

**INVESTIGATION OF COPING STRATEGIES, STRESS AND BURNOUT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON THE BASIS OF DIFFERENT PATTERNS**

**Nirupama**  
**Research Scholar**  
**Mewar University**  
**Rajasthan**

**Dr.Mohini Acharya**  
**Supervisor**  
**Mewar University**  
**Rajasthan**

**Dr.Ritu Bhardwaj**  
**Co- Supervisor**  
**Mewar University**  
**Rajasthan**

**ABSTRACT:** 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.

**KEYWORDS:** Stressful, social and psychological

**STRESS**

Stress is a universal human experiences unpleasant experiences, can bring on stress getting fired having an illness in the family and failing and important exam are all potentially stressful events and experiences can have stressful components sudden promotion going away to college, and the purchase of a new house may also be stressful. The common element among these experiences. Pleasant and unpleasant alike, is that may require some kind of adjustment or adaptation. Sometimes people are able to adopt to stressful situations fairly easily, but at other times they have more difficult adjusting, certain kinds, of stress but cope well with other kinds, other people have different coping patterns. Life would be simple indeed if one's biological and psychological needs were automatically gratified. But as we know there are many obstacles, both environmental and personal, that may be interfering. Such obstacles place adjustive demands or stress on the individual. Stress is a big problem in our society. *Some* 75 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. For ex: Stress is often a factor in heart disease and cancer, two of the leading causes of death. Further more, stress-related diseases cost American industry billions of dollars a year: several billion tranquilizer pills are prescribed in the United States each year: and although it can not be quantified, stress seems to be involved in much of our unhappiness, irritability and dissatisfaction.

**TYPES OF STRESS**

Problems of adjustive demand as stress can be classified as frustration, conflicts or pressures of course, elements of all three maybe present in the same situation, but for simplicity we shall discuss them separately.

**FRUSTRATION**

Frustration results form the blocking of needs and motives -either by something that prevents or Hindus our achieving a desired goal or by the absence of a desired goal object. Overly restrictive parents would be a source of frustration to an adolescent who wanted to go to a school party, while a lack of water would be a source of frustration to a person lost in the desert. Frustrations may be minor and inconsequential as they may represent serious threat to our well being and survival.

There are a wide range of environmental obstacles, both physical and social, which can lead to frustration. These include accidents, nun for interpersonal characteristics such as physical handicaps, inadequate competencies and lack of self-discipline can also be sources of frustration.

In our society, most of us do not suffer from malnutrition, lack of medical care, inadequate opportunities for education, or other related limitations that are still realities for one half the world's people. However, we have our share of frustrations. Some of the more common frustrations which often cause us special difficulty include delays, lack of resources, losses, failure and loneliness and meaninglessness.

**1. DELAY:** In our time conscious culture where we feel we must make every minute count, delays are especially galling, similarly, many young people are forced to delay marriage until they finish school or acquire the skills for earning a living and preparation for a career can take long years of intensive study. Even then it may not be possible to get the type of job one had hoped for many delays. Especially these related to material possessions, are made especially difficult by the constant barrage of advertising that stimulates our desire for things we can not presently afford and perhaps never will be able to afford.

**2. LACK OF RESOURCES:** Although most of us do not lack the basic necessities of life, probably few of us are with what we do have we all might like to have more money to buy and do the things we want.

Person limitations can also be highly stressful in our competitive society. Physical handicaps which limit our attractiveness or place serious limitations on our activities can be highly frustrating.

**3. LOSSES :** Losses are especially frustrating because so often they are beyond our control and once they have occurred there is nothing we can do about them they often seem to represent the whim of a cruel and capricious fate.

**4. FAILURE:** A special type of failure which is often highly frustrating is guilt. Either doing something we feel we should not can lead to self-recriminating and guilt. Even if we did not live in a highly competitive society, we would be bound to fail at some time. The competitive setting in which we operate merely increases the frequency of failure and frustration. As in other types of failure guilt may be particularly frustrating if nothing can be done to rectify the error such as when an individual is responsible for an automobile accident in which a loved one is killed.

