

# Relationship between Empathy and Burnout among Indian Women School Counsellors

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**Abstract –** *Helping experts who work with individuals having unending pressure or illness will in general dismissal their very own selfcare needs when concentrating on the needs of clients. The negative psychological impact experienced because of prolonged period of stress in one's job is known as burnout. Burnout mainly consists of three components, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal efficacy. There have been previous researches that have inspected burnout among mental health workers, yet scarcely any of them have deliberately intended to study burnout among school counsellors. Given the measure of time kids spend in the school setting (7– 8 h for every day) and high national assessments of youth trauma presentation, this line of investigation is important. The reason for this exploration is to look at the connection between empathy and burnout among the Indian counsellors working in the school setting.*

## INTRODUCTION

### *Counselling*

The term counselling lacks concise definition past many years. In 2010, twenty nine directing affiliations including the American Counselling Association (ACA) and its 19 sub-divisions settled upon an accord meaning of advising which is as per the following:

20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counselling. (2010), characterized counselling as: "Directing is an expert relationship that engages different people, families, and gatherings to achieve psychological well-being, health, instruction, and vocation objectives"

There are monstrous difficulties looked by directing as a calling in the 21st century. These incorporates managing savagery, trauma, and emergencies; cooperating decidedly with oversaw care associations; advancing health; utilizing innovation shrewdly and adequately; advancing social equity and upholding for client needs; giving administration; and taking a shot at setting up a more grounded character for the calling.

### ***Role of School Counsellors and Challenges faced by them***

School counselling can possibly enable students to accomplish elevated expectations in their scholarly, vocation, individual and social development (House et.al., 1998). School counsellors are fundamental

individuals from the school. They mean to expand student accomplishment by helping them to apply scholastic accomplishment methodologies and to oversee feelings and apply relational aptitudes adequately.

There is a developing consciousness of the effect that the trauma has on the lives of youngsters concentrating in schools. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) distinguishes a few various types of traumas that sway youngsters including car crashes, genuine wounds, demonstrations of viciousness, psychological oppression, physical or sexual maltreatment, restorative techniques, the sudden passing of a friend or family member, and perilous cataclysmic events (National Center for Child Traumatic Stress, 2005).

Demonstration of viciousness, for example, school shooting that happened at Euro International School in Gurgaon in 2007 and street mishaps of school transport that dove into the chasm of mountains in Indian area in April 2018 are not many instances of traumatic accidents that have affected students and those engaged with it; in any case, advising experts distinguish the most inescapable danger of trauma to kids as not really the enormous occasions yet rather the ceaseless as well as fundamental savagery that occurs in or near and dear (Meyers, 2014).

In spite of the fact that school is a situation where youngsters spend most of their daytime hours, and

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trauma related side effects are relied upon to affect the students in the school environment, yet there is restricted data concerning the effect such traumatic mishaps have on those whose activity include offering help to kids in the school condition. It is significantly the job and obligation of a school counsellor who is qualified for offer help to the youngster amid such cases. Aside from horrible accidents, students with mental side effects, for example, issues with comprehension, emotionalcounsellor line, or learning difficulties in the school condition, are frequently eluded to the school counsellor.

School counsellors are quite often observed as a backup to the mission of schools. They are excluded from the fundamental part of the educational system. School counsellors and what they do are things that are prominently absent in numerous instances. This exclusion is a huge misstep particularly for students who are unique, burdened, quick or moderate, over accomplishing or underachieving, and the individuals who are minimized, or are in the minority. The significant activity and basic job of school counsellor is to advance value, openings, and ensure the child rights (Amateet. al., 2005; Bemak, 2000)

### **Burnout**

Burnout is characterized as "a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job" (Leiter & Maslach, 2004, p. 93). Burnout mainly consists of three components, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal efficacy. Burnout may result in negative self-idea, negative dispositions about work, and lost thinking about business related issues (Keidel, 2002). A few purposes behind the beginning of burnout in the work environment are proposed in the writing. These incorporate such factors as (a) low pay rates, (b) requesting plans, (c) fluctuating work shifts, (d) low social acknowledgment, (e) absence of monetary assets (f) job vagueness, and (g) troublesome client practices (Jenaro et al. 2007) The movement of burnout is steady and combined coming about because of emotional depletion (Canfield, 2005; Trippany, Kress, and Wilcoxon, 2004).

