

A STUDY OF PERSONALITY FACTOR AND JOB STRESS IN HIGH AND LOW BURN OUT GROUPS OF FEMALE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION:

“Burnout”, a term originally coined by Freudenberger to describe healthcare workers who were physically and psychologically depleted, is now commonly associated with human service professionals such as teachers, nurses, social workers, police officers, physicians, and therapists. But today, burnout is being more clearly defined than ever before and there is hardly confusion about its conceptualization. Pines and Aronson considered burnout as a syndrome of mental, physical and emotional exhaustion due to long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations.

Burnout has also been described in terms of various models. Cherniss have proposed Process models; the gradual development of burnout and the impact of unmet expectations and dysfunctional coping strategies. Stage models have the sequentiality of three dimensions. Well-being model is personal accomplishment in terms of competency domain and two other dimensions in affective domain. Although the multidimensionality of the burnout is widely acknowledged but sometimes it is more convenient to treat burnout as unidimensional variable. Thus, in this regard two important issues i.e. multidimensionality v/s unidimensionality, and dichotomous v/s continuous have come into existence. Multidimensionality of the burnout does not allow for combining the three dimensions into unidimensional variable because one dimension i.e. reduced personal accomplishment is entirely independent from other two dimensions. But there are theoretical and practical reasons to consider burnout as a single construct. For practical reasons, unidimensional approach can be useful in simplifying the results, and to get the overall effect of burnout. Once opted for unidimensional approach, it is important to decide between dichotomous or continuous conceptualization. For the measurement purpose we should treat it as dichotomous variable, but for the purpose of comparison we should treat it as continuous variable. Here, in this study high and low burnout groups have been created on the basis of combined scores of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. It is originally assumed that burnout occurred mainly among human service professionals but the concept of burnout is currently not restricted to the human service sector only. Various occupational environments in which employees currently function demand more of them than did any previous period.

Personality and Occupational Stress identified as a particular stressful occupation. Negative aspects of the job such as disciplinary problems, students’ apathy, overcrowded classrooms, involuntary transfer, inadequate salaries, and lack of administrative support are among the stressors that confront teachers. As a result of these stressful aspects of teaching, burnout among teachers occurs, expressed in physical (e.g. headaches, peptic ulcers, hypertension, diabetes), psychological (depression, anger, anxiety), and behavioural (e.g. deterioration in work performance, absenteeism) symptoms. Teacher burnout is thought to be one reason for increasing numbers of competent teachers who are leaving the classroom for alternative careers (Cunningham, 1982). Burnout is difficult to estimate because it occurs as a gradual phenomenon, for which no universally accepted cut off scores exist.

Personality characteristics of employees can moderate the effect of stressful situations on burnout such that certain traits may buffer or enhance negative outcomes. Thus, personality and situational variables interact in complex ways. Over the past 50 years, research has converged on the existence of structural components (traits) of personality.

Job stress has been widely studied in relation to burnout. Occupational stress is a complex phenomenon consisting of two broad categories of stressors: (a) job characteristics, and (b) organizational characteristics. Certain variables of job stress i.e. role ambiguity, group or political pressures, responsibility, under participation, powerlessness, low status, poor interpersonal relationships, and lack of social and administrative support have been found to be significant correlates of burnout.

Keeping in view the above mentioned indications, the present research was conducted to figure out personality factor and job stress in high and low burn out groups of female physical education teachers.

METHODOLOGY:

A sample of 109 school female teachers from various high and senior secondary schools of remote areas of Gujarat state was randomly drawn from the population. Only regular teachers with experience above 5 years, ranging in age from 28 to 45 years with mean age of 39.4 years and those who volunteered to participate were included in the sample. Subjects were further divided into high and low burnout groups. Further the following tools were used to collect the data.

Maslach Burnout Inventory test consisting of 22 items and all the items are written in the form of statements about personal feelings or attitudes. Some of the items are positively worded and some negatively. For giving response, subjects are to evaluate the statements on 7-point scale ranging from 0 to 6 (0= never, 1= a few times a year or less, 2= once a month or less, 3=a few times a month, 4=once a week, 5=a few times a week, 6= every day)

Eysenck Personality Questionnaire-Revised (EPQ-R-1976) is an outgrowth of various Eysenck's earlier personality questionnaires. The EPQ-R consists of 90 items in all measuring extraversion-introversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and lie behaviour. Out of 90 items, 69 related to psychoticism (25), extroversion (21), and neuroticism (23) respectively.

Occupational Stress Index (OSI-1981) developed and standardized by Shrivastva and Singh (1981), is a useful tool to assess the occupational stress of employees. It consists of 46 statements each with 5 response alternatives.