**5. LONELINESS AND MEANINGLESSNESS:** Probably most of us experience painful feelings of isolation and loneliness at some time in our lives. *Southgate (1975)* considered the stresses of singularity and loneliness to be of key importance- in fact feeling of isolation and loneliness appear to be key sources of frustration for people throughout the world. (*Chancellor 1976; Filder 1976*) Being unloved and lonely has been called "The greatest poverty" perhaps for more people than we realize, the world is lonely place.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Some researchers (Contrada et al., 1988; Krantz and Durel, 1983, and Krantz et al., 1987) suggest the intriguing possibility that people's Type A behaviour may, in part, be caused by their physiological responses to stress. Two lines of evidence seem to support this view. First, research has been conducted with Type A patients who were either taking or not taking betablockers, a class of drugs that dampens sympathetic nervous system transmission. This research by Krantz et al. (1982) demonstrated that Type A patients who were taking a beta blocker exhibited less Type A behaviour in structured interview than those who were not taking the drug. In a second study, Kahn et al. (1980) have examined the blood pressure of Type A and Type B patients under general anesthesia at the start of coronary bypass surgery. Compared with Type Bs, Type A patients showed greater blood pressure increases over the pressure measured when they were admitted to the hospital. This is important because research showing greater reactivity in Type A than Type B individuals was typically done with subjects who could use conscious appraisal processes to

judge the situation as stressful. Since all the bypass patients were unconscious during the operation, the results with these patients indicate that the Type A person's greater reactivity to stress can occur without the role of conscious processes. Taken together these lines of evidence suggest that physiological reactions to stressors can influence Type A behaviour.

A number of other researchers Lawler et al. (1981), Lundberg (1986), Matthews and Jennings (1984), and Thoresen and Pattillo (1988) have examined reactivity in Type A and Type B boys and girls and found results similar to those found with adults. This suggests that the tendency of Type A individuals to be highly reactive to stress may begin in childhood.

Yarnold and Grimm (1982), and Van Egeren et al. (1983) studied interpersonal relations of Type A and Type B individual. In interpersonal relations compared with Type B people, Type A people are much more dominant and are impatient in competitive situations.

Lovullo et al. (1986) in their research have shown that Type A individuals exhibit greater reactivity to stress than Type B s during final exam in medical school. Sorensen et al. (1987) in their research studies found that employees with high scores on the Jenkins Activity Survey for Type A behaviour have longer work hours and less supportive relationships with coworkers than Type B workers do.

Other studies conducted by Carver, Diamond and Humphries (1985), Diamond and Humphries(1985), Contrada and Krantz (1988), and Houston (1986) have also compared the reactivity of Type A and Type B people using male and female subjects and a variety of tasks, ways to induce stress and measures of Type A and Type B behaviour. Most of these studies have found greater reactivity among Type A individuals and especially in males.

It has also been noted that Type A individuals tend to seek out demanding situations in their lives (Suls and Sanders, 1988). What is more, people who are often in a hurry and impatient with delays - as is the case for Type A individuals, tend to have more accidents than people who are more easy going. In these ways the Type A and B pattellls can affect the transactions of people in their environment and moderate the stress they experience in their lives.

A huge stock of researcher has focused on the relationship between Type A behaviour pattelll and stress. Type A persons experience higher degrees of stress than Type B person (Pestonjee & Singh, 1988; Nowak, 1991; Rajeshwari, 1992; Iwta et al., 1992; Desai, 1993).

Pestonjee and Singh (1988) investigated that stress and Type A behaviour were correlated positively. Richard & Angela (1999) also found that Type behaviors were significantly correlated with job induced stresses.

Jain, Mishra and Kothari (2002) conducted a study to understand the effect of Type A/B behaviour patterns among doctors and engineers. It was clear from the findings that engineers experienced higher occupational role stress than doctors, and Type A personalities experienced higher occupational role stress than Type B personalities.

A number of personality traits have been associated with burnout Low levels of hardiness, external locus of control, avoidant coping styles, low self esteem and Type A behaviour among other things, have all been related to high levels of burnout (Burke and Richardson, 2001; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Brief (1980) concluded that stress and burnout can be easily induced in a Type A person, but less so in a Type B person.

Stephen and Lorraine (1985) found that cellain personality factors like high workaholism and Type A personality were correlated to burnout factors (e.g. high depersonalization, high emotional exhaustion).

