



## A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AND BURNOUT OF SECONDARY TEACHERS IN MUMBAI

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### Abstract

*In India, over the past few years, many new education systems have become popular and these follow different boards and different curricula. The schools that are affiliated to and authorized by these bodies showcase different academic and work environment. There is varied student enrolment and hence the expectation from the teachers also differs on different parameters as per the board and the philosophy of the institution. The difficulty level of the followed curriculum is also different. In the wake of this, the teachers have to put in diverse and wide-ranging efforts that put a lot of pressure on them from all the stakeholders, from employers to students. This affects the psychological wellbeing of teachers which in turn affects the wellbeing of students, their social and emotional behaviour and their overall performance. Hence, the researcher thought it was significant to assess psychological wellbeing of teachers and their level of burnout as these factors are important to protect their mental health and provide them with a positive work environment that helps them grow personally and professionally.*

**Key words:** Psychological Wellbeing, Burnout, Secondary Teachers.



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### Introduction

An eminent educationist referring to the teaching profession states, “Teaching profession should not be allowed to suffer from poverty, neglect, indifference and insecurity. A frustrated teacher is bound to produce frustrated personalities”. Teachers are a very important asset and play a very crucial role in every society, as they are the backbone of the educational system. If the teachers are overburdened, the society cannot expect proper output. Health is a prerequisite for every task. Everybody should be healthy and well in state of health to shoulder day-to-day responsibilities. Teachers cannot be an exception to this. Wellbeing is vital for teachers and should be given special attention, as teachers perform the special duty of preparing our youth to be ideal citizens who can face the challenges of tomorrow. Therefore, special efforts should be initiated for the wellbeing of teachers. Studies have proved that job burnout leads to adverse effects on one’s health. Job burnout has assumed increasing importance as it has been linked to health issues. (Maslach et al, 2001).

Wellbeing can be described in philosophy as what is ultimately good for a person. The concept of wellbeing is difficult to define since it includes affective, cognitive and motivational aspects of life experiences with subjective feeling of satisfaction. There are so many terms such as satisfaction, happiness, hope, optimism, positive mental health, and quality of life which are often interchangeably used as equivalent to wellbeing.

According to Nishizawa (1996) the term psychic wellbeing is generally interpreted almost the same meaning as ‘happiness’ along with one’s cognitive appraisal of how satisfying his or her life has been and is, also encompassing



positive future prospect of life, 'hope'. It also connotes integrative character of mental healthiness which is supposed to be composed of a certain set of stable traits of personality, moral belief system as well as stocks of psycho-behavioral resources connected with one's main life domains such as home, school or workplace.

In a study conducted by Ansari (2009), it was found that there is no significant difference on psychological wellbeing between male and female teachers, those working in government and private schools, those hailing from joint or nuclear families or those working in rural or urban areas.

### **Burnout**

The topic of burnout has been extensively studied with respect to the teaching profession. The job stress and burnout have become two buzzwords of our times. It is an increasing problem in today's society due to increased job tensions and job pressures to get more work done in a shorter period of time. It has become an important area of study in numerous disciplines because of its theoretical and practical importance. It was Freudenberger (1974) who first used the term. Earlier it was called 'depression' but he described it as a condition that manifests itself somatically and behaviourally. The symptoms include exhaustion, fatigue, cold, headache, gastrointestinal disturbance, quickness to anger, crying, suspiciousness, paranoia, overconfidence, substance abuse, stubbornness, rigidity, cynicism, spending increasing hours of free time at work and withdrawal from non-work.

Webster International Dictionary (1976) defines burnout as, 'to fail, wear out or become exhausted by making excessive demands on the energy, strength or resources.' It indicates that burnout is the state of emotional exhaustion related to overload.

Burnout among teachers is a syndrome caused by inability to cope with stressful occupational conditions characterized by low morale, low productivity, high absenteeism and high job turnover.

The purpose of the present investigation is to find the psychological wellbeing and burnout of secondary school teachers in Mumbai. The main variables of the study are psychological wellbeing and burnout.

