

A STUDY ON BURNOUT AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT-

Objective: Teachers are considered as the most important group of professionals for the future growth and development of any nation and also regarded as the key resource for an efficient school system. In the present era challenges of Indian educational system makes the real premises for teachers to experience burnout. Since burnout a work related problem which most of the professionals need to deal with. Therefore, this study aims to figure out the existence of burnout syndrome in teachers and to investigate its relationship with emotional intelligence.

Method: Sample of 240 teachers has been selected randomly from public and private schools from all the five districts of Delhi. Maslach burnout inventory developed by Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1996) was used to assess the burnout among teachers and the Emotional Intelligence: reactions to teaching situations (RTS) by Perry & Ball (2005) was used to measure emotional intelligence of teachers in the present study. Demographic factors, including type of school, level of teaching and marital status were examined to determine if they were explanatory factors. Descriptive statistics and Analysis of variance were used to analyze the data.

Results: The results exhibited a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and three dimensions of burnout. It was indicated that public school teachers exhibit less burnout and high emotional intelligence as compared to private school teachers. Further, senior secondary teachers show high burnout with low emotional intelligence as compared to their counterparts. Married teachers reveal less burnout than unmarried teachers. However, this group didn't show any significant difference in emotional intelligence.

KEYWORDS- Emotional intelligence, burnout, School teachers

INTRODUCTION:

Nowadays, burnout is majorly affecting to all members of professions, that includes the teaching profession as well. Freudenberger (1974) is considered to be the father of the concept of the burnout syndrome. The origin and development of "burnout" concept are well documented in the literature (Burgess, 1980; Freudenberger, 1974, 1975; Maslach, 1978; Maslach & Jackson, 1977; Pines & Aronson, 1981). It is defined as the experience of someone in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that has failed to produce the expected reward (Freudenberger & Richelson, 1980). According to Veninga & Spradley (1981), burnout is a debilitating psychological condition brought about by unrelieved work stress. A further compression of the term was advanced by Edelwich & Brodsky (1980), who restricted the use of the term to the helping professions. They recognized that burnout could occur in almost any profession but they emphasized that it tends to assume special intensity and character in the human services professions. Maslach is among the one who instigated the research on teacher burnout which was as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion refers in reduction of one's emotional resources and the feeling that one has nothing left to give to others at a psychological level. Depersonalization means insensitive and negative attitudes about the people one works with. A third aspect of burnout is the perception that one's accomplishments on the job fall short of personal expectations i.e. a perception which involves a negative self-evaluation.

Burnout has been attributed to external factors such as heavy job demands, inadequate training, poor communication, long working hours, inadequate facilities and internal factors such as low self esteem, inability to reach aspired career goals, low emotional intelligence (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Mostly people can cope up successfully with organizational stressors, whereas few are not able to cope up. It has been seen that burnout is the subjective response to external factors, rather than the external factors itself.

Burnout tends to afflict people who are highly motivated and idealistic when they enter their professions, expecting their work to give their lives a sense of meaning. It is a particular hazard in occupations in which professionals tend to experience their work as a kind of calling. Because of prior learning, family background, current life circumstances, job experiences, appraisal skills, coping resources, and various other factors, certain individuals may be more predisposed to burnout than others. What can be accepted is that individuals participate in shaping their own environments. Those who have stereotyped, long-standing patterns of interacting with the world may invariably set themselves up for burnout.

Many researchers have focused on the personality traits as the important component in the development of burnout (McCrae & Costa, 1986; Shirom, 1989). In a longitudinal study of teachers by Jackson and Schuler (1986), no job conditions predictive of later burnout were found. Such null results open the door for the hypothesis that personal qualities of the individual, in addition to qualities of the job, may predispose one to emotional burnout. One such personal quality of the individual is emotional intelligence. Salovey & Mayer (1990) are credited with developing the EI construct. It is defined as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth"

(Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Chabungbam (2005) has said that EI is the ability of a person to control impulses and persist in the face of frustration. Emotional intelligence is the awareness of use of emotions and their utilization within the parameters of individual cognitive styles to cope with situations and problems (Sanwal, 2004). In relation to physical and mental health, emotional intelligence is considered essential. Research evidences indicate that higher emotional intelligence is associated with less depression (Martinez-Pons, 1997; Schutte, Malouf, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim, 1998; Schembri, Stough, Hansen, Tuckwell, & Schweitzer, 2006) also associated with greater optimism (Schutte *et al.*, 1998) and greater life satisfaction (Ciarrochi *et al.*, 2000; Martinez-Pons, 1997). Various authors have theorized that high emotional intelligence would lead to greater feelings of emotional well-being (Goleman, 1995; Saarni, 1999; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). For example, Carochi, Chan & Caputi, (2000), posit that emotional intelligence may protect people from stress and lead to better adaptation.

