

A Study of Job Related Stress and Burnout in Secondary School Teachers

Jalla Ram

Research Scholar
Sunrise University
Alwar, Rajasthan

Dr.I.J.Nigam

Supervisor
Sunrise University
Alwar, Rajasthan

ABSTRACT:

Job stress, job involvement and job satisfaction play a vital role in adjustment of teachers in schools. Stress in job or confrontation with reality which is totally different from one's expectations and dreams, gives a teacher the strength for transforming her or himself into a powerful person. The human life is becoming more and more complex and stressful day by day. Stress is a mental, physical and emotional reaction that some one experience as a result of demands of some one's life. A person's job life where he actively spends most of his time is a major source of satisfaction of his various social and psychological needs as well as stress and tension. Stress in the work place can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job don't match the capabilities, resources or needs of the worker. Workplace stress can lead to poor health and burnout. Those persons who are experiencing high amounts of stress also suffer from burnout. Burnout is a state of mental, emotional and physical exhaustions caused by excessive and prolonged stress. Teacher's stress may have an impact on teachers as individuals, on the educational institutions in which they work and on the pupil they teach. In teaching profession the loss due to stress and burnout may be defined in terms of departure of skilled teachers, impairment of teaching skills or even premature death.

KEY WORDS: mental, physical and emotional reaction

INTRODUCTION:

Thus, the concept of stress has a very important place in psychology. Stress and coping with stress are not only important from point of view of research but also important from practical implication. Stress is a complex phenomenon. It is very subjective experience. What may be challenge for one will be a stressor for another? It depends largely on background experiences, temperament and environmental conditions. Stress is a part of life and is generated by constantly changing situations that a person must face. The term stress refers to an internal state, which results from frustrating or unsatisfying conditions. A certain level of stress is unavoidable. Because of its complex nature stress has been studied for many years by researchers in psychology, sociology and medicine. Thus we will define stress as an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body (disease conditions, exercise, extremes of temperature, and the like) or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable or exceeding our resources for coping. On the other hand, psychological responses, such as anxiety, hopelessness, depression, irritability and a general feeling of not being able to cope with the world can result from the stress state.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED:

STRESS:

Stress is a feeling that is created when we react to a particular event. It is the body's way of reacting to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation. Researchers define stress as a physical, mental or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. The work stress is derived from the word "stringy" which means 'to be drawn tight'. In medical terms stress is described as "a physical or psychological

stimulus that can produce mental tension or psychological reactions that may lead to illness."

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF JOB STRESS:

Headache, sleep disturbances, difficulty in concentrating, short temper, upset stomach, job dissatisfaction, low morale.

Job stress may result in Cardiovascular diseases, musculo skeletal disorders, psychological disorders, workplace injury, suicide, cancer, ulcers and impaired immune functions.

The various viewpoints regarding the nature of stress have also been incorporated in the definition given by Former et al. (1984) "Stress consists of any event in which environmental demands, internal demands or both, tax or exceed the adaptive resource of the individual, social system or tissue system. According to Kete de Vries (1979), each individual needs a moderate amount of stress to be alert and capable of functioning effectively in an organisation. Stress within the elasticity range is positively related to job satisfaction and adjustment, but a high level of stress is found to be responsible for poor performance (John and Michael, 1980), physical ill health (Lipaswki, 1977) and psychological disorders (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974).

CAUSES OF JOB STRESS:

There are various causes of job stress which contribute to stress. These causes come from both outside and inside the organisation, from the groups employees are influenced by, and from employees themselves.

Cartwright and Cooper (1997) identified six major sources of pressures in work stress.

These are :

1. FACTORS INTRINSIC TO THE JOB:

Poor working conditions, work overload or underload, poor technology, long hours and danger are the factors that are intrinsic to the job capable of producing stress.

2. ROLE IN THE ORGANISATION:

Stress is commonly experienced by the individuals whose roles are not clearly defined in the organisation.

3. RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK:

According to Agarwal (2001) there are three critical interpersonal relationships at work : relationships with one's boss, those with one's subordinates, and those with one's colleagues.

4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT :

Career progression, job security, obsolescence of skills and capabilities and retirement are included in this.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CLIMATE:

Non-participation at work and a general lack of control in the organisation are reported to be source of stress.