### **Definition of the variables**

#### **Psychological wellbeing**

Levi (1987) defined wellbeing as a dynamic state of mind characterized by a responsible amount of harmony between an individual.

#### **Burnout**

Freudenberger and Richelson (1980) described burnout as a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward.

Singh, Jagsharan Bir (1999) had studied wellbeing of Navodaya Vidyalaya teachers in relation to their job burnout - The major findings were: Navodaya teachers enjoy good sense of wellbeing. They are not emotionally fagged out. They do not exhibit the fatigued feelings of being emotionally drained and overextended by their work. They also do not show negative and indifferent attitude towards their pupils.

Jamal, Reshma (2000) conducted research on psychological wellbeing and family adjustment in relation to socio-demographic variables among school teachers through a questionnaire scale. The major findings were that social supports and work supports factors were found to be significantly associated with the teachers of nuclear family, whereas the social stressors, work stressors, and personal stressors factors were found to be significantly associated with the teachers of joint family.



Hiregoudar (2009) conducted a study of psychological wellbeing of high school college and university teachers in relation to their work motivation and self-efficacy. The major findings were psychological wellbeing of school and college teachers is significantly related to some of the dimensions of work motivation and self-efficacy. College teachers with working spouse and those with senior grade lecturer designation have significantly lower psychological wellbeing compared to their counterparts. University male teachers have significantly lower psychological wellbeing than their female counterparts.

Patel, M. R. (2013) conducted a study on occupational stress adjustment and psychological wellbeing of government and non-government school teachers. It was found that Government school teachers have less occupational stress than private school teachers. Also, the more the experience, the less the stress the teacher faced.

Farber, B. A. (1984). Studied stress and burnout in suburban teachers. He found that stresses were related to excessive paperwork, unsuccessful administrative meetings and also because of fewer advancement opportunities in teaching.

Harpeet, S. (2016) conducted a research on stress burnout and health among teachers of university in Punjab and came out with the findings that the increasing level of stress and burnout among the academics in India has serious challenges for the Indian society. Unpleasant working conditions and lack of resources have been found to be a significant determinant of stress and thus poor health of teachers.

Zhou & Wen (2007) concluded that conflicts between teachers and school administrators probably lead to teachers' burnout. It included the conflict between overloaded work pressure under strict school management and teacher's call for flexibility, the conflict between redundant roles of teachers and lack of specific organizational objectives, the conflict between unfair evaluation and teachers' calls for fairness.

The review of the related literature made the researcher aware of the different angles from which the PWB and BO of teachers has been viewed by previous researchers and thus motivated the researcher to study PWB and BO of secondary school teachers in Greater Mumbai. The literature review thus helped the researcher to mould the objectives of the study, to frame an appropriate design and to adopt the statistical techniques suited for data analysis.

#### **Objectives of the study:**

- To ascertain the relationship between PWB and BO of secondary school teachers of ICSE, SSC and CBSE boards.
- To ascertain the gender differences in the following variables:
  - i. PWB
  - ii. BO
- To ascertain difference between the following variables on the basis of school boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and SSC.
  - i. PWB
  - ii. BO

#### **Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses have been formulated.

- There is no significant relationship between PWB and BO of secondary school teachers of ICSE, SSC and CBSE boards schools.
- There are no significant gender differences in the following variables:
  - i. PWB
  - ii. BO



- There is no significant difference between the following variables on the basis of school boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and SSC.
  - PWB
  - BO

### Scope of the study

Data for this paper was collected from 97 secondary school teachers teaching in various schools affiliated to three boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and Maharashtra board from Greater Mumbai. The study included only two variables i.e. burnout and psychological wellbeing.

### Significance of the study

- The study builds the relationship between the two variables i.e. burnout and psychological wellbeing.
- The results of the research will be useful to the educational policy makers as well as the school management for taking effective leadership decisions which will help to reduce stress among the teachers.
- The study will be helpful to the principal of the school in making effective plans which will reduce the psychological conditions of the teachers and provide them with a better organizational environment.
- The outcome of the study will help the teachers to know how to deal with the stress without experiencing burnout.
- It will also make parents understand that they should always maintain faith in teachers.