Teaching by its nature demands that teachers demonstrate or display emotion they may not actually feel. Researchers, including Hargreaves (1994; 1998; 2000; 2007), Nias (1999), Fullan (1993) and Zembylas (2007), contributed to the understanding of the emotional nature of teaching and learning. They argue that teaching is emotional labour (Day & Gu, 2007; Hochschild, 1983) which refers to the “act of managing emotions and emotional expressions in order to be consistent with organizational ‘display rules’ defined as the organizationally required emotions during interpersonal service transactions” (Mikolajczak, Menil & Luminet, 2007). As such, the organizationally required emotions often clash with spontaneous emotions creating confusion, stress and masked emotions. Moreover, teachers are also expected to demonstrate unusual love and kindness to their students. They have to serve as the mentors and motivate students who are even unwilling to learn. These expectations lead to a kind of discrepancy between the expected and the actual emotion and thereby leading to emotional dissonance which is an aspect of emotional labor that is detrimental to one’s health and make them stressful and burnout.

Therefore, in the light of above discussion, an attempt has been made in the present study to examine the burnout of teachers and its relationship with emotional intelligence and what strategies can be applied to enhance emotional intelligence of teachers as it helps them to develop their attitude and behavior towards work.

METHOD

Participants: The participants of the present study were taken from the Delhi metropolitan city. A total of 47 schools were taken on a random basis (21 public schools and 26 private schools) from the five districts of Delhi i.e. west, east, north, south and central districts. A total of 292 teachers were contacted in these schools on their availability basis. Among them 240 teachers respond the questions properly. These teachers were segregated into 120 teachers each from public schools and private schools. Among each group, 60 teachers each of secondary and senior secondary grades were taken. Further in each group, 30 married and 30 unmarried teachers were selected.

Measurements: The Emotional Intelligence: Reactions to Teaching Situations (RTS) by Perry & Ball (2005) was used in this research to study emotional intelligence. It studies the four aspects of emotional intelligence i.e., identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and managing emotions. The reactions to teaching situations comprised of 10 items or situations which are presented in a random order. The ratings of the measure are made on a five point Likert scale labeled: ‘Never Likely’, ‘Seldom Likely’, ‘Sometimes Likely’, ‘Usually Likely’ and ‘Always Likely’. The items were scored in a unidirectional way i.e. items were given a score of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for ‘never likely’, ‘seldom likely’, ‘sometimes likely’, ‘usually likely’ and ‘always likely’, respectively. Scores on all the answers were summed up to obtain total score of an individual. High scores obtained by the individual indicate high emotional intelligence and low scores indicates low emotional intelligence of an individual. The alpha reliability of the measure is 0.82 and compared successfully with other measures, such as Bar-On’s EQ-I. High scores obtained by the individual indicate high emotional intelligence and low scores indicates low emotional intelligence of an individual.

Maslach Burnout inventory developed by Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1996) was used to measure burnout. It comprises of 22 items. Participants were asked to fill out a background information sheet and respond to the intensity dimension of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (22 items) (Maslach C, Jackson SE. (1986, and 1981). Participants were requested to evaluate each item in terms of the frequency of their feelings ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). The items are scored into the three components of emotional exhaustion, depersonalizations and personal accomplishment. . The test-retest reliability coefficients for the subscales of the MBI are 0.82 (frequency) for Emotional Exhaustion, 0.60 (frequency) for Depersonalisation, and 0.80 (frequency) for Personal Accomplishment. High scores of the first two scales and low scores of the last scale are indicative of burnout.

