

## Burnout among Secondary School Teachers with reference to Certain Demographic Variables

FARHANA AFSAR

Master's Student

Department of Education

Aligarh Muslim University, UP, India

DR. PUNITA GOVIL

Department of Education

Aligarh Muslim University, UP, India

SWATI GUPTA

Research Scholar

Department of Education,

Aligarh Muslim University, UP, India

### Abstract:

*The present study attempts to investigate the correlates of burnout of secondary school teachers. The study explored the burnout level of secondary school teachers with reference to certain demographic variables like age, gender, marital status and place of living. The study has been conducted on the sample of 300 secondary school teachers of Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has been used as a measure of burnout among secondary school teachers. t-test and analysis of variance have been employed to analyze the data. The findings of this study reveal that secondary school teachers have lower level of burnout in all three dimensions of burnout i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. It has also been found that secondary school teachers do not differ significantly on their level of burnout according to age, gender and marital status but they significantly differ according to their place of living. The study suggests that it is necessary to control this phenomenon seriously and to devise proper plan to decrease its consequences.*

**Keywords:** Burnout, secondary school teachers, age, gender, marital status and living place

### Introduction

Since the beginning of civilization human beings have been trying their best to achieve the goal of happiness, peace and stress free life. These are three parameters of prosperity in the present time. To

achieve this goal, human beings have been striving to develop specialized knowledge and expertise in technology. The race of excelling has given birth to unending competitions and challenges in our life. More explicitly stated, one has to compete oneself and with others in the organization. Even while competing oneself, one can't totally disregard the primary social institutions, such as the home and family, which have been nurtured over the years by human civilizations and valued deeply by the individual. We may subscribe to this view to a lesser or greater degree or we may totally disregard the prevailing dilemma, but we would be forced to agree on one basic point that 'modern life is pervaded with stress.

Stress in the present world is an inseparable part of one's life, irrespective of his or her social position and status. It is inevitably experienced by each one of us in different magnitude in our daily life. It is agreed that stress is necessary because without experiencing some degree of stress we would be lifeless and apathetic creatures. Stress is unavoidable and inseparable part because it is connected with the changes in one's life and increasing complexities at workplace in today's environment across the groups. In this most competitive era and fast pace of development, its impact has increased manifolds and its adverse effects in varying degree can be observed in almost every one of us. Basically, stress refers to sensations that everyone feels and which occur in response to events and situations that everyone faces in day to day life.

Burnout is defined as a negative psychological experience that is the reactions to job- related stress. It pertains to feelings experienced by people whose jobs require repeated exposure to emotionally charged social situations. Thus, it is an occupational hazard to which all members of helping professions are exposed, including teachers. As a metaphor, "burnout points the quench of candle or a fire; if fire does not receive adequate resources, it will be quenched after a while" (Schaufiel et al 2009).

Maslach and Jackson (1986) have conceptualized 'burnout as encompassing the tripartite components of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment'. Emotional exhaustion is a situation in which a person gets emotionally involved, overextends him or herself and feels overwhelmed by the emotional demands imposed by other people. As a result, he wants to reduce his contact with people. Depersonalization is seen to be an 'initial burnout phase' and is considered a precursor to the reduction in personal

accomplishment with both further generating the more advanced and the most severe conditions of emotional exhaustion. Basically, it is the state to look at individuals through rust-colored glasses or developing a poor opinion about them. The third aspect of burnout i.e. reduced personal accomplishment appears, when people begin to think that they are turning into the very type of person-cold and uncaring that nobody likes them. They start to feel a sense of inadequacy about their abilities. As a whole burnout has been associated with high absenteeism, ineffectiveness, interpersonal conflicts, lower level of productivity, lack of commitment, dissatisfaction with job, self esteem, turnover and an inability to take work seriously. It may occur among individuals who do “people work” of some kind. It is a response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing extensively with other human beings, particularly when they are troubled or having problems. Thus, it can be considered as one type of job stress.