6. NON-WORK PRESSURES :

Relates to pressures on the domestic front due to job stress. The prevalence, causes and effects of teacher stress have been reported in several studies (Kyriacous & Sutcliffe, 1977a ; Kyriacou, 1980). In general, the antecedents of stress, or the so called stressors, affecting today's employees may be divided into following categories:

EXTRA ORGANIZATIONAL STRESSORS:

Although most of studies of job stress ignore the importance of outside forces and events, it is becoming increasingly clear that these have a tremendous impact. Taking an open system's perspective of an organization (that is, the organisation is generally affected by the external environment), it is clear that job stress is not limited just to things that happen inside the organization during working hours. Extra

organizational stressors include things such as societal/technological change, the family, relocation, economic and financial conditions, race and class, religious affiliation and residential or community conditions.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRESSORS:

Besides the potential stressors that occur outside the organization, there are also those associated with the organization itself. Organizational stressors can be categorized into organizational structure and climate, management, working conditions, career development opportunity, salary, adequate technology, organizational politics and administrative policies etc.

GROUP STRESSORS:

The group can also be a potential source of stress. These group stressors can be categorized into three areas : (a) Lack of group cohesiveness, (b) lack of social support, (c) intra individual, interpersonal and inter group conflict.

INDIVIDUAL STRESSORS:

The extra organizational, organizational and group stressors all eventually get down to the individual level. There is also more research and agreement on possible situational dimensions and individual dispositions that may affect stress outcomes. For example, role conflict, role ambiguity and individual dispositions such as Type A personality patterns, personal control, learned helplessness, self efficacy, and psychological hardiness may all affect the level of stress someone experiences.

BURNOUT:

The term burnout was first coined by the Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 in his book "Burnout" and since then interest in phenomenon of job burnout, as a stress reaction, has increased markedly.

He originally defined burnout as "extinction of motivation or incentive especially where one's devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results. It is a job related stage."

The phenomenon of feeling overstressed is commonly described as being 'burned out'. Burnout is a state of emotional, mental and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when a person feel over-whelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As the burnout continues, the person begin to lose interest or motivation that led him to take a certain role in the first place. It is a syndrome of depersonalization and reduction in personal accomplishment that occurs among individuals who do 'people work' of same kind.

CAUSES OF BURNOUT:

There are many causes of burnout. In many cases, burnout stems from the job. But anyone who feels overworked and overvalued is at risk for burnout. Burnout is not solely caused by stressful work or too many responsibilities, other factors also contribute to burnout including life style and other personality traits.

SYMPTOMS OF JOB BURNOUT:

Job burnout is caused by a multiplicity of factors and hence its symptoms are also multifarious. Research literature in this area suggests that there are three major areas that are predominant in job burnout experiences (Maslach & Jackson, 1979). The description of these three areas is given as under :

PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Jackson et al. (1996) described that a burned out person tends to show a consistently lowered work productivity, loss of commitment to work, feeling of over work, deterioration in performance, withdrawal and alienation from work, total detachment from or over involvement in the job.

EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION:

According to Maslach and Jackson (1986) this includes physical and mental exhaustion. Physical exhaustion is characterised by fatigue, nausea, muscle tension, changes in eating and sleeping habits and a generally lowered energy level (Gaines and Jermier, 1983). Mental exhaustion is characterised by dissatisfaction with self, with the job, with life in general, with colleagues and supervisors. Burned out people feel there is something wrong with them because their work does not seem interesting as it was before. Emotional exhaustion includes feelings of frustration, hopelessness, being trapped, depression, sadness and apathy for work. People with these symptoms report suffering from frequent irritation and anger (Perlman and Hartman, 1981; Lee and Ashforth, 1991).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Misra (1992) found that teachers with less experience felt more emotional exhaustion, which is reverse in case of high experience teachers. Saini, Yadav & Mal (1997) conducted a study on school teachers. They found that effect of teaching experience was not significant for stress and burnout sub-scales.

Singh, Nain, Sharma and Verma (2002) explored burnout among primary school teachers in relation to gender, age and teaching experience. Results revealed that the level of burnout was almost similar among male and female teachers. Age was not significantly related to burnout while teaching experience was significantly, but negatively correlated with the feelings of burnout.

When individual experiences stress, he adopts ways of dealing with it as one cannot remain in a continuous state of stress. Coping with stress is a normal and necessary experience in daily life. At the workplace, it gains particular importance because it is related not only to individual's career, goals, health and satisfaction, but also to organizational success and social relations. The state of stress is inseparable from coping. Vitaliano et al. (1990) treat coping with stress as a regulatory function that consists of maintaining the adequate balance between demands and capacities or of reducing the discrepancy between demands and capacities. Efficient coping, which results in match or goodness of fit between demands and capacities, reduces the state of stress, whereas inefficient coping leads to the increase in the state of stress. Coping strategies play important role in reducing stress from the possibility of burnout to glowup. There are several coping strategies. Pareek (1977) Cohen and Lazarus (1979), Folkman and Lazarus (1980), Parkes (1990), Pestonjee (1992), Moos (1997), Lyne and Roger (2000) suggest some commonly used methods of coping.

