

The Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Capital with Burnout among School Counselors: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the role of social support and psychological capital (Psychological Capital/PsyCap) in reducing the rate of burnout in school counselors and educators through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. A total of 20 scientific articles published between 2007 and 2025 were analyzed thematically and statistically descriptively. The study's results indicate that social support from colleagues, supervisors, and the organizational environment has a significant negative impact on burnout. In addition, PsyCap, which includes self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, is a mediating factor that strengthens the relationship between social support and burnout. These findings support and confirm the importance of collaboration between social and psychological factors in maintaining the mental well-being of educators. Practically, educational institutions need to develop social support-based interventions and strengthen psychological capital (PsyCap) as a sustainable strategy for preventing burnout.

Keywords: psychological capital, social support, fatigue, counselor welfare, quality education, good health and well-being

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi peran dukungan sosial dan modal psikologis (Psychological Capital/PsyCap) dalam menurunkan tingkat burnout pada konselor sekolah dan tenaga pendidik melalui pendekatan Systematic Literature Review (SLR) berdasarkan pedoman PRISMA 2020. Sebanyak 20 artikel ilmiah yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2007 hingga 2025 dianalisis secara tematik dan statistik deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dukungan sosial dari rekan kerja, supervisor, dan lingkungan organisasi memiliki pengaruh negatif signifikan terhadap burnout. Selain itu, PsyCap yang mencakup efikasi diri, harapan, optimisme, dan resiliensi terbukti menjadi faktor mediasi yang memperkuat hubungan antara dukungan sosial dan burnout. Temuan ini mendukung dan menegaskan pentingnya kolaborasi antara faktor sosial dan psikologis dalam menjaga kesejahteraan mental tenaga pendidik. Secara praktis, lembaga pendidikan perlu mengembangkan intervensi berbasis dukungan sosial dan penguatan PsyCap sebagai strategi pencegahan burnout yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: modal psikologis, dukungan sosial, kelelahan, kesejahteraan konselor, pendidikan berkualitas, kesehatan dan kesejahteraan yang baik

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INTRODUCTION

School counselors have a crucial role in supporting students' academic, social, and emotional development. These professionals implement comprehensive, development-based school counseling programs that encompass social, emotional, academic, and vocational guidance to foster holistic student growth (Rahman, 2020). These programs are designed to be developmentally appropriate, building upon previous goal achievement across a student's entire K-12 academic experience (Castellanos & Septeowski, 2005). This systematic approach ensures that every student can master increasingly complex developmental tasks and achieve self-direction as they progress through their educational journey (Ward-Roof et al., 2010).

This sustained engagement with students facilitates their personal growth, enabling them to integrate diverse experiences and influences and become increasingly interdependent (Ward-Roof et al., 2010). Moreover, school counselors, particularly at the middle school level, utilize frameworks such as the ASCA National Model to advocate for and systematically promote academic, career, and personal-social development, thereby addressing the unique growth trajectories of emerging adolescents (Akos & Ellis, 2008). Specifically, school counselors are crucial front-line providers in K-12 education, focusing on prevention, wellness, development, and social justice to support student learning, mental health, and career readiness (Kim et al., 2024).

Their role is integral in establishing an equitable educational environment and supporting the overall well-being of students through early intervention and the cultivation of positive school cultures (Simbolon & Purba, 2022). This includes advocating for systemic change to ensure all students are treated with dignity and have access to services that promote a safe school environment, particularly for marginalized youth (Mayes et al., 2022). Furthermore, they play a vital role in connecting students and families with essential community resources, which is especially critical for non-traditional students who often face additional stressors related to managing multiple roles (Ward-Roof et al., 2010).

These professionals play a crucial role in fostering holistic student development, ensuring personal growth, social adjustment, and professional readiness through tailored interventions and comprehensive programs (Nasreen, 1970). They are responsible for providing guidance and counseling services, addressing behavioral issues, offering career support, and collaborating with teachers, parents, and other professionals (Johari & Amat, 2019). This multifaceted role ensures that students receive comprehensive support to navigate academic challenges, foster personal development, and plan for their future, which are crucial for their overall success (Sasmita et al., 2021; Adinda et al., 2023; Basith, 2016).

