



# Cyberbullying Against Teachers in Latin America During the Pandemic: The Negative Effects on Their Levels of Well-Being Through Burnout

Jorge Javier Varela<sup>a</sup>, Pilar Álamos<sup>b</sup>, Paulina Guzmán<sup>c</sup>, Roxana Marsollier<sup>d</sup>, Cristian Exposito<sup>d</sup>, Francisca Romo<sup>e</sup>, Cindy López<sup>f</sup>, and Rafael Miranda<sup>g</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Facultad de Psicología, Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, Chile; <sup>b</sup>Facultad de Educación, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, Chile; <sup>c</sup>Facultad de Psicología, Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, Chile; <sup>d</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, CONICET Mendoza, Mendoza, Argentina; <sup>e</sup>Facultad de Educación, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile; <sup>f</sup>Facultad de Psicología, Universidad del Azuay, Cuenca, Ecuador; <sup>g</sup>Escuela de Psicología, Universidad Continental, Huancayo, Peru

## ABSTRACT

During the Pandemic teachers switch from in-person classes to online platforms during 2021–22. This context enabled cyberbullying against teachers from students, which negatively impact their well-being. Previous studies have focused on school violence against teachers, but less is known about cyberbullying against teachers while considering teacher burnout dimensions. We used a sample of 1,387 teachers ( $M = 42.2$ ,  $SD = 10.1$ ; female, 79.1%) from Chile, Peru, Argentina, Colombia, and Ecuador. Using structural equation modeling, we found that higher levels of cyberbullying are associated with lower levels of teachers' well-being and mediated by psychological exhaustion but not by enthusiasm toward the job scale. Our results confirm the adverse effects of cyberbullying on teachers' well-being. We highlight two burnout dimensions as possible underlying mechanics to better understand this relationship. Therefore, prevention programs can include skills and teacher resources to deal with cyberbullying and burnout to moderate the negative impact on their well-being.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 1 July 2023

Accepted 11 October 2024

## KEYWORDS

Cyberbullying; Latin America; teachers; burnout

During the Pandemic in Latin America, schools and universities were closed, demanding that teachers use different online platforms (Berrocal Ogia, 2023; Sánchez et al., 2021). Despite their significant efforts to create safe learning environments, teachers became victims of cyberbullying (García Ramos et al., 2022; González Amarilla & Vargas Pérez, 2019). Previous studies have focused on adolescents and youth as victims of cyberbullying without considering teachers as possible victims. Consequently, we investigate the impact of cyberbullying on the well-being levels of teachers in Latin America during the pandemic while considering gender, age, and burnout as a possible mediator (Celuch et al., 2022; Peñalver & Díaz-Mena, 2023; Wang et al., 2023).

Evidence supports the notion that elevated levels of teacher well-being have far-reaching positive effects on teachers, students, and schools (e.g., Cui et al., 2022). With the pandemic's emergence, new teaching risks have surfaced, with the virtualization of teaching being the most significant challenge at the professional level (Expósito & Marsollier, 2020). Previous studies have overlooked the aggression against teachers through technology and its potential negative consequences on teachers' well-being.