### Tools for Data Collection

The research has used the standardized tool on Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale and Copenhagen Burnout Inventory. The PWB tool consists of total 6 dimensions: Autonomy, Environmental mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose in life and Self- acceptance. The Copenhagen BO Inventory has three dimensions: Personal burnout, Work-related burnout and Student-related burnout.

### Statistical Techniques used for the Study

The statistical techniques used for the study were: Correlation, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between PWB and BO of secondary school teachers of ICSE, SSC and CBSE boards schools.

**TABLE 1**

### CORRELATION BETWEEN PWB AND BO

Variables	Mean	SD	r <sup>2</sup>	R	P
PWB	176.9175	24.9527	0.0831	-0.2883	0.004245
BO	41.0619	10.7081			

### Interpretation

The first null hypothesis was tested using Pearson's r. The obtained r was found to be 0.2883 which is significant ( $P < 0.01$ ) rendering the null hypothesis untenable. It may be concluded that there is a weak negative relationship between Burnout and Psychological Wellbeing of teachers from different schools affiliated to different boards. This means that if the PWB of the teachers is increased, it will lead to decreased levels of burnout.

These findings are in tune with the research findings in the study of Kareaga et al. (2009) where the researchers found that work variables such as work overload, lack of recognition and lack of career development were significantly



related to high levels of burnout and low wellbeing levels.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant gender differences in the following variables:

i) PWB ii) BO. This hypothesis was tested using t-test.

**TABLE 2**

**RELEVANT STATISTICS OF THE PWB AND BO SCORES OF FEMALE AND MALE TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT BOARDS**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	t-ratio	p value
PWB	Female	52	179.4231	+1.06	0.291832
	Male	45	174.0222		
BO	Female	52	45.3654	+4.7	<.0001
	Male	45	36.0889		

**Interpretation**

From the preceding table it can be inferred that the p-value is 0.291832 that indicates there is no significant difference between the psychological wellbeing of female and male teachers in ICSE, SSC and CBSE boards. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the PWB of female and male teachers. However, there is a significant difference in the burnout of female and male teachers. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The difference is clearly evident in the mean scores which are 45.3654 for female teachers and 36.0889 for male teachers suggesting that female teachers are more prone to burnout compared to male teachers.

This could be as a result of frequently getting tired or emotionally exhausted. The significant difference could also possibly be because of less cooperation from the family front. Often, female teachers have to perform all the tasks of a homemaker and look after children along with their jobs, whereas, male teachers may be less burnt out because they get less responsibility on the home front. The high burnout levels within them could also be because of feeling worn out physically at the end of the working day or being tired working with students.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between the following variables on the basis of school boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and SSC. (i) PWB (ii) BO

The hypothesis 3(i) was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**TABLE 3**

**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF PWB OF TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT BOARDS**

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	8878.616	2	4439.308	10.08	0.000109
Within Groups	40941.997	93	440.2365		
Total	49543.1563	95			

**Interpretation**

From the preceding table, it can be inferred that F-ratio for the degree of freedom 2 and 93 is 10.08 and p-value is 0.000109 at 0.05 alpha level. The F-ratio is significant and hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in PWB of teachers in ICSE, CBSE and SSC boards is rejected. There is a significant difference in the



psychological wellbeing between teachers teaching in CBSE, ICSE and SSC board schools. This implies that teachers in all three boards differ in their psychological wellbeing. The following table shows the relevant statistics of PWB of teachers from different boards.

**TABLE 4****RELEVANT STATISTICS OF PWB OF TEACHERS FROM DIFFERENT BOARDS**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	t-ratio	p-value
PWB	ICSE	30	181.6333	+3.9	0.000242
	SSC	33	161.2121		
PWB	ICSE	30	181.6333	-1.12	0.267034
	CBSE	34	188		
PWB	SSC	33	161.2121	-4.71	<.0001
	CBSE	34	188		

**Interpretation**

From the preceding table it can be inferred that there is a significant difference between the PWB of teachers in ICSE and SSC board schools. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis. The mean score differs i.e. 181.6333 for teachers in ICSE schools whereas 161.2121 in SSC schools teachers. This shows that teachers in SSC schools are more prone to burnout than teachers in ICSE schools.