Furthermore, counselors are expected to implement balanced, development-based school counseling programs that integrate social, emotional, academic, and vocational support for all students (Rahman, 2020). This encompasses developing an individual's identity and exploring their inherent potential, thereby empowering them to independently resolve issues and make informed life choices (Sasmita et al., 2021). Despite these clear mandates, counselors frequently encounter high demands for activities outside their primary scope, which can negatively impact their efficiency and the effectiveness of their core responsibilities.

This often necessitates a re-evaluation of resource allocation and administrative support to ensure that guidance and counseling facilities are adequately equipped to meet student needs (Cania et al., 2024). However, a common perception persists among both



students and teachers that counselors primarily function as school psychologists, focusing solely on personal and emotional adjustment or conflict resolution, thereby overlooking the broader spectrum of guidance and career support they offer. The evolution of the higher education environment has expanded the role of university counselors beyond traditional academic guidance to include mental health support, career planning, and cross-cultural adaptation (Jia & Chu, 2023).

This expanded scope is particularly crucial given that many university students are living independently for the first time, often leading to challenges such as adjusting to new environments and potentially engaging in antisocial behaviors without adequate support (Otieno & Simiyu, 2020). Effective counseling services are thus essential not only for mitigating behavioral issues but also for enhancing academic achievement and promoting overall student well-being, particularly for non-traditional students who may face additional stressors (Arfasa & Weldmeskel, 2020; Ward-Roof et al., 2010). These students, especially male non-traditional students, often experience significant stress managing multiple roles and may be less inclined to seek help, underscoring the critical need for tailored counseling interventions that address their unique circumstances (Ward-Roof et al., 2010).

Counseling specifically designed for adult students in higher education is crucial for tackling the various challenges and opportunities they encounter, thereby fostering their academic success, personal development, and overall well-being (Stamou et al., 2024). This tailored support can include addressing unique life experiences that shape their educational desires and providing additional non-planning advising sessions that adopt a developmental approach to advising (Stamou et al., 2024).

Specifically, high self-efficacy, a core component of psychological capital (PsyCap), has been demonstrably linked to lower burnout rates among school counselors (Smith et al., 2003). This is because robust self-efficacy empowers counselors to perceive challenges as opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable threats, thereby sustaining motivation and engagement (Yu et al., 2024). Furthermore, hope, another vital element of PsyCap, acts as a protective resource, bolstering self-efficacy and mitigating the negative impacts of burnout (Niles et al., 2024).

This internal reservoir of positive psychological resources enables individuals to navigate complex professional demands and maintain job satisfaction even in high-stress environments (Xue et al., 2023) (Liu & Du, 2024). Optimism, another facet of PsyCap, further equips individuals with a generalized expectancy that positive outcomes are attainable, fostering proactive coping mechanisms against work-related stressors (Xue et al., 2023; Solms et al., 2024). This positive outlook, combined with resilience—the capacity to bounce back from adversity allows counselors to adapt effectively to changes and setbacks inherent in their demanding roles (Yu et al., 2024).

These integrated dimensions of psychological capital collectively enhance an individual's ability to cope with demanding professional environments, reducing susceptibility to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Xue et al., 2023). Moreover, this composite construct also encompasses a strong belief in one's ability to succeed and control outcomes when facing difficult challenges, as well as a positive expectancy that motivates one to reach goals (Chen et al., 2024). Research consistently indicates that individuals with higher PsyCap exhibit enhanced subjective well-being and life satisfaction, which further acts as a protective factor against internalizing and externalizing disorders (Fan et al., 2024; Hu et al., 2021).



This collective enhancement in psychological resources not only buffers against burnout but also fosters greater work engagement and overall job performance among educators (Fathi et al., 2023; Ma, 2023). This comprehensive understanding of psychological capital underscores its crucial role in promoting mental health and promoting sustainable career longevity among school counselors, thereby directly influencing the quality of educational support services they provide. Consequently, interventions aimed at cultivating PsyCap components can lead to a more resilient and effective counseling workforce, ultimately benefiting students and the broader educational community (Pérez-Marqués et al., 2023).

