal 4.c to "substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers". The policy commitment to well-being is particularly linked to trauma-informed education practices and will also guide governance in the emerging space related to global education for sustainable development (ESD) goals.

3. **Growing Recognition of Collective Trauma:**

Following COVID, the conversation about trauma has shifted, going from trauma discourse representing a more individual experience, to a concern with collective and systemic trauma (e.g., social inequality, economic hardship, losses due to pandemic). Teacher education will need to go beyond the individual trauma discourse for their intake/educational experiences to consider broader socio-ecological considerations.

6. **Synthesis**

The findings of the triangulated analyses suggest that trauma-informed teacher education is not simply a new educational reform initiative; it is more accurately described as a new educational reform initiative that is rapidly going global. Although trauma-informed teacher education is being proposed, however, inequities around access to training and institutionalization of policy continue to reinforce what this study will depict as "the trauma preparedness gap."

While OECD countries, for instance, have more advanced integration of trauma-informed solutions further legitimized within professional standards and mental health frameworks in schools, the Global South, such as India, remains an assemblage of incomplete responses limited by under-resourced mechanisms for potentially better integration.

Ultimately, the data suggests teachers' emotional well-being, policy sponsorship, and trauma pedagogy are interconnected. In order to facilitate effective trauma-informed education that benefits teachers and students, it requires individual teacher competencies but also a systemic reform which embeds psychosocial well-being across situational policy layers of educational governance.

Discussion

The results based on a significant secondary survey data set indicate that trauma-informed teacher education is recognized as a globally legitimate agenda, despite being performed in fragmented and disjointed ways across contexts. The subsequent discussion interprets these findings through three overlapping lenses — global diffusion of policy, teacher professional identity, and contextualization — and suggests the strengths and weaknesses of existing trauma-informed reforms.

1. **Global Diffusion of Trauma-Informed Pedagogy**

Similar to the continuing spread of trauma-informed educational strategies, the socialization of emotional and mental health is taking root. The TALIS reports incorporate measures of emotional wellness and social-emotional learning (SEL) in performance evaluation of school leadership efficacy to provide an international perspective (OECD, 2024). These developments indicate a developing awareness that the cognitive and affective domains of learning will always be inextricably linked.

Simultaneously, it is important to consider that the spread of trauma-informed principles does not appear to have any level of standardized success across OECD high-income countries (e.g., Finland, Canada and Australia). In many of these countries, policy and practice in terms of moving towards a trauma-informed approach has made progress with the support of a strong teacher union, generous professional learning commitments and established psychosocial services viewed as part of the education system (Brunzell et al. 2019, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2021). In these systems, the provisioning of teacher well-being and family poverty is a pre-condition to effective pedagogy as opposed to a footnote.

On the other hand, nations in the Global South, India included, face challenges to effectiveness in implementing those frameworks because of economic limitations, bureaucratic fragmentation, and cultural taboos around mental health. To illustrate, "teacher well-being" in many low-income systems is still defined, as UNESCO (2021) highlights, in terms of physical or occupation problems, rather than emotional. This conceptual gap is a barrier to trauma-informed pedagogy becoming a conventionally endorsed teacher education priority.

2. Teacher Professional Identity and Emotional Labor

Data from surveys in various reports (OECD 2020; Education International 2022) show that teachers are feeling the weight of more emotional labor without the necessary institutional support. This situation transforms the understanding of teacher professionalism into being about academic competence AND emotional competence and relational care.

Trauma-informed pedagogy offers a way to rethink teacher identity around empathetic practice, self-awareness, and resilience. However, the literature and data provide a juxtaposition between the idealized emotional labor to take place in classrooms and the structural conditions in which teachers work that uphold this emotional labor. For example, TALIS 2018 data shows that teachers, when working in high stress contexts ("high-stress context" refers to school environments that had a high number of students with traumatic experiences leading to high student emotional and behavioral needs), often feel personally responsible for student trauma, without the support to promote their own emotional health (OECD, 2019). This "double burden" of teaching through trauma while being neglected by the system illustrates what Maslach and Leiter (1997) offer as "organizational burnout."

