

PERSONALITY AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CORRELATES OF BURNOUT AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS OF HARYANA

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Abstract

Present study was conducted to explore the personality and emotional intelligence correlates of burnout, for which 150 high school teachers (ranging in age from 26 to 55 with the mean age of 40.5 years) were selected from various Government and Private schools of Rohtak and Bhiwani Districts of Haryana. Selected teachers were administered with Maslach Burnout Inventory, NEO- Five Factor Inventory and Multi-Dimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence. Obtained data were analysed by applying descriptive statistics i.e. Mean, SD Skewness and Kurtoses to ascertain the normalcy of data; and Product Movement Method of Correlation, and Principle component Factor Analysis. Both Pearson's correlations and Principle Component Analysis have revealed Neuroticism, Extraversion and Conscientiousness to be significant personality correlates of Burnout. Among the components of Emotional Intelligence, Self Awareness, Managing Emotions, Motivating one-self and Handling Relations have marked significant relationship with teacher burnout. Measures of Personality and Emotional Intelligence have marked differential relationship with three components of teacher burnout.

Introduction

For over three decades, scholars have investigated burnout among various populations including social workers, educators, medical and mental health professionals, police personnel, child carers, lawyers, and customer service providers (Maslach et al., 1996). According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), burnout is an umbrella term that is used to describe a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs in response to the stressors and strains of occupational life. Initially, Freudenberger (1974) defined burnout as a specific psychological condition in which people suffer emotional exhaustion, experience a lack of personal accomplishment, and tend to depersonalize others. Subsequently, Maslach (2003) has refined burnout as job-related and "a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job". Researches (e.g. Maslach, 1982, 1993, 2003; Maslach and Jackson, 1986; Maslach et al., 1996) have identified three dimensions of burnout: (1) emotional exhaustion (feelings of being emotionally over-extended and exhausted by one's work); (2) depersonalization (feeling of impersonal response toward clients); and (3) a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (a loss of personal efficacy). Emotional exhaustion is a chronic state of emotional and physical depletion and closely resembles traditional stress reactions such as fatigue, job related depression, psychosomatic complaints, and anxiety. It can be reasonably conceptualized as a strain that results from work place stressors (Demerouti et al, 2001; Cropanzano and Rupp, 2003; Hogan & McNight, 2007). Depersonalization is a type of interpersonal distancing and lack of connectedness with one's coworkers and clients. Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a negative evaluation of self.

Empirical evidences suggest that burnout is a process that gradually develops across time (Leiter, 1993; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Schaufali and Enzmann, 1998; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000; Bhargav & Acharya, 2006; Holstein, 2008). The first stage is characterized by an imbalance between resources and demands (Stress). In human-service-occupations considerable amount of stress is caused by emotionally demanding relationships with recipients (e.g. pupils, patients, or clients) that may result in the depletion of one's emotional resources. Second, negative attitudes and behaviours are developed which constitute the depersonalization component of burnout. These attitudinal and behavioural negativities can be considered as defensive coping mechanisms. Third, in order to reduce emotional exhaustion, the burnout employee creates a psychological distance in an attempt to protect him or herself against the stressful social environment. However, this is an inadequate coping strategy that increases stress rather than reduces it because it reduces the relationship with recipients and aggravates interpersonal problems. Consequently, the personnel become deficient and ineffective in achieving his/her goals which further leads to feelings of reduced personal accomplishment and incompetence; and self devaluation or doubt. It constitutes the third component of burnout. Likewise, disillusionment may also occur which refers to a progressive loss of idealism, energy, and purpose experienced by people in the helping-professions as a result of conditions in their work". The initial idealistic expectations and noble aspirations are

regarded as built-in sources of future frustration, and therefore, a major cause of burnout (Edelwich of Brodsky, 1980).