There is no significant difference between the PWB of teachers in ICSE and CBSE board schools. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis.

There is a significant difference between the PWB of teachers in SSC and CBSE board schools. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis. The mean score 161.2121 for teachers in SSC schools whereas 188 in CBSE schools shows that teachers in SSC schools are more prone to burnout than teachers in CBSE schools.

This could be as a result of having the sense that one has not developed a lot as person overtime or it might be difficult for a person to voice their own opinions on controversial matters. There might not be as much exposure to teachers in the SSC schools as there would be to teachers from ICSE and CBSE schools. Their PWB might thus be compromised. Hypothesis 3 (ii): There is no significant difference between the following variables on the basis of school boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and SSC. i. PWB ii. BO. This hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**TABLE 5****ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF BO OF TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT BOARDS**

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	447.5361	2	223.7681	1.99	0.142
Within Groups	10573.8102	94	112.4873		
Total	11007.6289	96			

**Interpretation:**

From the preceding table, it can be inferred that F-ratio for the degree of freedom 2 and 94 is 1.99 and p-value is 0.142413 at 0.05 alpha levels. The F-ratio is not so significant and hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in BO of male and female teachers in ICSE, CBSE and SSC boards is accepted. This indicates that there is



no significant difference in the burnout between female and male teachers in CBSE, ICSE and SSC boards. This could possibly be as a result of similar perceptions of the teachers with respect to stress, fatigue and mental wellness.

### Major findings of the study

It has been concluded that there is a significant inverse relationship between BO and PWB of teachers in CBSE, ICSE and SSC board schools. However, this relationship is found to be weak.

The first null hypothesis was tested using Pearson's  $r$ . The obtained  $r$  was found to be 0.2883 ( $P=0.004245$ ) which is significant rendering the null hypothesis untenable. It may be concluded that there is a weak relationship between BO and PWB of teachers in CBSE, ICSE and SSC board schools. The table indicates that if the teachers are burnt out, their psychological wellbeing will be low. Or to put in other words, if the wellbeing of the teachers is raised, it will lead to happiness and less stress.

There is no significant difference in the PWB of female and male teachers teaching in SSC, ICSE and CBSE board schools. However, there is a significant difference in the BO of female and male teachers. It was found that female teachers are more prone to burnout than the male teachers. This could be as a result of frequently getting tired or emotionally exhausted due to multitasking at work and home. This could be as a result feeling exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work or when a person is frustrated with the continuous rigorous work. This could also as a result of feeling disappointed about their achievements in life or difficulty in voicing their own opinions on controversial matters. Another reason could be feeling worn out at the end of the working day or being tired working with students.

There is a significant difference in the psychological wellbeing between teachers teaching in CBSE, ICSE and SSC board schools. This implies that teachers in all three boards differ in their psychological wellbeing. It was found that teachers in SSC schools have a lower psychological wellbeing as compared to teachers in ICSE and CBSE schools. This could be because the work conditions and leadership in SSC schools might not be as supportive as in case of the ICSE and CBSE schools.

There is no significant difference in the burnout between teachers in CBSE, ICSE and SSC boards. This could possibly be as a result of similar perceptions of the teachers with respect to stress, fatigue and mental wellness.

### Suggestions

Burnout is a serious academic issue which increases the scope of research in the area of academic and student related stress or burnout. Teachers' burnout may be correlated with their socio-economic back grounds, familial conditions, teaching styles of teachers, school climate, parental involvement and many other personality characteristics. An intervention programme may be developed to reduce burnout and relieve them from severe emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and inefficacy. Educational policy makers are required to take effective leadership decision that will reduce the burnout among the teachers.

The principal shall provide effective learning environment and pace to the teachers which will help them to achieve the institutional as well as individual objectives. Stress management or coping mechanisms may be taken as an input in teacher education programs. These findings can also be used to develop special provisions to encourage the reinvigoration of teachers. At the same time, it is also important, that parents must retain faith in teachers.

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