Teaching can be considered a high-stress occupation. An education system has all the elements associated with stress such as a bureaucratic structure, continuous evaluation of its processes and outcomes, and increasingly intensive interpersonal interactions with students, parents, colleagues, principals and the community etc. In addition, increasing misconduct of students, student’s apathy, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate salaries, demanding or unsupportive parents, budgetary constraints, expanding administrative loads, lack of infrastructural support, and an increasingly negative public opinion have contributed to an embittered teacher force throughout the world. This develops some time stress, frustration and negative attitude, which results into teacher burnout. Good, C. V. (1959) defines teacher burnout as physical, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion that begins with a feeling of uneasiness and mounts as the joy of teaching begins to gradually slip away.

Literature on burnout appears to support the notion that effects of burnout are associated with many problems of teachers. This phenomenon has been intensively explored by various researchers.

Singh and Billingsley (1996) found factors such as stress, burnout, work overload, and job dissatisfaction contribute to teacher attrition while factors such as, administrative support, reasonable role expectations, and decreased workplace stress contribute to teachers’ intention to stay in teaching. Maslach and others (2001) tried to find out the burnout level in terms of marital status. The

findings explored that unmarried people especially men are more exposed to burnout than married individuals. It was also found that single, unmarried individuals show more features of burnout in comparison to divorcees. Dali's (2004) study revealed that there was no significant difference between male & female primary school teachers in terms of all burnout dimensions. Ioannou and Kyriakides (2007) indicated that if teacher suffer from burnout, he would have poor interpersonal relationships with colleague and students. Teachers are the key persons in the frontline to ensure the quality of teaching to provide to the next generation.

Vercambre and others (2009) found gender differences in burnout. Their study revealed that female teachers are more prone to high emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment whereas male teachers are more susceptible to high depersonalization. Brouwers (2011) tried to explore the relationship between age and teaching profession. He carried out the study on 311 physical education teachers and found that teachers have greater risk of falling victim to burnout as they grow older. Matin and others (2012) examined relationship between demographic variables and job burnout. The study revealed that the job burnout of employees in organizations may lead to the intention to leave the job. However, the researchers did not find any relationship between demographic variables (age, place of living) and burnout.

A perusal of the studies reveals that burnout has become a common phenomenon among professionals who deal with human beings. Burnout may be regarded the endpoint of coping unsuccessfully with chronic stress. Teacher's stress and burnout affect the lives of teachers and their families, students and their families and all of society. The present study is an attempt to find out the extent of burnout among teachers working at secondary level. The study aims at finding out whether prominent demographic variables specially age, gender, marital status and place of living affect the level of burnout among teachers.

Briefly, the present study is aimed at finding out the level of burnout among secondary school teachers in relation to their age, gender, marital status and place of living.

### **Research Methodology:**

This study has been conducted to study the level of burnout among

teachers at the secondary level in Aligarh District of UP. The descriptive survey research method has been employed to carry out the study. The sample of the study selected through purposive stratified sampling technique comprised of 300 teachers, teaching at secondary school level. The level of burnout among secondary school teachers was measured through 'Maslach Burnout Inventory' (1996). The scale contains 22 items and each item is rated on 7 point scale. The scale measures 3 dimensions of burnout i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The obtained data was tabulated and analyzed through SPSS 20. The following paragraphs present a detailed description and subsequent interpretation of results in accordance with the objectives.

### Results & Analysis:

The following table describes the burnout level among secondary school teachers:

**Table 1:-Descriptive statistics related to the burnout level among secondary school teachers**

Level of Burnout & its dimension	N	Mean	Mean (scale value)	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	Median	Mode	t	Sig. (p value)
Emotional Exhaustion	300	11.30 (26.90%)	23.5 (55.95%)	6.61	.38	11	12	-31.92**	.01
Depersonalization	300	6.19 (14.73%)	8.5 (20.30%)	5.84	.33	4.50	1	-6.86**	.01
Personal Accomplishment	300	41.96 (87.29%)	36.5 (76.04%)	7.52	.43	44	48	12.56**	.01
TOTAL	300	59.43 (45%)	-	-	.69	59	63	-	-