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between social support and psychological capital (Psychological Capital / PsyCap) in relation to burnout among school counselors. Her primary focus is on how social support from colleagues, family, and the professional community serves as a protective factor against work stress, as well as how Psychological Capital (PsyCap), which encompasses hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, can enhance counselor resilience. Through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, this study synthesizes findings from various previous studies that examined the interaction between the two main variables and burnout. Thus, the formulation of this study is directed to understand the extent to which the interaction between social and psychological factors can reduce the level of work burnout in school counselors.

The main objective of this study is to identify the direct and indirect influence between social support and psychological capital on burnout in school counselors. This study also aims to reveal how the two factors interact with each other in forming mental resilience to work pressure. Practically, this research is expected to provide strategic recommendations for educational institutions to design social support-based interventions and promote psychological capital (PsyCap) development. Thus, the study's results can serve as a basis for strengthening policies and programs that support the psychological well-being and work effectiveness of school counselors.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic approach, which combines two psychosocial variables, social support and psychological capital, as predictors of burnout in the context of school counselors. Unlike previous studies that only highlighted one factor, this study reviewed the interaction of the two simultaneously to see a more comprehensive protective effect. In addition, this study uses the current literature range (2015–2025) with strict selection criteria based on the PRISMA guidelines, which makes it more accurate and relevant to the professional conditions of current counselors. The results make a new contribution to the guidance and counseling literature by emphasizing the importance of a balance between social and psychological factors in preventing burnout.

METHOD

This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, adhering to the guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). This approach was chosen because it provided a comprehensive, transparent, and structured picture of the results of previous research on the relationship between social support, psychological capital, and burnout in school counselors. SLR is considered appropriate because it enables researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific evidence from various sources using a systematic and replicable approach. The PRISMA method was first developed by Moher et al. (2009) and has become an



international standard in systematic review-based research. The full guidelines can be accessed through the official website: <https://www.prisma-statement.org/>.

The first stage in implementing this method is identifying relevant articles. The search process was conducted through several academic databases, including Google Scholar, using the following keywords: social support, psychological capital, burnout, and school counselors. Search criteria are limited to articles published between 2007 and 2025, so that the results reflect the latest data and are relevant to the professional context of today's counselors. Each article found is then collected for further evaluation. This stage is in accordance with PRISMA's recommendations to ensure transparency and accuracy in the literature identification process.

The second stage is screening, where all identified articles are checked for their relevance to the research topic. Articles that have inappropriate abstracts or address topics outside the field of education and counseling guidance are immediately eliminated. In addition, duplicate search results are also removed so that data repetition does not occur. At this stage, only articles that explicitly examined the relationship between social support, psychological capital, and burnout were maintained. This stage follows the principle of eligibility filtering, as explained in the PRISMA guide by Page et al. (2021), which can be found on the [https://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/](https://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/page) page.

The third stage is eligibility, where articles that have passed the screening process are re-examined using strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include: (1) articles published in reputable or Scopus-indexed journals, (2) using a population of school counselors or educators, and (3) researching the variables of social support, PsyCap, and burnout. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria include articles that are not in English or Indonesian, articles that have not gone through a peer review process, and research before 2015. The results of this stage resulted in 10 key articles that met the research quality standards for further analysis.

The fourth stage involves evaluating article quality using the assessment scale developed by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI). This instrument is used to ensure the validity and credibility of the research methodology being analyzed. Each article was evaluated based on four main aspects, namely: (1) the quality of the research design, (2) the suitability of the results with the research objectives, (3) the level of peer-review of the journal, and (4) the significance of the contribution of the research results to the burnout issue. Articles with high scores based on the JBI scale are prioritized in the literature synthesis. The complete guide on JBI quality evaluation can be accessed through the official website: <https://jbi.global/critical-appraisal-tools>.

