

## **OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND BURNOUT AMONG ANGANWADI WORKERS**

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### **Abstract**

*In the present study, an attempt was made to study occupational stress and burnout among anganwadi workers. the sample comprised of 100 Anganwadi Workers selected randomly from various Anganwadi centres of Nilokheri Block. Their age ranges between 35-45 years. The sample was administered, Srivastava and A.P. Singh's Occupational Stress Scale. The data thus collected was subjected to correlation coefficient. The results indicated positive correlation between occupational stress and burnout. As the level of occupational stress increases, the level of burnout also increases among Anganwadi Workers.*

### **Introduction**

The modern world, which is said to be a world of achievement, is also a world of stress. One finds stress everywhere, whether it is within the family or business organization or any other social or economic activity. Right from the time of birth till the last breath, an individual is invariably exposed to various stressful situations. Thus it is not surprising that interest in the issue has been rising with the advancement of the present century, which has been called the "Age of Anxiety and Stress."

Stress is a part of day-to-day living. Although we tend to think of stress as caused by external events, events in themselves are not stressful. Rather it is the way in which we interpret and react to events that makes them stressful. People differ dramatically in the type of events they interpret as stressful and the way in which they respond to such stress. For example, speaking in public can be stressful for some people and relaxing for others. Occupational stress is now a major concern and will very likely to be so in the future. Stress in the work environment and its effects are not restricted to just the employers but also include the organizations that hire them. Occupational stress initially arises from the constituent factors of job and its psychological environment, Selye (1956) who is the father of modern stress research defined it as the "non-specific" response of the body to any specific condition which makes it up.

Anganwadi Workers usually work 24x7 in a week. All work in the Anganwadi Centers and have a more regular shift from Monday to Saturday. They often work for ODF at late night and early morning hours also. Anganwadi Workers are supposed to be on duty even when they are off duty.

Anganwadi Workers stressors have been divided into four categories (fuller 1990.)

- Stressors due to the nature of Anganwadi Workers work.
- Stressors resulting from departmental policies.
- Stressors dealing with the occupational system and social expectations about Anganwadi Workers conduct.
- Stressors resulting from psychological issues unique to each officer.

Work related stress is a serious problem; with the high stress level a person becomes burned out. Burnout is not simply excessive stress. Rather it is a complex human reaction to ongoing stress and it relates to feeling that your inner resources are inadequate for managing the tasks and situations presented to you. The signs and symptoms of burnout are similar to those of stress but burnout includes an emotional exhaustion and an increasingly negative attitude towards your work and perhaps your life. The American Institute of Stress defines burnout as “a disabling reaction to stress on the job.” Aside from being painful to the employees, burnout is expensive to the nation. According to the institute’s estimates the job stress costs the U.S industry \$300 billion annually, as measured by absenteeism, decreased productivity, employee turnover and direct medical, legal and insurance fees. The institute also reports that nearly half of all American workers suffer from symptoms of burnout.

### Method

#### Sample

The study consisted of a sample of 100 Anganwadi Workers. The data was collected from various Anganwadi centers of block Nilokheri. The sample includes Matriculation passed or above qualified workers.

#### Tool Used

**Occupational Stress:** This scale was standardized by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. A.P. Singh (1984). It consists of 46 items.

**Burnout:** The burnout scale was developed and standardized by “Freudenberger”. It has 15 items.

#### Procedure

Before the administration of the scale, the purpose of investigation was briefly explained and the Anganwadi Workers were encouraged to give the correct answers and were assured that the results would be kept confidential.

### Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the Mean scores of Occupational Stress and Burnout 59.38 and 41.73 respectively and the correlation between them is 0.49. This data shows that as the occupational stress increases the level of the burnout also increases. This is evident from research by Mayes (1996) on police officers, fire

Table-1: Mean Scores of Burnout and Occupational Stress

variables	Mean Values	Correlation Value
Occupational Stress	59.38	0.49
Burnout	41.73	Positive

fighters and electricians. He found the relationship among various job stressors and physiological symptoms and found that physiological depression leads to burnout and dissatisfaction in life.

Hans Selye the foremost researcher in work-related stress found that the Nanny is the most stressful occupation in America, even surpassing the formidable stresses of infant care.

Anganwadi Workers’s job is often regarded as an extremely stressful occupation and workers typically suffer a variety of physiological, psychological and behavioral stress. It has been argued that particular attention should be given to occupational stress in Anganwadi Workers as its potential negative consequences affect society more directly and critically than stress in most other occupations. Anganwadi Workers operating under severe and chronic stress may well be at greater risk of error, accidents and over-reaction that can compromise their performance.

Anganwadi Workers job is often considered as feminine job and females who are in this profession experience more job stress and burnout. They have to hold dual responsibility i.e. at home and in the field also. No doubt today's women have jumped into commercial sector but the harsh schedule and the environment of Anganwadi Workers has increased the stress level and burnout among them as compared to any other job. As the Occupational Stress increases mental health of the individual is adversely affected.

Research shows that there is a close relationship between occupational stress and burnout. People in service-oriented organizations such as teaching, healthcare, police or the military service, banking and insurance are more likely to face burnout than people who are in manufacturing or commercial organizations. If the environment is poor, the likelihood of burnout increases manifold. It has been seen in a large number of organizations that continuous exposure to stressors can produce the state of burnout. Being in the wrong career is also very stressful and can be frustrating. Many people are in wrong career. They are either tired of a career they once liked or they chose poorly in the first place. Others are in the career but in the wrong job. Either way, a change may be in order. It may involve a career in where you work.

### **Conclusions**

- As Occupational Stress increases, the likelihood of Burnout increases.
- There is a positive correlation between Occupational Stress and Burnout.

### **References**

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