Reviews of researches on stress coping suggest to conclude that people use different coping strategies to reduce the potential for stress. These are enhancing social support, improving one's personal control and hardiness, focusing and reconstructing stressful situations, compensating through self improvement, organizing one's world better, exercising to increase fitness, preparing for stressful events.

Broadly, psychologists have identified two major ways in which people cope with experienced stress. The first, termed as problem-focused coping, is aimed at problem solving or doing something to alter the source of the stress. The second, termed as emotion-focused coping, is aimed at reducing or managing the emotional distress that is associated with it. In general, problem focused is approach coping; it also reflects cognitive and behavioral efforts to master or resolve life stressors. In contrast, emotion-focused tends to be avoidance coping; it reflects cognitive and behavioural attempts to avoid thinking about a stressor and its implications, or to manage the affect associated with it.

O. Lanre Olaitan et al. (2011) in their study "Prevalence of job stress among primary school teachers in South-West. Nigeria found that majority of teachers experience headache as symptom of stress and majority of them engage in watching TV as a strategy for coping with stress. It was recommended among others that, teachers working conditions should be improved by planning educational economics and of some social facilities as satellite TV, computer connected with internet and that the school curriculum should take into cognizance, sporting activities especially for the teachers which should be given a bit of knowledge in health

education so to be able to understand themselves and generate more coping techniques for job stress.

RESULT & DISCUSSION:

In this paper the results are analyzed and interpreted. In this analysis and interpretation the scores are arranged in this way so that the wanted results could be obtained according to the hypothesis of the problem.

Table-1 SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR JOB STRESS AND BURNOUT OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS

Variables		Sum of squares	Df	Mean squares	F-value
Job stress		7721.61	1	7721.61	342.20**
Burnout	Emotional exhaustion	2845.92	1	2845.92	385.68**
	Depersonalization	322.40	1	322.40	37.63**
	Personal accomplishment	803.60	1	803.60	31.51**

**** .01 level of significance**

Table-1 indicates that the main effect of sex was significant for depersonalization sub-scale of burnout measure [F =37.63, df = 1, p < 0.01]. Female subjects showed higher scores [M = 6.51] on the measure than their male counter parts [M = 4.43].

Table-1 also provide summary of analysis of variance for personal accomplishment sub-scale of burnout. It shows a significant main effect of sex [F =31.56, df = 1, p < 0.01] on personal accomplishment. Male teacher had higher mean score [M = 35.52] on the measure than female teachers [M = 32.25].

So it is seen that female teachers scoring higher on stress scale indicate higher on stress scale indicate higher job stress whereas male teachers scoring lower as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and higher on personal accomplishment sub-scale of burnout indicated lower burnout.

Table-2

Means and SDs of Scores of Male and Female Teachers on Job Stress and Burnout Scale

Variables		Male		Female	
		M	S.D.	M.	S.D.
Job stress		38.01	7.32	48.16	7.71
Burnout	Emotional exhaustion	9.23	3.93	15.39	2.91
	Depersonalization	4.43	3.36	6.51	2.64
	Personal accomplishment	35.52	5.21	32.25	4.94

Above table presents the summary of ANOVA for job stress. The ANOVA indicates significant effect of sex having mean 342.20, degree of freedom 1 at 0.01 of significance. Table-2 indicating means of both groups shows that mean of both groups differ significantly. A close observation of table-2 indicate that female teachers exhibit more stress having mean 48.16 in comparison to male teachers having mean 38.61.

High scores of burnout reflect high scores of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and low scores of personal accomplishment. As shown in table-1. The analysis of variance yields a significant effect of sex, as

means of female subjects were higher [M = 15.39] on emotional exhaustion than the male subject [M = 9.23] with high significant difference [F = 385.68, df = 1, p < 0.01].

Table-3

Summary of Analysis of Variance for Job Stress and Burnout on The Basis Of Cadres

Variables		Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F-value
Job stress		2284.41	2	1142.70	50.64**
Burnout	Emotional exhaustion	220.83	2	110.41	14.96**
	Depersonalization	81.06	2	40.43	4.73**
	Personal accomplishment	187.65	2	93.82	3.68*

**** .01 level of significance**

*** .05 level of significance**

From the analysis of variance (table-3), it is clear that there is a significant effect of cadre on job stress [F = 2284.41, df = 1 , p < 0.01]. A careful comparison of means reveal that secondary school teachers showed more job stress [M = 46.99], than the comparable primary school teachers [M = 41.13] and college teacher [M = 41.14]. Whereas mean difference between primary school teachers and college teachers was not found significant on job stress measure.