RESULTS

Quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and ANOVA on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Ver. 23)

Table 1: Mean scores of the dimension of Emotional Exhaustion for different groups

Groups	Public		Mean of Means	Private		Mean of Means	Mean of Means
	Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		
Married	17.83	21.67	19.75	18.73	25.63	22.18	20.97
Unmarried	22.57	26.80	24.68	28.03	34.43	31.23	27.96
Mean of Means	20.20	24.23	22.22	23.38	30.03	26.71	
Mean of Means	Secondary Teachers: 21.79			Senior Secondary Teachers: 27.13			

Table 2: Summary of ANOVA of the dimension of Emotional Exhaustion

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F - Value
Types of School (A)	1210.5	1	1210.5	12.48**
Grade of Teachers (B)	1712	1	1712	17.66**
Marital Status (C)	2933	1	2933	30.25**
Type x Grade (AxB)	102.7	1	102.7	1.06
Type x Marital Status (AxC)	254.2	1	254.2	2.62
Grade x Marital Status (BxC)	.038	1	.038	.000
Type x Grade x Marital Status (AxBxC)	3.03	1	3.03	.031
Error (within groups)	22488.16	232	96.93	
Total	172323	240		

** P<0.01

The summary of three-way ANOVA has been reported in Table 2. F-values obtained for the main effect of types of school (A), grade of teachers (B) and marital status (C) were found significant (F = 12.48, 17.66 and 30.25, respectively; p <0.01), which indicate that all the three factors independently influence emotional exhaustion to a very large extent. The obtained F-values of the two way interactions of types of school x grade of teachers, types of schools x marital status, and grade of teachers x marital status were not found significant (F = 1.06, 2.62 and .000, respectively; p >0.05). Further, three-way (AxBxC) interaction of types of school, grade of teachers and marital status was also found non-significant (F = .031; p >0.05).

Table 3: Mean scores of the dimension of Depersonalization for different groups

Groups	Public		Mean of Means	Private		Mean of Means	Mean of Means
	Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		
Married	9.53	10.17	9.85	10.60	12.50	11.55	10.70
Unmarried	11.57	14.60	13.08	13.10	15.87	14.48	13.78
Mean of Means	10.55	12.38	11.47	11.85	14.18	13.02	
Mean of Means	Secondary Teachers: 11.20			Senior Secondary Teachers: 13.28			

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA of the dimension of Depersonalization

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F - Value
Types of School (A)	144.15	1	144.15	6.12**
Grade of Teachers (B)	260.41	1	260.41	11.07**
Marital Status (C)	570.41	1	570.41	24.25**
Type x Grade (AxB)	3.75	1	3.75	.159
Type x Marital Status (AxC)	1.35	1	1.35	.057
Grade x Marital Status (BxC)	40.01	1	40.01	1.70
Type x Grade x Marital Status (AxBxC)	8.81	1	8.81	.375
Error (within groups)	5457	232	23.52	
Total	42452	240		

** P<0.01

The above table shows the three-way ANOVA on the scores of depersonalization. The F-values computed for the main effects of types of school (A), grade of teachers (B) and marital status (C) were found significant (F = 6.12, 11.07 and 24.25, respectively; p < 0.01). Moreover, the two-way interactions of types of school x grade of teachers (AxB), types of school x marital status (AxC), and grade of teachers x marital status (BxC) were all not statistically significant (F = .159, .057 and 1.70, respectively; p >0.05). The F-value obtained of three way (AxBxC) interactions was also non-significant (F = .375; p >0.05).

Table 5: Mean scores of the dimension of Personal Accomplishment for different groups

Groups	Public		Mean of Means	Private		Mean of Means	Mean of Means
	Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		
Married	39.30	37.10	38.20	36.87	35.93	36.40	37.30
Unmarried	36.13	33.33	34.73	32.70	29.20	30.95	32.84
Mean of Means	37.72	35.22	36.47	34.78	32.57	33.67	
Mean of Means	Secondary Teachers: 36.25			Senior Secondary Teachers: 33.89			

Table 6: Summary of ANOVA of the dimension of Personal Accomplishment

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F – Value
Types of School (A)	467.6	1	467.6	9.58**
Grade of Teachers (B)	333.7	1	333.7	6.83**
Marital Status (C)	1192.6	1	1192.6	24.44**
Type x Grade (AxB)	1.2	1	1.2	.025
Type x Marital Status (AxC)	59	1	59	1.2
Grade x Marital Status (BxC)	37.6	1	37.6	.771
Type x Grade x Marital Status (AxBxC)	14.5	1	14.5	.297
Error (within groups)	11321.56	232	48.8	
Total	308619	240		

** P<0.01

As indicated by the table above, the obtained F-values for the main effects of types of school (A), grade of teachers (B) and marital status (C) were found significant ($F = 9.58, 6.83$ and 24.44 , respectively; $p < 0.01$). Whereas, F-values of two-way interactions of types of school x grade of teachers (AxB), types of school x marital status (AxC), and grade of teachers x marital status (BxC) were all found non-significant ($F = .025, 1.2$ and $.771$, respectively; $p > 0.05$). Further, three-way (AxBxC) interactions of type x grade x marital status were also found non-significant ($F = .297, p > 0.05$).

