

Analysis of Stress and Burnout in Primary & Secondary School Male & Female Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Stress, like depression, is a universal experience. Both are generally self-limiting and may even prove to be beneficial in terms of personal growth. In some circumstances, however, stress and depression may become excessive or morbid, and lead to considerable disability. The association of stress with physical and psychological disorders has aroused much controversy over the years, but the particular subject of 'burnout' has received comparatively little attention in Britain. In the USA, on the other hand, job stress and the burnout stress syndrome (BOSS) have stirred up great interest, as demonstrated by the writings of Jones' and Cherniss. They suggest that a high level of occupational stress leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, with consequent loss of efficiency. The condition is thought to affect particularly those in the helping professions and in responsible administrative positions. Critics of the concept suggest that burnout is merely a trendy name for boredom or an alternative label for the midlife crisis..

KEY WORDS: Stress, depression, burnout stress

INTRODUCTION:

Issues of employee wellbeing have never been more important than now (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001). Research related to the happiness of employees is necessary; not only because of the happy-productive worker thesis, but also because of claims that many people are unhappy (Myers & Diener, 1997). Subjective wellbeing is an important indicator of the wellbeing of individuals (Kahn & Juster, 2002). Wellbeing could be considered in terms of different life roles, such as marriage, family, work and housing. Work represents an important context for studying the wellbeing of individuals, especially because it provides a source of income that impact on various life roles, and because it demands a significant part of individuals' time and energy. Work also ranks high among the determinants of life satisfaction. Unfortunately, work-related wellbeing has often been narrowly operationalised as job satisfaction. As a result, Daniels (2000) suggested that affective wellbeing is assessed. Affective wellbeing is regarded as multidimensional and could capture subtleties in experiences of work. Job satisfaction, occupational stress, burnout and work engagement are important dimensions of the affective work-related wellbeing of employees (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001). 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.

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

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 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 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 characterized 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:

Rajvir & Pradeep (2012) conducted a study to analyse the Job Stress and Job Satisfaction among different faculties of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalays of India. For the purpose two hundred and forty teachers (120 Male and 120 Female teachers which consists 30 Male and 30 Female teachers belonging to each faculty namely Physical Education, Arts, Commerce, and Science) were randomly selected for the study. The Collected data was analyzed and interpreted on the objectives of the study by using descriptive statistics i.e. Mean and Standard deviation. The data was also analyzed by using percentile technique of statistics. It was found that there is very low degree of Job satisfaction among and very much job stress among teachers of differences faculties of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas of India.

Bentea and Anghelache (2012) conducted a study aimed to test if were differences in the levels of job satisfaction varying with the gender, the professional position given by the level of continuous training held (through tenure and teaching degrees) and the dominant needs. The results did not indicate any differences between men and women in overall job satisfaction and its dimensions but satisfaction is affected by the level of continuous training. Also, job satisfaction was found to be influenced by the intensity of the needs of achievement and affiliation.

Bal and Visser (2011) in their study investigated the factors influencing the motivation to continue working after retirement. The findings revealed that organizational support and change of work role were positively related to motivation to continue working. However, contrary to hypothesis, organizational support and change of work role interacted negatively, such that organizational support was only positively related to motivation to continue working for those who wanted to conduct the same kind of work after their retirement.

Wagner and French (2010) studied motivation, work satisfaction and teacher change among the teachers. The results indicated that three facets of work satisfaction: supervisor support, the nature of the work itself, and co-worker relations were the significant predictors of intrinsic interest in professional development. The qualitative analyses also revealed the ways in which interactions between motivation, professional development activities, and work environment support or undermine change

RESULT & DISCUSSION:

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 [$F = 385.68$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$].

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 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.

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