The final stage involves data analysis, which is conducted using two approaches: narrative synthesis and meta-analysis. The narrative synthesis approach is employed to elaborate on the thematic relationship between social support, psychological capital, and burnout, drawing on relevant theories and previous research findings. Meanwhile, meta-analysis is used when quantitative data are available to statistically measure the strength of correlations between variables. The analysis was conducted to find common patterns and the contribution of key variables to the reduction of burnout in school counselors. Thus, this research method not only highlights the empirical results but also presents a deeper conceptual understanding of the role of social and psychological factors in building professional well-being.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

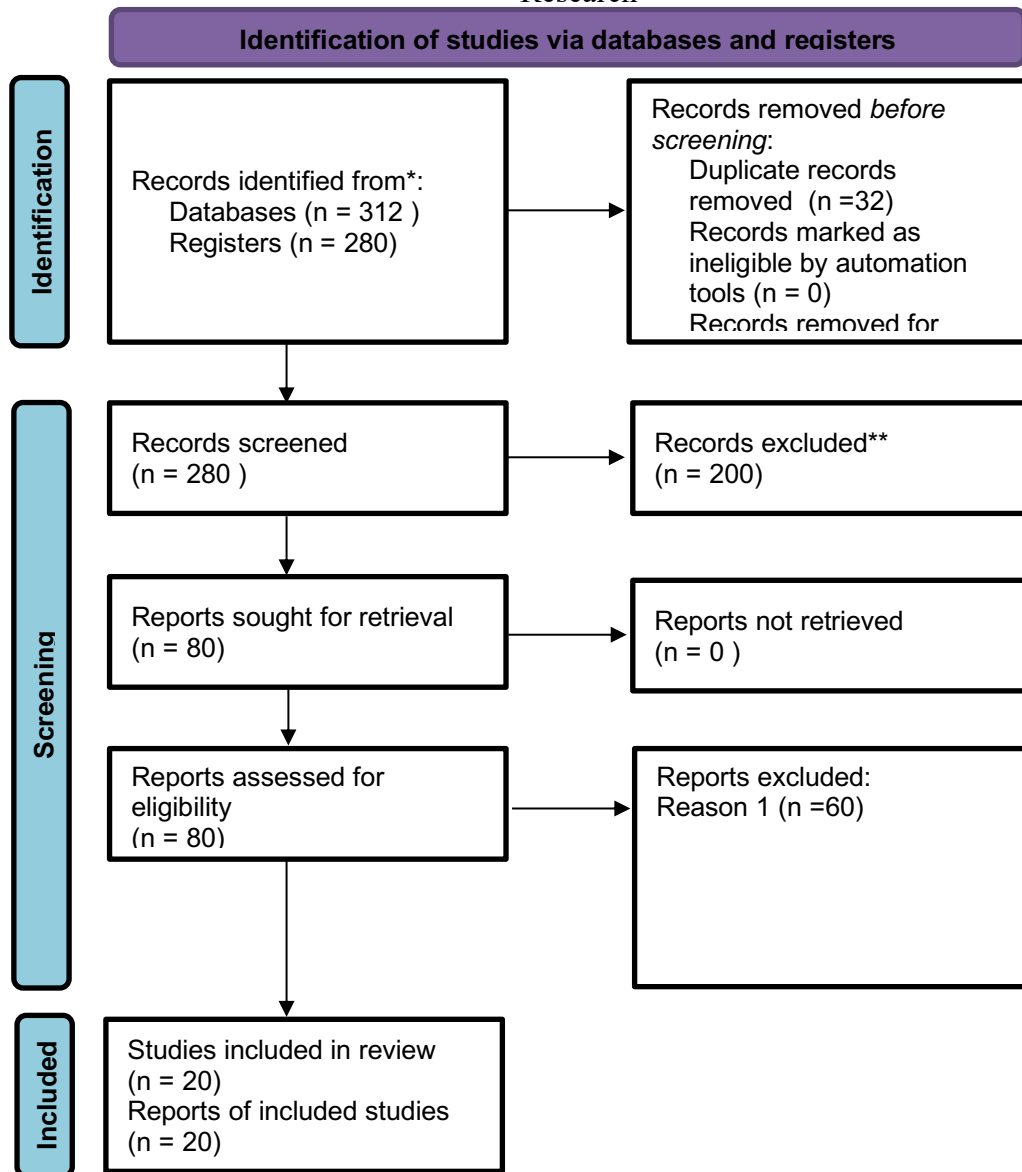
The article selection process in this study was conducted using the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework, which ensures transparency, replicability, and methodological rigor in systematic reviews. The PRISMA diagram illustrates each stage of the literature identification, screening, and inclusion process for the current Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Initially, all articles were identified exclusively through Google Scholar, using relevant keywords such as social support, psychological capital, and burnout among school counselors.