Since its conceptualization, attempts have been made to diagnostically describe burnout in terms of uni-dimensional, two dimensional and multidimensional models. Attempts to simplify the diagnosis of burnout by creating one dimensional burnout instrument have failed. Enzman et al. (1998) examined a modified version of a burnout measure and found the single component conceptualization to insufficiently capture crucial aspects of burnout. Other researchers have reported inadequate validity of a two-dimensional burnout construct (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1993) while the validity of three dimensional construct has been convincingly demonstrated (Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Koeske & Koeske, 1989; Lee & Ashforth, 1990; Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1993; Maslach, 1993, 1996; Demerouti et al. 2001; Cook, 2006; Hogan & McNight, 2007; Schepman & Zarate, 2008). Therefore, now the researchers instead of attempting to examine the relationship of variables to burnout rather attempt to examine how various variables are differentially related to three components of burnout. The present study sticking to the same assumption is oriented to examine how the variables of personality and emotional intelligence are differentially related to three components of burnout i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and burnout.

Burnout has been recognized as a serious concern for employers in the social services and all other organizations (Schepman and Zarate, 2008). Burnout has been linked to negative cholesterol problems, headaches, diminished psychological well being, and other health concerns (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Kahil, 1988; Maslach 1993; Shirom et al., 1997, Schepman & Zarate, 2008). Combined with the personal health repercussions associated with burnout are organizational repercussions.

Burnout has been linked to intention to turnover, decreased employee commitment, and decreased job satisfaction (Jackson et al., 1986; Leitner & Maslach, 1988; Wolpin et al., 1991).

Most empirical studies on burnout have investigated the effects of organizational factors or job stressors (Coffey, 1999; Jamal & Babu, 2000; Sundin et al., 2006). Recently, authors have emphasized the effects of personality resources on the burnout process (Baker et al, 2006; Baramée and Blegan, 2003, Garrosa et al., 2006; Harrison et al., 2002; Honkes et al., 2003; Schmitz et al., 2000).

The second construct of interest is personality. It has been reported to be related to burnout (Piedmont 1993; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Grundy, 2000; Zellars et al., 2000; Singh & Kumari, 2006. Shimizutani et. al., 2008). Personality variables have been found to account for a significant portion of the variance in burnout scores (Grundy 2000; Singh & Kumari, 2006; Garrosa et al., 2006; Miner, 2007, Bagby et al., 2008, Shimizutani et al., 2008). Thus, burnout features may differ depending on personality characteristics of individual subjects.

The third variables of interest in the present study is emotional intelligence which has been conceptualized as a multi-dimensional construct as proposed by Goleman (1995, 1998), Salovey and Mayer (1990), Mayer & Salovey (1993, 1995) and Mayer et al., (2000). According to this conceptualization, emotional intelligence consists of “abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulses and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope”. Further research in this area have indicated that an emotionally intelligent person is likely to be skilled in two key areas – one, within one's emotional competence framework, namely “personal competence” – how one manages the self; and second, “social competence” –how one manages relationships. While the former essentially implies self-awareness (of internal states, preferences, resources, and inhibitions), self-regulation (of internal states, impulses and resources) and motivation (traits that facilitate accomplishing goals); the later comprises empathy (the ability to understand others' emotions, and other talents or skills needed to influence, communicate, lead, develop others, manage conflicts, promote team work, or catalyse change) and social skills such as expertise in inculcating desirable responses in others (Kierstead, 1999; Bhalla & Nauriyal, 2004).

Researchers (e.g. Salovey & Mayer, 1995; Nikolau et al., 2002; Ricca & Donna; 2003; Duran et al., 2005; David, 2006) have reported the inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout.

Most of researches on burnout have been carried out by industrial – organizational and occupational psychologists mainly to examine the effects of organizational factors or job stressors. Very little research on burnout has been carried out within educational setting. Recently, authors have emphasized to investigate burnout in relation to personal dispositions. The focus of present study is to investigate burnout among high school teachers of Haryana in relation to their personality, and emotional intelligence.