To realize the main objective of the study, the obtained data were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics i.e. means, standard deviations, and t-ratio. The level of significance were set at 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The obtained results are reported in table-1. The perusal of table-1 reveals that high burnout female teachers have scored significantly high on three scales of personality i.e. psychoticism (Mean=5.53, SD=2.13), neuroticism (Mean=8.47, SD=3.51), and lie scale (Mean=8.57, SD=3.77) whereas low on extroversion (M=12.22, SD=3.27) than the low burnout group. It posits that female teachers characterized as aggressive, egocentric, impersonal, impulsive, unsympathetic, dogmatic, tough-minded, tense, anxious, irrational, moody, emotional, low in

self-esteem, hypochondriatic, introverted, motivated to show goodness and to behave in socially desirable manner tend to be develop high level of burnout in their respective occupational setting.

Table I
Mean, SD and t-values of High and Low Burnout Groups on Measures of Personality Factor and Job Stress

Sr.No.	Variables	High Burnout Group		Low Burnout Group		t-ratio
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Psychoticism	5.53	2.13	4.39	1.90	3.985*
2	Neuroticism	8.47	3.51	7.62	2.23	2.272*
3	Extraversion	12.22	3.27	14.33	3.71	1.999*
4	Lie Scale	8.57	3.77	7.49	3.80	2.435*
5	Occupational Stress	171.50	10.49	165.73	8.12	3.397*

* $p < 0.05$

Figure 1

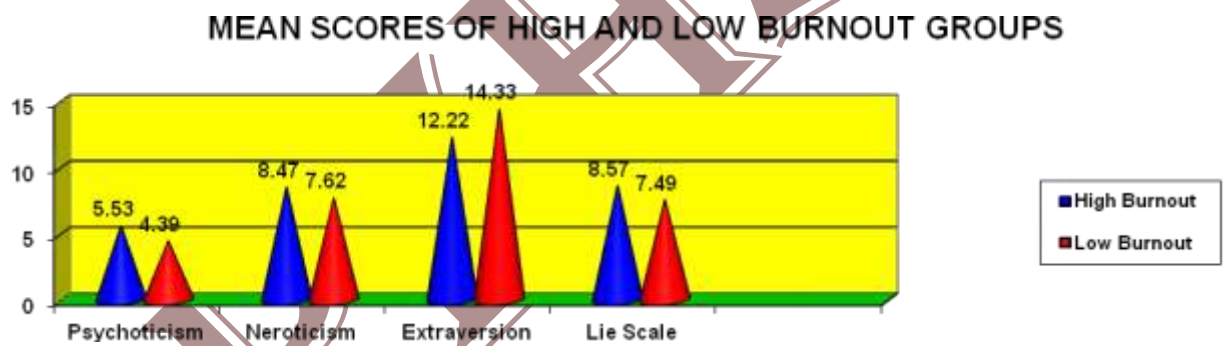
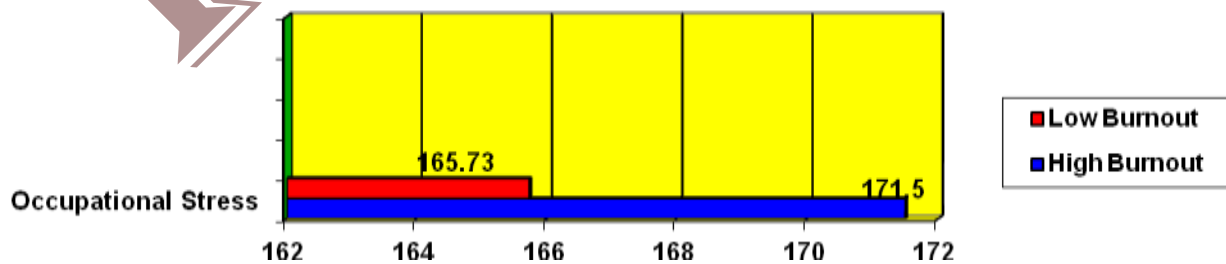


Figure 2

MEAN SCORES OF HIGH AND LOW BURNOUT GROUPS OF O.S.



High burnout teachers have scored significantly low on scale of occupational stress (Mean=171.5, SD=10.49). Though occupational stress index can provide 12 scores for different dimensions but in the present study only single score has been taken up to represent the overall extent of occupational stress. This finding is definitely inconsistent with the earlier findings (Heinbokel & Stolte, 1994) which have reported the high level of occupational stress in high burnout employees. It is not explainable in the light of existing literature, so for further verification large scale investigation is required. It shows that high burnout female teachers are characterized as having depletion of emotional resources feeling of being 'empty' or 'worn out'; negative and cynical attitude towards the recipient of their service (students); and negative evaluation of their own accomplishment at work. In the present study, it has been found that subjects having high level of emotional exhaustion are also high on depersonalization.

CONCLUSION:

The findings of the present study have revealed significant information about some personal dispositions of high and low burnout high school female teachers working in remote areas of Gujarat state. These findings suggest that teachers should be frequently screened for their occupational stress and burnout, and if needed, be counseled to cope with the threat of burnout and occupational stress.

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