After removing duplicate records, titles and abstracts were screened to determine relevance to the study's focus. Non-relevant and low-quality studies were excluded based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The full-text articles were then retrieved and assessed for eligibility according to the PRISMA guidelines, ensuring that only studies meeting the defined methodological and thematic standards were retained.

A total of 312 records were identified during the initial search. After removing 32 duplicates, 280 articles proceeded to the screening phase, where 200 records were excluded for irrelevance. Subsequently, 80 full-text articles were reviewed for eligibility, and 60 were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Finally, 20 studies were included in both the qualitative and quantitative synthesis. This systematic selection process reflects the methodological integrity of the SLR approach and ensures that the synthesized findings are based on reliable, peer-reviewed, and thematically relevant studies. The PRISMA 2020 flowchart below summarizes the detailed screening stages undertaken in this research.



Graph 1.
PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram which Shows the Process ff Selecting Articles in Research



This study analyzed 20 scientific articles that examined the relationship between social support and psychological capital (PsyCap) in relation to burnout among educators and school counselors. The results of the study showed that almost all studies found a significant negative relationship between burnout and these two main variables. This means that the stronger the social support an individual receives and the higher their PsyCap, the lower the level of emotional fatigue and decreased work motivation. These findings are in line with the theory of Conservation of Resources (Hobfoll, 1989), which asserts that individuals with substantial social and psychological resources are better able to maintain mental well-being under work pressure.

In addition, the majority of articles indicate that social support not only has a direct impact on burnout but also plays an indirect role through the improvement of psychological capital (PsyCap). Individuals with good emotional and professional



support tend to exhibit higher levels of optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience to work-related stress. These results are strengthened by several studies based on structural equation modeling (SEM) that show a dual mediation model between the three variables. Thus, the combination of social and psychological factors is the primary key in preventing burnout in the modern educational and counseling environment.

Table 1.
Identification and Characteristics of SLR Studies

No.	Researcher & Year	Population/Sample	Key Variables	Method/Design	Key Results
1.	Avola et al. (2025)	School teacher	Social support, burnout	Scoping Review	Social support is effective in reducing teacher burnout
2.	Boyce et al. (2007)	Temporary workers	Work stigma, social support	Conceptual model	Social support moderates work stress
3.	Cao, Hassan & Omar (2024)	University lecturer	Social support, burnout	SLR	Social support negatively affects burnout
4.	Cao, Hassan & Omar (2025)	University lecturer	Social support, burnout intervention	SLR	Social interventions are effective in reducing burnout
5.	Chen et al. (2024)	Medical staff	Social support, PsyCap, burnout	Path analysis	PsyCap mediates the relationship between social support and burnout
6.	Feng et al. (2024)	School counselor	Social support, occupational well-being	SEM	Multidimensional social support improves psychological well-being
7.	Gebregergis & Csukonyi (2025)	Student	Burnout akademik, PsyCap	Cross-sectional	PsyCap and social support reduce academic burnout
8.	Habibah et al. (2022)	Indonesian school counselor	Peer support, burnout	Quantitative correlational	Peer support has a significant effect on reducing burnout
9.	Heng et al. (2020)	University lecturer	Supervisor support, PsyCap, burnout	SEM	Supervisor support improves PsyCap and reduces burnout
10.	Holman et al. (2019)	School counselor	Organizational variables, burnout	Survey	The organizational environment affects burnout