Furthermore, international data does not really consider the gendered aspects of emotional labor. In South Asia and Africa, for example, most caregiving labor occurs in schools or homes, which means female teachers become emotionally tired. (UNESCO, 2023). So, trauma-informed teacher education can be more than meant to raise awareness about trauma cognitively, it can also incorporate considerations of emotional labor and power dynamics, uneven work, and cultural beliefs about teachers feeling.

3. Contextual Adaptability and Decolonizing Trauma Frameworks

An important takeaway from the research was understanding trauma not as a universal experience, but an experience mediated by cultural, historical and socio-political context. Western frameworks of trauma-informed education, which have relied primarily on individual psychology and mental health, may not address collective and intergenerational trauma in postcolonial contexts -- as is often the case in India (Samaras and Gannon, 2021).

In an Indian context, teacher well-being may include aspects like caste, gender, and even institutional precarity from other agential causes and systemic issues, not just what is happening in the classroom with the teacher and students. So, trauma-informed education in this context must be context-sensitive too — weaving into the understanding of trauma and resilience, indigenous notions of care and community-based frameworks of the same issue. We can also see this consideration for local epistemologies at play in South Africa when Pillay, for example, integrates concepts from the ubuntu philosophy into her trauma-informed pedagogy (Pillay 2020).

So decolonizing trauma-informed education means reconceptualizing trauma-informed education as a form of relational healing -- which emphasize community, solidarity, social justice, and cultural safety in teacher education.

4. Policy Implications and Institutional Pathways

A review of the secondary data shows that effectively integrating trauma-informed principles into teacher education requires change across multiple levels and in three primary domains. At the level of policy, it is important that national policy explicitly includes teacher well-being as part of the decision-making process connected to achieving certain academic indicators. India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is an excellent start but does not provide enough

guidance for practice related to the psychosocial well-being of students, parental support considerations, or trauma sensitive pedagogy. Similarly, at the institutional level, teacher education programs would ideally include trauma informed modules as part of both pre-service teacher education and in-service adult learning experiences that included mentorship, reflective learning and peer-supported-learning opportunities. Professional learning for teachers, as part of their ongoing learning and learning opportunities, must also include ongoing access to supports for counseling and emotional literacy and communities of practice that exist to varying degrees in the professional learning models of many OECD countries. Global evidence tells us that when globally acknowledged, multi-layered practices for integration are in place, the retention of teachers improved and the motivation of teachers improved along with the classroom climate (UNESCO 2024; OECD 2024).

5. Bridging the Trauma Preparedness Gap

These findings highlight what could be called the “trauma preparedness gap”—a systemic and ongoing structural divide between systems that prepare teachers ahead of time for recognizing and responding to trauma and systems that are reactive and crisis-centric. To eliminate this gap will require international collaboration, sharing of cross-national data, and investment in capacity building to address local cultural and socio-economic realities.

Conclusion

In summation, one would find that there is strong agreement across the large datasets such as the OECD TALIS (2018, 2024), UNESCO Teacher Task Force Reports (2021, 2024), UNICEF Education in a Post-COVID World (2023); and Education International Global Report on the Status of Teachers (2022) - teacher well-being, emotional literacy and psychosocial preparedness are important aspects of quality education. Nevertheless, there are still large inequities, particularly for educators in Global South, for example, India, where systemic issues remain prevalent, including limited access to training, scant mental health provisioning, and social stigma for being vulnerable emotionally. Drawing on secondary data from UNESCO, OECD and UNICEF can provide advice around culturally responsive, evidence-based models of trauma-informed teacher education and the skilled teacher competencies that are required; and not, optional. Furthermore, trauma-informed teacher competencies are necessary; and a necessity to becoming a safe space to facilitate healing, inclusion and resilience for both students and themselves, whereby normalising the experiences and irrespective of their birthing there could be a collective movement towards social justice or equity.

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