Table 7 Mean scores of Emotional Intelligence for different groups

Groups	Public		Mean of Means	Private		Mean of Means	Mean of Means
	Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		Secondary Teachers	Senior Secondary Teachers		
Married	32.07	29.90	30.98	26.47	25.27	25.87	28.43
Unmarried	32.23	25.97	29.10	26.17	25.03	25.60	27.35
Mean of Means	32.15	27.93	30.04	26.32	25.15	25.73	
Mean of Means	Secondary Teachers: 29.23			Senior Secondary Teachers: 26.54			

Table 8: Summary of ANOVA of the measure of Emotional Intelligence

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F – Value
Types of School (A)	1113.7	1	1113.7	36.29**
Grade of Teachers (B)	434.70	1	434.70	14.16**
Marital Status (C)	69.33	1	69.33	2.26
Type x Grade (AxB)	139.53	1	139.53	4.54*
Type x Marital Status (AxC)	39.20	1	39.20	1.27
Grade x Marital Status (BxC)	61.0	1	61.0	1.98
Type x Grade x Marital Status (AxBxC)	65.10	1	65.10	2.12
Error (within groups)	7119.36	232	30.68	
Total	195693	240		

*P<0.05; ** P<0.01

The above table shows the results of three-way ANOVA on the scores of emotional intelligence. F-value of the main effect of marital status (C) was found non-significant ($F = 2.26$; $p > 0.05$). However, F-values of the main effects of types of school (A) and grade of teachers (B) were found significant ($F = 36.29$ and 14.16 , respectively; $p < 0.01$). The obtained F-values of the two-way interactions of types of school x marital status (AxC) and grade x marital status (BxC) were also found non-significant ($F = 1.27$ and 1.98 , respectively; $p > 0.05$). However, two-way interactions of types of school x grade of teachers (AxB) was found significant ($F = 4.54$; $p < 0.05$). F-value of three-way (AxBxC) interactions of type x grade x marital status was non-significant ($F = 2.12$; $p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this research were discussed on the basis of three dimensions of burnout i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Results obtained on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization revealed that teachers of private schools differed significantly from teachers of public schools, showing greater degree of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than teachers of public schools. However, on the dimension of personal accomplishment, teachers of public schools showed higher personal accomplishment than teachers of private schools. In the case of emotional intelligence, teachers of public schools exhibited greater level of emotional intelligence than the teachers of private schools. Considering the definition of emotional intelligence by Cherniss & Adler (2000), as the basis for personal qualities such as realistic self-confidence, integrity, knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses, resilience in times of change or adversity, self-motivation, perseverance and the knack for getting along well with others, it can be said that public school teachers were better in all the spheres given by Cherniss & Adler, than private school teachers. It may sound odd because we don't have good images of public schools. But, public schools have completed a long journey to come at the stage where they provide better qualified teachers and better facilities for curricular and co-curricular activities. Public schools are providing ample of opportunities to their teachers by sending them in different workshops and seminars time to time, so that they can reflect on their existing level of performance and how they can further develop themselves. No doubt, all these activities help them to develop their emotional intelligence and lower down their burnout level. Beside this, teachers of public schools are provided as per their qualifications, conducive working environment, high career prospects and high prestige which are all indicators of better emotional intelligence. Another problem of role conflict and role ambiguity can also be seen in teachers of private schools that make them prone to burnout. Many teachers reported a sense of role conflict when inappropriate, incompatible and inconsistent demands are placed on them. When teachers cannot reconcile inconsistencies between these sets of expected role behaviors, they experience conflict. Firstly, they are expected to provide quality education for their students while they do not have at their disposal the best teaching materials. Secondly, they are held responsible for handling the discipline problems in their classes while they are not given the authority to do so. It bears evidence from the studies that role ambiguity has generally been reported as an important determinant of burnout (Bacharach, Bauer & Conley, 1976; Bensky *et al.*, 1980; Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982; Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982b; Tosi & Tosi, 1970). At a multidimensional level, role ambiguity has been shown to influence emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982).