\*\* significant at 0.01 level

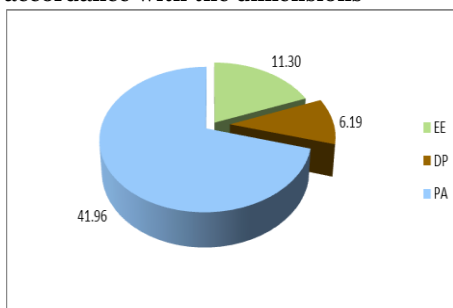
It is clear from the table no.1 that the mean (scale value) is 23.5 (55.95%) and the mean score of the sample is 11.30 (26.90%) at the dimension of emotional exhaustion, which implies that the burnout level among teachers at secondary level is low. The standard deviation is 6.61, which means that the score can deviate from the mean by 6.61 on both positive and negative side. The standard error of mean is .38, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by .38. Median (11) is the midpoint of the sample and mode is 12 i.e. the most reoccurring score in the sample.

At the dimension of depersonalization, the mean (scale value) is 8.5 (20.30%) and mean score is 6.19 (14.73%), which implies that burnout level among teachers at secondary level is low. The standard deviation is 5.84 and standard error of mean is .33, median is 4.50 and

mode is 1.

At the dimension of personal accomplishment, the mean (scale value) is 36.5 (76.04%) and the mean score of the sample is 41.96 (87.29%) which implies that the burnout level among teachers at secondary level is low. The standard deviation is 7.52, standard error of mean is .43 and median is 44 and mode is 48. At the total level of burnout mean is 59.43, standard error of mean is .69, median is 59, mode is 63. On an average the total level of burnout among secondary school teachers is 45%. Figure no. 1 also describes the level of burnout among secondary school teachers in accordance with the dimensions.

**Figure 1: Graphical presentation of average burnout level among secondary school teachers in accordance with the dimensions**



All the means of the sample i.e. emotional exhaustion (11.30), depersonalization (6.19) and personal accomplishment (41.96) were compared with mean (scale value), which is for emotional exhaustion (23.5), depersonalization (8.5) and personal accomplishment (36.5). For this, t-test for one sample was applied and the values reveal that the difference among the sample mean and scale mean is not by chance and actual difference exists between the two. Thus, it can be concluded that burnout level among secondary school teachers at Aligarh district is significantly low. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

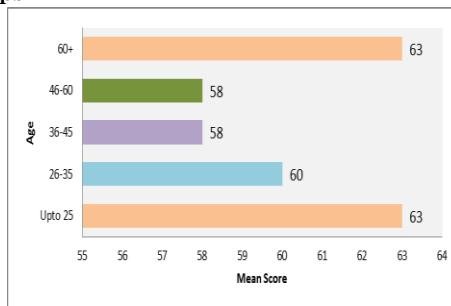
The following table describes level of burnout among secondary school teachers belonging to different age groups:

**Table no. 2:- Descriptive statistics related to the burnout among teachers at secondary level belonging to different age groups**

Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	Median	Mode	ANOVA	Sig. (p value)
Up to 25	31	63	9.66	1.74	63	63	1.257	.278
26-35	138	60	12.66	1.04	59	55		
36-45	82	58	12.54	1.38	57	54		
46-60	48	58	12.19	1.76	60	52		
60+	1	63	-	-	63			

The table no. 2 reveals that the mean score of secondary school teachers belonging to (up to 25) age group is 63, standard deviation is 9.66, which means that the scores can deviate from the mean by 9.66 on both positive and negative side. The standard error of mean is 1.74, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by 1.74. Median is 63 i.e. the midpoint in the sample. Mode is 63 i.e. the most reoccurring score in the sample. At the age group (26-35) the mean score is 60, standard deviation is 12.66. The standard error of mean is 1.04, median is 59 and mode is 55. At the age group (36-45) the mean score is 58, standard deviation is 12.54. The standard error of mean is 1.38, median is 57 and mode is 54. At the age group (46-60) the mean score is 58, standard deviation is 12.54. The standard error of mean is 1.38, median is 57 and mode is 54. At the age group (46-60) the mean score is 58, standard deviation is 12.54. The standard error of mean is 1.38, median is 57 and mode is 54. At the age group (46-60) the mean score is 58, standard deviation is 12.54. The standard error of mean is 1.38, median is 57 and mode is 54. At the age group (46-60) the mean score is 58, standard deviation is 12.54. The standard error of mean is 1.38, median is 57 and mode is 54. At the age of 60 the mean and median both are 63. Figure no. 2 also describes the burnout level among secondary school teachers belonging to different age groups.