No.	Researcher & Year	Population/Sample	Key Variables	Method/Design	Key Results
11.	Kerksieck et al. (2019)	Employee	PsyCap, work social support	Longitudinal	The mutual relationship between social support and PsyCap
12.	Kim & Lambie (2018)	Professional Consultant	Burnout, coping	Descriptive survey	High burnout rate found due to workload
13.	Li, Hassan & Saharuddin (2023)	Student	PsyCap, academic results	SLR	PsyCap has a positive effect on performance and well-being
14.	Liu & Du (2024)	Guru bahasa Inggris	PsyCap, mindfulness, burnout	SEM	PsyCap significantly reduces burnout
15.	Niles et al. (2024)	School counselor	Hope, self-efficacy, burnout	Gradual regression	PsyCap mediates the relationship between social support and burnout
16.	Vivolo et al. (2022)	Psychological therapist	Burnout, coping	Meta-sintesis	Social support lowers the risk of burnout
17.	Wahid et al. (2023)	Teachers in Malaysia	PsyCap, burnout	Corelasional	PsyCap plays a protective role against burnout
18.	Xue et al. (2023)	School teacher	PsyCap, burnout	Network analysis	PsyCap is directly related to burnout symptoms
19.	Stephens et al. (2024)	Local apparatus	Social support, boundary spanning	Scoping Review	Social support increases work adaptability
20.	Liu et al. (2024)	Expatriate MNC	PsyCap, boundary-spanning	Eksperimental	PsyCap strengthens cross-cultural effectiveness and lowers stress

The quantitative analysis in this study focuses on the strength and direction of the relationships between three main variables: social support, psychological capital (PsyCap), and burnout. Of the 20 articles analyzed, the majority employed statistical approaches and structural equation modeling (SEM) to measure the relationships between variables. The results of the synthesis showed high consistency in the data, with most studies reporting a significant negative association between burnout and social support, as well as psychological capital (PsyCap). Thus, it can be concluded that the higher a



person's level of social support and Psychological Capital, the lower the risk of burnout in educational and counseling work environments.

In addition, several studies have also revealed an indirect link between social support and burnout through PsyCap mediation. This mechanism illustrates that social support functions as an external factor that strengthens the psychological resources of individuals, thereby indirectly reducing the level of emotional and mental fatigue. The reported statistical effect values (r between -0.45 and -0.70 and β between -0.30 and -0.45) reinforce the evidence that a combination of social and psychological factors plays a protective role against burnout. A summary of the analysis results is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2.
Key Findings Based on Research Variables

Variable	Number of Studies (n)	Consistent Findings	Direction of Contact	Average Statistical Effect
Social Support → Burnout	15	14 studies support	Negative	$r = -0.45$ to -0.62
PsyCap → Burnout	13	13 studies support	Negative	$r = -0.48$ to -0.70
Social Support → PsyCap	8	8 studies support	Positive	$r = 0.40$ to 0.68
Social Support → PsyCap → Burnout	7	6 Supportive studies (mediation)	Indirect	$\beta = -0.30$ to -0.45

Most of the articles in this study confirm that social support plays a significant role in reducing burnout, both in teachers, lecturers, and school counselors. Research by Cao, Hassan, and Omar (2024; 2025) shows that social support from colleagues and superiors can reduce emotional fatigue and improve work well-being in university lecturers. The same thing was also expressed by Habibah et al. (2022), who found that peer support has a significant contribution to low burnout in school counselors in Indonesia. These findings are reinforced by the study of Avola et al. (2025), which reviewed various interventions aimed at improving teacher welfare by strengthening the social support system in schools. Overall, these results show that a supportive work environment is an essential foundation in maintaining the mental health and professional performance of educators.