School counsellors give essential help to students, and are commonly the first reached by other school experts when students are known to encounter mental agony which thusly improves the probability that those counsellors will encounter burnout. (Ackerley, et.al., 1988) The compelling requests put on school counsellors will without a doubt leave students off guard in the sum and nature of administration that is given by the school counsellor, and in the meantime these requests can likewise effectly affect the counsellor also.

Significance of school counsellors is presently being perceived coming about which more school

counsellors are being utilized and advanced. The essential point of any school counsellor is to recognize and address different issues like kid misuse, tormenting, peer weight, tranquilize misuse and different components that goes about as close to home trouble for a child.

### **Empathy**

Researchers have contended that empathy fills in as a defensive factor against burnout in human service specialists since it takes into account successful correspondence cooperation's. Truth be told, the Empathetic Communication Model of Burnout offered by Miller et al. (1995) demonstrates that empathy encourages powerful correspondence with clients/patients, which in this manner anticipates burnout.

Empathy has its underlying foundations from the German word Einfühlung ("feeling into" something) that was utilized to portray a device for dissecting gems and nature. The exploratory analyst, Tichener (1909) interpreted it in English as empathy.

Davis (1983) portrays empathy as the "responses of one individual to the watched encounters of another" (p.113). Hoffman (2008) characterizes empathy as, "aemotional state activated by another's emotional state or circumstance, in which one feels what different feels or would typically be required to feel in his circumstance" (p. 440). This view is promoted by Eisenbergh and Strayer (1991) who fight empathy to be a real feeling that emerges when a person's emotional state is comparable, or in compatibility with another.

Empathy is viewed as a basic part of the human experience as it identifies with how people socially and emotional interface with each other (Goleman, 1995; Szalavitz and Perry, 2010). Rogers (1957) instinctively comprehended the need of empathy in a directing relationship, which has been confirmed by the comprehension of the physiology of the cerebrum (Badenoch, 2008; Decety and Ickes, 2009; Siegel, 2010) and approved in the advising writing (Elliott, Bohart, Watson, and Greenberg, 2011).

As per, Miller et al., 1995 empathy takes into account compelling correspondence between the counsellor and client. Empathy specifically has been viewed as the most significant angle to the counselling relationship (Norcross and Wampold, 2011; Rogers, 1957). Observational proof has uncovered that empathy prompts more noteworthy relational investigation and client self-divulgence (Kurtz and Grummon, 1972; Traux and Carkhuff, 1967; Traux and Carkhuff, 1965), clients sentiments of wellbeing (Greenberg, Watson, Elliot and Hobart, 2001), treatment life span (Kasarabada, Hser, Boles and Huang, 2002), and

generally speaking positive appraisals of counsellor and directing (Grigg and Goodstein, 1957). Moreover, meta-examination thinks about on treatment results have created powerful help for the utility of empathy in counselling (Elliot, Bohart, Watson, and Greenber, 2011; Greenberg, Watson, Elliot and Bohart, 2001; Kurtz and Grummon, 1972).

Skorup and Afresti (1993) recommended that burnout may happen in the advising setting as lost empathy for the client, which can appear as close to home trouble, a self-arranged reaction to upsetting boosts.