Figure no. 2: Average burnout level of secondary school teachers belonging to different age groups



However the f-test was applied and it was found that the difference among mean scores is not significant ( $p \text{ value} > 0.05$ ). It also can be concluded that the teachers at secondary level belonging to different age groups do not differ significantly on their level of burnout. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The following table presents level of burnout among secondary school teachers in reference to gender:

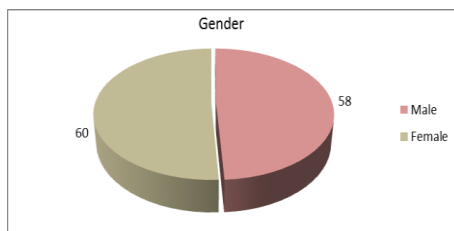
Table 3:- Descriptive statistics related to the burnout level of male and female teachers at secondary level

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	Median	Mode	t	Sig. (p value)
Male	96	58	13.27	1.35	58	63	-1.840	.067
Female	204	60	11.38	1.04	60	55		

It is clear from the table 3 the mean score of the male teachers is 58, standard deviation is 13.27, which means that the scores can deviate from the mean by 13.27 on both positive and negative side. The standard error of mean is 1.35, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by 1.35. Median is 58 i.e. the midpoint in the sample. Mode is 63 i.e. the most reoccurring score in the sample.

The mean score of the female teachers is 60, standard deviation is 11.38 .The standard error of mean is 80, median is 60 and mode is 55. Figure no. 3 also describes the burnout level among secondary school teachers in reference to gender.

**Figure no. 3: Average burnout level of secondary school teachers in reference to gender**



However, the t-test was applied to find out the difference between two mean scores, which is not significant ( $p$  value  $> 0.05$ ) and indicates that male and female teachers at secondary level do not differ significantly on their level of burnout. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The following table describes the level of burnout among secondary school teachers in reference to their marital status:

**Table no. 4:- Descriptive statistics related to the burnout level of unmarried and married teachers at secondary level**

Marital Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	Median	Mode	t	Sig. (p value)
Unmarried	97	61	11.94	1.21	60	63	1.115	.266
Married	203	59	12.12	.85	59	54		

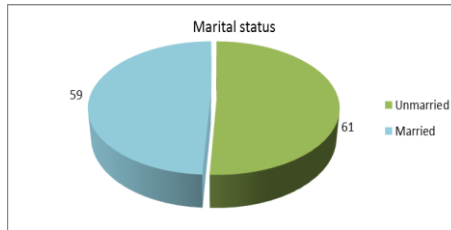
The table no. 4 shows that the mean score of unmarried teachers is 61; standard deviation is 11.94, which means that the scores can deviate from the mean by 11.94 on both positive and negative side. The standard error of mean is 1.21, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by 1.21. Median is 60 i.e. the midpoint in the sample. Mode is 63 i.e. the most reoccurring score in



the sample.

The mean score of married teachers is 59, standard deviation is 12.12. The standard error of mean is .85, median is 59 and mode is 54. Figure no. 4 also describes the burnout level among secondary school teachers in reference to their marital status.

**Figure no. 4: Average burnout level of secondary school teachers in reference to their marital status**



However, the t-test was applied and it was found that the difference between two mean scores is not significant ( $p \text{ value} > 0.05$ ) indicating that unmarried and married teachers at secondary level do not differ significantly on their level of burnout. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The following table describes the level of burnout among secondary school teachers with reference to their place of living:

**Table no. 5:- Descriptive statistics related to the burnout level among teachers at secondary level in reference to their place of living**

Place of living	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	Median	Mode	ANOVA	Sig. (p value)
Rural	14	53	16.80	4.49	54	40	6.22*	.05
Urban	262	59	11.87	.73	58	55		
Semi Urban	24	66	7.51	1.53	66.50	63		