Gioacchino (1997) studied burnout and Type a behaviour of teachers and nurses and found that Type A scores were correlated positively with scores on burnout and negatively with ratings of job satisfaction. Another study was conducted by Anton (1997) to see the relation between mental and physical health, Type behaviour and burnout among elementary school teachers. Findings generally support previous results revealing a relation between burnout and health problems. Women reported more frequent health problems

and less involvement in work and Type behaviour is more related to burnout among women.

Jamal and Vishwanath (2001) examined the relationship between Type A behaviour and job performance and employees' well being among college teachers. Well being was operational in terms of burnout. They found that Type A behaviour was positively correlated with burnout and negatively with work satisfaction.

### BURNOUT

The term burnout was first coined by the Herbert Freudenberg 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 people 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.

Both the terms stress and burnout have significant difference in their characteristics. Stress is characterized by over engagement whereas burnout is characterized by disengagement. In stress emotions are overactive whereas in burnout emotions are blunted. Stress produces urgency and hyperactivity whereas burnout produces helplessness and hopelessness. Stress shows loss of energy whereas burnout shows loss of motivation, ideals and hope. Stress leads to anxiety disorders whereas burnout leads to detachment and depression. In stress primary damage is physical whereas in burnout primary damage in emotional. Ultimately stress may kill a person prematurely whereas burnout may make life seem not worth living.

### RESULT & DISCUSSION

In this paper the datas and results are analyzed and interrelated. 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 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**

**TABLE-2**

**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

From the analysis of variance table-1, 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 reveal 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 analyses also reveal that secondary school and college teachers did not differ significantly on depersonalization subscale of burnout.

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-2 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 higher degree of burnout than comparable groups. Results also indicate that secondary school teachers and college teachers did not differ significantly.

In this case the null hypothesis is rejected for job stress whereas it is accepted for burnout.

**TABLE-3**

**Summary of ANOVA for approach & avoidance coping strategies of teachers of primary, secondary & college cadres.**

Variables	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F-value
Approach coping strategy	321.36	2	160.68	3.94**
Avoidance coping strategy	1092.98	2	546.49	18.12**

**TABLE-4**

**Comparison of means & SDs of teachers and different cadres on approach and avoidance coping strategies**

Variables	Primary		Secondary		College	
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.
Approach coping strategy	45.40	8.46	47.68	6.73	47.50	8.17
Avoidance coping strategy	41.72	12.60	46.14	7.10	45.25	6.65

The analysis of variance for the effect of cadre on use of approach coping strategy is found to be significant [ $F = 3.94$ ,  $df = 2$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ]. A closer perusal of mean table indicates that teachers of secondary school [ $M = 47.68$ ] followed by college teachers [ $M = 47.50$ ] used approach coping predominantly as compared to teachers of primary school [ $M = 45.40$ ]. Results also reveal that a significant difference was found between means of secondary school teachers and primary school teachers. The mean difference between secondary and college teachers was not found to be significant.

In the case of use of avoidance coping strategy, a perusal of analysis of variance summary indicates significant difference among cadres [ $F = 18.12$ ,  $df = 2$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ]. An examination of means table indicate that teachers of secondary schools adopted avoidance coping strategy at a greater level [ $M = 46.14$ ] in



comparison to college [ $M = 45.25$ ] and primary school teachers [ $M = 45.27$ ]. A comparison indicates that secondary school and college teachers did not differ significantly.

So, we can say that secondary school teachers differ significantly from primary school teachers in use of both approach and avoidance coping strategy whereas the difference between secondary and college teachers is found to be non-significant. So here the null hypothesis is rejected for secondary and primary teachers whereas it is accepted for secondary and college teachers.

### CONCLUSIONS

The present study also investigated the role of sex, cadre and certain behaviour patterns in the experience of stress, burnout and ways of coping with stress. Though every effort was made to make the study comprehensive, inclusive and objective, the researcher came across certain limitations of the present work. As well, some new insights into the phenomenon were also gained with inviting attention for further research. In the present study, various standardized self-reports measuring tools have been used. However, any future research attempt may incorporate relevant objective behavioral such as measures absenteeism, turnover, poor teaching performance, inadequate social relationships with colleagues, conflicts with students, frequent complaints of physical symptoms, use of alcohol and tranquilizers etc. in order to arrive at a comprehensive picture of stress and burnout.

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