In addition to social factors, several studies in this SLR highlight the role of psychological capital (PsyCap), which consists of self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism. Research by Liu & Du (2024) shows that PsyCap has a direct effect on reducing burnout in EFL teachers in China, where mindfulness amplifies the influence of PsyCap on work well-being. The study by Wahid, Mohd, and Omar (2023) also found that PsyCap functions as an emotional protector against work stress in educators in Malaysia. Research by Li, Hassan, and Saharuddin (2023) confirms that PsyCap is closely related to improving student academic outcomes, showing its positive impact on performance and well-being. In addition, Xue et al. (2023) found that psychological capital (PsyCap) was negatively associated with teacher burnout symptoms, with resilience and self-efficacy being the most influential aspects. The consistency of the results across these studies confirms that PsyCap is the leading psychological resource that must be developed to reduce burnout.



The findings of several articles suggest that social support affects burnout indirectly in increasing psychological capital (PsyCap). Research by Chen et al. (2024) demonstrates that social support enhances the Psychological Capital (PsyCap) of medical personnel, ultimately reducing burnout and the intention to leave work. Similar results were shown by Heng et al. (2020), who confirmed that supervisor support improves PsyCap and reduces work conflicts in university lecturers. Gebregergis & Csukonyi (2025) also found that PsyCap acts as a mediator between social support and student academic well-being. In contrast, Niles et al. (2024) confirmed that self-expectation and efficacy (components of PsyCap) were the main predictors of low burnout in school counselors. In general, this mediation model suggests that social support enhances psychological capital, which in turn serves as an internal buffer against work fatigue.

Several studies have also highlighted the influence of organizational and work culture factors on burnout. Holman, Nelson, and Watts (2019) highlight the importance of organizational variables such as leadership and institutional support systems in suppressing burnout in school counselors. Meanwhile, Kerksieck, Bauer, and Brauchli (2019) demonstrate a reciprocal relationship between social support in the workplace and PsyCap, which contributes to enhanced employee well-being. Stephens, Van Steden, and Schoonmade (2024) assert that social support plays a vital role in the effectiveness of work across government agencies, while Boyce et al. (2007) highlight that the lack of social support exacerbates stigma and stress in contract workers. These studies indicate that burnout not only arises from individual workloads but is also influenced by less supportive social structures and organizational environments.

In a broader scope, several articles demonstrate that the phenomenon of burnout resulting from weak social support and PsyCap is not limited to the education sector alone. Vivolo, Owen, and Fisher (2022) found a similar pattern in psychological therapists, where social support plays a significant role in emotional recovery from work burnout. Liu, Sekiguchi, Qin, and Shen (2024) confirmed the effects of PsyCap on cross-cultural stress reduction in multinational expatriates, confirming the universality of PsyCap's protective impact on burnout. Feng, Liu, and Huang (2024) note that fulfilling basic psychological needs and providing multidimensional support simultaneously enhances the well-being of school counselors. Overall, the synthesis of these 20 articles reinforces the view that the combination of external social support and internal psychological capital (PsyCap) is the most effective approach in preventing burnout in various professional contexts and modern work cultures.

CONCLUSION

The results of the Systematic Literature Review of 20 articles show that social support and psychological capital (Psychological Capital / PsyCap) have an essential role in reducing burnout in school counselors and educators. Social support serves as an external factor that protects against work-related stress. At the same time, psychological capital (PsyCap) is an internal resource that enhances psychological resilience through its four dimensions: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. These findings reinforce that individuals with substantial social and psychological resources are better able to manage work stress adaptively. Practically, educational institutions need to implement strategies to strengthen social support through peer mentoring, collaborative supervision, and PsyCap development training to improve work welfare and prevent burnout. Further research is recommended to examine the role of moderating contextual factors, such as organizational climate, work culture, and gender, as well as to utilize longitudinal and



mixed-method designs to understand the dynamics of PsyCap and the effectiveness of social interventions in the long term. With the development of this direction, future research is expected to make a more comprehensive theoretical and practical contribution to understanding the mechanisms of burnout prevention in various professional contexts and work cultures.

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