In case of emotional exhaustion sub-scale of job burnout the analysis of variance, exhibits a highly significant effect of cadre [F = 14.96, df = 2 , p < 0.01] as the teachers of secondary school displayed more emotional exhaustion [M =13.50] followed by college [M = 11.90] and primary school teachers [M = 11.52]. However, the difference between primary school and college teachers was within the limit of random variation. Results also reveals that mean difference between primary school teachers and college teachers was not found significant on emotional exhaustion measure.

The analysis of variance also reveals a significant effect of cadre for depersonalization sub-scale of burnout measure [F = 4.73, df = 2 , p < 0.01].

Teacher of primary school cadre reported higher score [M = 6.20] than college cadre [M = 5.18] and secondary school cadre [M = 5.03]. The statistical analysis also reveal that secondary school and college teachers did not differ significantly on depersonalization subscale of burnout.

Table-4 Means and SDs of Scores Teachers of Different Cadres for Job Stress and Burnout

Variables		Primary		Secondary		College	
		M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.
Job stress		41.13	10.35	46.99	8.16	41.14	7.17
Burnout	Emotional exhaustion	11.52	4.71	13.50	4.48	11.90	4.49
	Depersonalization	6.20	2.70	5.03	3.49	5.18	3.23
	Personal accomplishment	35.00	4.22	33.38	5.40	33.27	6.06

In the case of personal accomplishment subscale of burnout measure, analysis of variance indicates

significant effect of cadre [$F = 3.68$, $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$] on the measure. Table-4 also indicate that teachers of primary school scored more [$M = 35.00$] in comparison to their counterparts of secondary school [$M = 33.38$] and college teachers [$M = 33.27$] which means primary teachers has lower degree of burnout than comparable groups. Results also indicate that secondary school teachers and college teachers did not differ significantly.

CONCLUSION:

To compare the job stress and burnout between male and female, the scores obtained by them on these dimensions are analyzed and the mean S.D. and f value are calculated in the table-1 and table-2. It is clear from the analysis of statistical values shown in the table that there is significant difference in the scores of job stress and burnout of male and female teachers. The significant relationship can also be proved by comparison of means of two categories. The mean of scores of female teachers are more than of male teachers. The results for effect of cadre on job stress and burnout are depicted in table-3 and table-4. It is clear from analyzed data that secondary school teachers showed significantly more job stress as compared to primary and college teachers whereas mean difference between primary and college teachers was not significant. For emotional exhaustion subscales of burnout the secondary school teachers differ significantly from their comparable groups where as primary and college teachers did not differ significantly. For depersonalization subscale the results show that secondary school teachers differ significantly from primary teachers but not from college teachers. The primary teachers also differ significantly from college teachers. For personal accomplishment subscale the primary teachers scored higher than secondary and college teachers and secondary school teachers and college teachers did not differ significantly.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Carver, C.S. & Scheier, M (1989). "Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36 (2), 267-283.
2. Chaplain, R.P. (2012). "Stress and Job Satisfaction among Primary Head-teachers: A question of balance?" *Educational Management and Administration*, 29 (2), 197-215.
3. Desai, T.P. (2010). "Stress and Mental workload: A study is an industrial organisation." *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 28(3), 258-273.
4. Femandes, C., & Murthy, V. (1989). "A study of Job Related Stress and Burnout in middle and Secondary school teachers." Unpublished paper. Bangalore University, Bangalore.
5. Hann, N. (2013). "Coping and defense mechanisms related to' personality inventories." *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 29, 373-378.
6. Jenkins, C.D. Zyzanski, S.J. & Rosenman, R.H. (1979). "Jenkins Activity Survey (Fonn C)." The Psychological Corporation. New York.
7. Kemp, M.A. & Neimeyer, G.J (2010). "Interpersonal Attachment: Experiencing, Expressing and Coping with stress." *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 46 (3), 388-394.
8. Landsbergis PA, Schnall PL, Belkic K, Baker D, Schwartz JE, Pickering TG (2001). "Work stress and cardiovascular disease. Work." *A Journal of Assessment and Prevention*, 17 : 191-208.
9. Rhodewalt, F., & Zone, J.B. (2011). "Appraisal of life change, depression, and illness in hardy and nonhardy women." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, (81-88).
10. Upadhayay, B., & Singh, B. (2012). "Occupational Stress among college and school teachers." *Psycho-Lingua*, 31(1), 49-52.