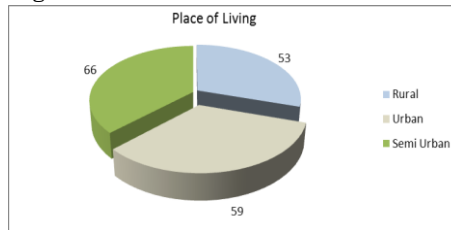
\* significant at 0.05 level

It is clear from the table no. 5 that the mean score of teachers at secondary level belonging to rural area is 53 and standard deviation is 16.80, which means that the scores can deviate from the mean by 16.80 on both negative and positive side. The standard error of mean is 4.49, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by 4.49. Median (54) is the midpoint in the sample. Mode is 40 the most reoccurring score in the sample. The mean score of teachers at secondary level belonging to urban areas is 59, standard deviation is 11.87. The standard error of mean is .73, median is 58 and mode is 55.

The mean score of teachers at secondary level belonging to

semi urban areas is 66, standard deviation is 7.51. The standard error of mean is 1.53, median is 66.50 and mode is 63. Figure no.5 also describes the burnout level among secondary school teachers in reference to their place of living.

**Figure no. 5: Average burnout level of secondary school teachers in reference to their place of living**



However, f-test was applied and it was found that the difference among mean scores is significant ( $p$  value $<0.05$ ) indicating that teachers at secondary level belonging to rural, urban and semi urban areas differ significantly on their level of burnout. It can also be concluded that the level of burnout among secondary school teachers belonging to semi-urban is highest followed by urban and rural respectively. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

### **Conclusions:**

The study leads to the following conclusions:-

- a) Burnout level among secondary school teachers at Aligarh district of UP is significantly low.
- b) It has been found that secondary school teachers belonging to different age groups do not differ significantly on their level of burnout.
- c) It has been found that male and female teachers teaching at secondary level do not differ significantly on their level of burnout.
- d) It has been found that unmarried and married teachers teaching at secondary level do not differ significantly on their level of burnout.
- e) It has been found that secondary school teachers belonging to rural, urban and semi-urban areas differ significantly on their level of burnout and the level of burnout of semi-urban secondary school teachers is highest.

## **Discussion:**

The study reveals that the burnout level among secondary school teachers has been found low at all three dimensions separately. Thus, it may be concluded that on an average the burnout level among secondary school teachers is significantly low.

The study has taken into consideration certain demographic variables (age, gender, marital status and place of living) and revealed that age, gender and marital status have nothing to do with burnout level. However, it has been found significant in relation to place of living.

In place of living, the teachers belonging to semi-urban areas have been found more prone to burnout than rural and urban teachers, it is just because of uncertainty of their living status as they neither belong to rural areas nor to urban areas.

The study reveals that teachers living in semi-urban area have higher level of burnout. On the contrary, people living at urban and rural area have lower level of burnout. The probable reason for such finding may be that people living at semi-urban area have to do lots of things for the sake of maintaining standards, which requires both money and energy. On the other side, teachers living at rural places do not bother about such consideration. Teachers living at urban places also have higher level of burnout in comparison to their rural counterparts. They have to meet out their ends, do various social obligations and also have to maintain proper standards of livings. Besides, in urban areas distance (between living place and working place) is also another criterion creating problems. All these features of urban and semi-urban life tear them apart. The whole life span is spent in meeting out the ends, then leaving them with higher level of burnout.

Besides, these causes, a number of factors like job dissatisfaction, organizational role stress, job insecurity, individual personality traits etc. causes may be responsible for higher level of burnout.

A number of strategies may be adopted in schools to enable the teachers to come out of this situation as it directly affects both qualitative and quantitative output. Overall environment of the school should be congenial. Flexibility should be the prevailing philosophy of the work place. There should be sufficient provisions for entertainment and relaxation. Duties to teachers should be assigned

in accordance with their capabilities and interest. There should be chances to grow and prove. Excursion, occasional trips, orientation programs etc. should be organized to refresh them.

Teachers are the backbone of the entire system of education. On their well-being (both physical and mental) depends the well-being of the learners. Every possible attempt should be made to make them free from burnout as only healthy teacher can execute his responsibilities in an effective manner.

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