Results of burnout for different grades of teachers revealed that senior secondary teachers differed significantly from secondary teachers, exhibiting greater amount of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization as compared to secondary teachers. Whereas, on the measure of personal accomplishment secondary teachers significantly vary from senior secondary teachers, showing greater degree of personal accomplishment as compared to senior secondary teachers. Further, on the measure of emotional intelligence results depicted that secondary teachers have high emotional intelligence than senior secondary teachers. It can be said, this group seems to be more successful in life as they know how to manage their emotional reactions, to neutralize or transform negative emotions and processes and gain new richness of experience. It could be seen that employees with higher level of emotional intelligence are assets to their organization.

Chan (2006) found that personal accomplishment could develop relatively independently from the burnout components through the influence of positive utilization of emotions in senior secondary teachers. It means that there may be greater burnout in senior secondary school teachers than secondary school teachers. Secondary teachers seem to be more resistant in times of adversity, self confident in the regulation and use of their emotions than senior secondary teachers. Senior secondary teachers may be overloaded with too many demands and get too little time and resources to meet those demands adequately. This overload can be the job complexity or work that is perceived as too difficult to complete satisfactorily. Senior secondary teachers consistently cited work overload as a major stressor in their jobs, important factors include: excessive paper work, oversized classes comprising students of heterogeneous academic abilities and the need to teach courses that do not match with one's particular skill area (Blase, 1986; Cedoline, 1982; Evers, 1987; Iwanicki, 1983; McLaughlin *et al.*, 1986; Sakharov & Farber, 1991; Weiskopf, 1980). Another major stressor for senior secondary teachers can be their lack of involvement in decisions that bear directly on their quality of work life. In general, they are permitted to give minimal input into the decisions that directly concern them (e.g., changes in policies and their implementation, curricula changes, student disciplinary action, etc) that affect their morale, job satisfaction and locus of control. Overtime, the cumulative effects lead to job stress and ultimately, to burnout. Participation in the decision-making process of the organization is regarded as a critical factor in maintaining morale, motivation, self-esteem and overall job satisfaction in working personnel (French & Caplan, 1973), and in minimizing role conflict and ambiguity (Maslach & Jackson, 1984). Moreover, there is more likelihood of increased burnout when the structural and the social dimensions at the workplace are incongruent with the work.

In case of marital status of teachers, results of burnout indicated that unmarried teachers were more prone to burnout as compared to married teachers. Whereas, in emotional intelligence it hardly makes any difference if an employee is married or unmarried. On the measure of burnout, it seems imperative to say that single individuals can be more responsive to psychological stress than married individuals as marriage and social support can work as a buffer against stress. At the time of stressful

conditions, married people may make themselves comfortable by talking to their spouse and spending time with their children. Whereas, unmarried people have less social network and they have to think on whom they can rely and can share their emotions. It is usually seen that in most families the single woman is expected to assume the responsibilities of every sort including caring of elderly parents. With this, financial expectation of the family members also increases which often results in financial burden, in addition, to the physical and emotional burden to the single earning women. Moreover, being single she has to face many 'ifs' and 'buts' of social norm and taboos which also work as a stressor for her. In fact, at the workplace too, they are often differentiated. The results are in support of the studies conducted by Maslach & Jackson (1985) found that unmarried (especially men) have an increased risk of burning-out compared to those who are married. In another study by Maslach, et al (1996) found that single people seem to experience even higher burnout levels than those who are divorced.

In burnout results, the analyses of the interactional effects between types of school and grade of teachers; types of school and marital status; and grade of teachers and marital status did not show any significant F-ratios, except in emotional intelligence, the two-way interaction effects between types of school and grade of teachers depicted significant interactional effect of the two. If we look at mean of means table 7, we shall find that secondary teachers if they are from public schools showed better emotional intelligence than other combinations. It can be concluded that types of school, grade and marital status of teachers though bring differences individually in the extent of burnout, but when their effects are combined together with each other, the combined effects dissipate.

The analysis of three-way interaction effects of types of school, grade of teachers and marital status also did not come to be significant. It means that any specific combination of the three variables together does not affect their emotional intelligence and increase the degree of burnout.

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