Method

Sample

Data were collected from full-time high school teachers of various private (duly recognized by State Govt.) schools of Rohtak and Bhiwani Districts of Haryana. Teachers from both the Govt. and private schools were included in the study with the assumption that their administration is regulated by the same rules, and regulations enforced by Commissioner Secondary Education (Haryana) and Haryana Board of School Education. The sample consisted of 150 full time high school teachers randomly drawn various schools of above mentioned districts. The sample consisted of both male and female teachers ranging in age from 26 to 55 years with the mean age of 40.5 years. The obtained data were clubbed when no statistical significant differences were obtained between Private and Govt. school teachers, and between male and female teachers in terms of their mean scores on burnout scale.

Tools Used

Following measures were used for data collection:

1. Neo-Five Factor Personality Inventory.
2. Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence.
3. Maslach Burnout Inventory.

Measures

Following measures were used for data collection:

1. The Neo-Five Factor Inventory (Neo-FFI) developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) consists of 60 items relating to personality dimensions of neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), Openness (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C). Cronbach alpha reliabilities for each of domains are reported between .86 and .92. There is a large body of correlational data attesting to the construct validity of the measure (McCrae and Costa, 1996).
2. Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence (MMEI) developed by Darolia (2003) consist of sixty five multiple response choice items indexing five dimensions of emotional intelligence viz., Empathy, Self-awareness, Motivating Oneself, Managing Emotions, and Handling Relations. On each item subject is required to check and report one of the five response choices that describes his or her behaviour the best. The internal consistency coefficients for five scales have been assessed in terms of alpha coefficients and were found to be ranging from .76 to .83. The construct validity of scales was established through factor analysis and found to be satisfactory.
3. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a paper pencil test consisting of 22 items and all the items are written in the form of statements about personal feelings or attitudes. It consists of three sub-scales: Emotional Exhaustion describes the feelings of being emotionally over extended and exhausted by one's work; Depersonalization describes an unfeeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's care and service; Personal Accomplishment describes feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Maslach and Jackson (1980) and Lahoz and Mason (1989) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients for the test varying from .71 to .90. Test-retest reliabilities vary from .60 to .82. Three scores were obtained to represent three dimensions.

Results and Discussion

To realize the main objective, obtained data were analysed by various statistical techniques. Frequency distributions and descriptive statistics i.e. Mean, SD, Skewness, and Kurtosis (Table- 1) were used to ascertain the normal distribution of data.

After ascertaining the normalcy of data, Pearson's correlations were computed among/between all the 13 variable used in the study (Table-1). Degree of freedom being 148 (N-2), correlation coefficient of .16 and .21 are significant at .05 and .01 levels of significance.

Table-I
Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

	N	E	O	A	C	SA	ME	Em	MO	HR	EE	PA	DP		
N	XX	-.18	-.01	-.18	-.28	-.20	-.30	.16	-.32	-.28	-.19	.12	.00		
E		XX	.28	.22	.51	.21	.13	.17	.26	.29	.25	-.23	.03		
O			XX	-.10	-.14	.02	-.09	.07	.06	-.01	-.07	-.15	.02		
A				XX	.34	.03	.18	.22	.25	.30	.14	.06	.03		
C					XX	.30	.22	.01	.51	.26	.20	-.28	.11		
SA						XX	.26	-.04	.37	.19	.15	-.04	-.09		
ME							XX	.00	.42	.49	.22	-.21	-.01		
Em								XX	-.03	.18	.14	.05	-.08		
MO									XX	.29	.16	-.17	.06		
HR										XX	.28	-.09	-.03		
EE			.16 p < .05								XX	-.24	-.14		-.14
PA			.21 p < .01									XX	-.20	XX	-.20
DP													XX		
\bar{x}	22.93	29.23	25.99	26.74	33.37	52.49	51.57	53.77	56.25	56.07	36.89	15.31	7.19		
SD	5.66	5.58	4.57	5.05	6.80	6.58	6.73	5.44	7.43	7.38	7.43	4.53	3.56		
Sk	.25	.05	.51	.11	.55	1.60	.33	.05	.43	.25	.95	1.11	1.12		
Ku	-.27	-.37	1.81	.57	-.05	7.83	-.31	-.29	.44	-.06	.77	6.77	3.43		

Perusal of inter correlations matrix reveals that inter correlations among five factors of personality (Neo-FFI) are ranging between -.28 and .51 seven of ten correlations are significant at or above .05 level of significance, of which 3 are negative and 5 are positive. Some significant correlations among measures of personality may be because of their association with some personality factors at higher order level.

Correlations between measures of personality and those of emotional intelligence are ranging from -.32 to .51. Seventeen of 25 correlations are significant, of which 13 are positive and 4 are negative. Neuroticism has marked significant negative correlations with four measures of emotional intelligence, namely, Self-awareness ($-.20 p < .05$). Managing Emotions ($-.30 p < .01$). Motivating Oneself ($-.32 p < .01$) and Handling Relation ($-.28 p < .01$). Unexpectedly, neuroticism has correlated positively with empathy. Extraversion has marked positive association with all the five measures of emotional intelligence. Agreeableness has correlated positively, with Managing Emotions (.18), Empathy (.22), Motivating Oneself (.25), and Handling Relations (.30). Conscientiousness has correlated positively with Self-awareness (.30), Managing Emotions (.22).

Motivating oneself (.51) and Handling Relations (.26). Unexpectedly Openness did not correspond significantly with any of the measures of emotional intelligence. Obtained correlations between two types of measures hereby posit that neurotic persons tend to lack the emotional skills for appropriate interpersonal interactions whereas extroverted, agreeable, and conscientious individuals tend to be emotionally apt in interacting with others.

Correlations between five measures of personality and three of burnout are ranging from $-.28$ to $.25$. Five of 15 correlations are significant. Emotional Exhaustion, a dimension of burnout has correlated negatively with neuroticism ($-.19 < .05$) and positively with extraversion ($.25 < .01$), and conscientiousness ($.20 < .05$). Reduced Personal Accomplishment has marked significant negative association with extroversion ($-.23 < .01$), and conscientiousness ($-.23 < .01$). Depersonalization has not marked significant correlations with any of the measures of personality. It has depicted the differential relationship of personality factors with the components of burnout.

Intercorrelations among five measures of emotional intelligence are in general positive depicting substantial amount of variance sharing among them and construct validity of the scale. Correlations between five measures of emotional intelligence and three of burnout are ranging from $-.21$ to $.28$. Five of 15 correlations are significant. Emotional Exhaustion has correlated positively with Managing Emotions ($.20 < .01$), Motivating Oneself ($.16 < .05$), and Handling Relations ($.28 < .01$). Reduced Personal Accomplishment has marked significant negative association with two measures of emotional intelligence i.e. Managing Emotions ($-.21$), and Motivating Oneself ($-.17$). Depersonalization has marked significant relationship with none of the measures of emotional intelligence. Obtaining correlations depict some amount of variance sharing between two types of measures. Intercorrelation among three measures burnout are in general negative depicting positive association among themselves.

Though, bivariate correlations reveal meaningful information about the commonality among variables, yet a precise picture of overlap can best be revealed through factor analysis. So, the 13×13 intercorrelations matrix was subjected to Principal Component Factor Analysis to understand the structure of overlap among various measures of personality, emotional intelligence, and burnout. Factor Analysis was undertaken by using unities in the diagonal of intercorrelations matrix (Hotelling, 1935). The Principal component Analysis with Kaiser's (1960) criterion of eigen values greater than 1.00 yielded five factors which accounted for 63.74% of total variance. In order to have more meaningful and interpretable solutions, the factors were rotated by employing Kaisers (1958) varimax criterion for orthogonal rotation. The rotated factor matrix is presented in Table -2.

Table-2
Rotated Factor Matrix

Variables	F A C T O R S					h ²
	I	II	III	IV	V	
N	.	.00	-.17	.06	-.05	.417
E	.25	.31	.22	.67	.04	.654
O	-.05	-.13	-.07	.78	-.02	.637
A	.26	.80	-.05	-.05	.13	.724
C	.58	.28	.07	.46	.23	.680
SA	.63	-.10	.01	.19	-.35	.571
ME	.56	.12	.47	-.22	.03	.593
Emp	-.36	.64	.22	.22	-.21	.683
MO	.74	.15	.06	.16	.08	.613
HR	.37	.44	.46	-.05	-.06	.556
EE	.10	.11	.76	.06	-.18	.640
PA	-.09	.26	-.60	-.31	-.48	.773
DP	.01	.03	-.11	.01	.85	.745
% Var .	18.44	12.01	11.86	11.83	9.58	

Perusal of rotated factor matrix reveals that all the five measures of emotional intelligence combined with two measures of personality i.e. neuroticism and conscientiousness have defined this factor (Factor-1). On the basis of nature of markers, the first factor is named as Emotional Intelligence. It has accounted for 18.44% of total variance. Obtained factor portrays the individuals who tend to be high in emotional skills such as motivating themselves, self-awareness, managing emotions, and handling relations. Unexpectedly, empathy has loaded

negatively here. Neuroticism and conscientiousness have emerged significant personality correlates of emotional intelligence. Overall, this factor depicts that school teachers temperamentally characterized as emotionally stable, calm, even-tempered, purposeful, strong-willed and determined tend to be emotionally apt in achievement drive, accurate self-assessment, self-control, conflict management but lacking service orientation to others.

Factor II highly loads on agreeableness followed by empathy, handling relations, and extraversion with respective loadings of .80, .64, .44, and .31 suggesting it to be a factor of Agreeableness. It has accounted for 12.014% of total variance. Obtained structure hereby depicts that school teachers characterized as altruistic, sympathetic and extroverted tend to be apt in understanding others, communicating with others, building bonds, and conflict management. Measures of burnout have not shared their variance substantially with the markers of this factor.

Factor III (Emotional Exhaustion) has been mainly defined by emotional exhaustion (.76) and reduced personal accomplishment (-.60) dimensions of burnout with contrasting loadings; and two measures of emotional intelligence, namely managing emotions (.47) and handling relations (.46). It accounts for 11.867% of variance. Obtained solution hereby depicts that school teachers who are apt in handling relations and managing their emotions tend to work hard to maintain their level of personal accomplishment which lead them to be emotionally exhausted. Measures of personality have not marked their association with this factor.

Factor IV (Extroverted Openness) mainly loads on three factors of personality viz. openness (.78), extraversion (.67), and conscientiousness (.46), and reduced personal accomplishment (-.31), a dimension of burnout. It accounts for 11.835% of total variance. Obtained structure depicts that school teachers temperamentally characterized as open, extroverted, purposive, and strong-willed do not tend to have reduced feelings of competence, productivity at work and self-efficacy. It has shed significant light on personality correlates of reduced personal accomplishment, a dimension of burnout.

Factor V (Depersonalization) significantly loads on two measures of burnout i.e. depersonalization (.85) and reduced personal accomplishment (-.48); and self-awareness (-.35), a measure of emotional intelligence. It has accounted for 9.584% of total variance. Obtained structure portrays the school teachers having detached or negative response to others, but intact personal competence at work, and self-efficacy; and lack of emotional self-awareness and self-confidence.

Conclusion

Findings of the present study have provided significant information about the personality and emotional intelligence correlates of teacher burnout. Both Pearson's correlation and Principal Component Analysis have revealed neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness to be significant personality correlates of burnout. Among the components of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, and handling relations have marked significant relationship with teacher burnout. Measures of personality and emotional intelligence have marked differential relationship with three components of teacher burnout.

Suggestions

The present findings have suggestive implications for the school administrators and managers for in-service clinical management of burnout among teachers to maintain optimal level of teacher effectiveness. Even at the time of recruitment, the candidates to be recruited as teachers can be screened for their burnout vulnerability in terms of their personality structure and emotional make up.

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