In spite of the fact that the develop, for example, empathy and burnout have been examined before by different analysts yet just few of them have explicitly focussed their examination on school counsellors and scarcely any investigations in Indian setting. . There is a need to look at the effect of burnout by order. It is essential to know whether some specific experts are at a higher danger of burnout just because of the idea of their calling and if so what might be the purposes for it. The point of the present research is to examine the connection between empathy and burnout among female school counsellors in India.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The prime objective of the study is to identify the correlation between empathy and burnout among women school counsellors.

## METHOD

### Procedure

The present research focus on studying the relationship between empathy and burnout among women school counsellors working in India for at least 10 years or more. For this purpose, total 136 school counsellors were selected to be part of the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and their consent to participate was obtained. All measures were administered in a randomized order. Finally, participants were then debriefed and thanked.

### Sample

The sample consist of total 136 women school counsellors currently working in Indian schools from at least past 10 years or more. As a part of inclusion criterion for the present research, only those participants were selected who had at least 10 years of work experience or more and were in the age range of 35-45 years. For this purpose, counsellors working in schools in the state of Delhi, Haryana and Chandigarh were selected for data collection. These 136 counsellors were working in their field since at least 10 years (or more) and were aged 35-45 years.

## Measures

A semi-structured interview schedule was administered to the respondents to elicit detailed information on socio-demographic profile, work profile, personal history of any past stressful life event and other relevant information.

*Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ)* by Spreng, R.N. et.al (2009) was used to measure empathy in the participants. The TEQ questionnaire consists of 16 questions, each rated on a five point scale from never, rarely, sometimes, often to always.

*Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)* by Maslach, et al. (1996) was used to measure burnout among participants in the present research study. The MBI is a 22-item self-report questionnaire, consisting of three subscales: (a) Emotional Exhaustion (b) Depersonalization (c) Personal Accomplishment.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was done using appropriate statistics from the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

- Mean and standard deviation was computed for empathy and burnout among school counsellors and normality test of the sample was done.
- To find out the relationship pattern among the scores of Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), Pearson's coefficient correlation was computed.

## RESULTS

**Following are the two result tables:**

**Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation (N=136)**

|                      | N   | MEAN  | STANDARD DEVIATION | SKEWNESS | KURTOSIS |
|----------------------|-----|-------|--------------------|----------|----------|
| Empathy              | 136 | 45.58 | 8.44               | -0.85    | 0.39     |
| Emotional Exhaustion | 136 | 20.12 | 10.30              | -0.09    | -1.28    |
| Depersonalisation    | 136 | 11.81 | 8.41               | 0.09     | -1.30    |
| Personal Achievement | 136 | 34.82 | 7.61               | -0.06    | -1.25    |

**Table 2: Correlations among all variables (N=136) where \*p< .05 \*\*p.< .01**

|                      | Empathy | Emotional Exhaustion | Depersonalisation | Personal Achievement |
|----------------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Empathy              | 1       | -.322**              | -.271**           | .385**               |
| Emotional Exhaustion |         | 1                    | .842**            | -.809**              |
| Depersonalisation    |         |                      | 1                 | -.752**              |
| Personal Achievement |         |                      |                   | 1                    |

## DISCUSSION

Findings of the present research study have indicated that burnout is significantly and negatively related with empathy (see table 2). It was found that empathy has an inverse relationship with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization while it is positively correlated with personal achievement. Results have been consistent with hypotheses. Existing research has also indicated that burnout is negatively linked with empathy. Thomas et.al (2007) observed an inverse relationship between perceived burnout (Maslach, 1993; Maslach et.al 1981) and empathy. Brazeau and colleagues reported that empathy scores (Hojat et.al, 2002) in medical students were positively correlated with scores on personal accomplishment, but inversely correlated with scores on the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scales of the MBI. According to Mehrabian (1972) there is existence of negative relation between level of empathy and professional burnout. Also significantly strong ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) negative relation between empathy level and emotional exhaustion level (EEX), depersonalisation (DEP) and loss of sense of personal achievements (PAR) was found for all respondents.

## CONCLUSION

Present study is constrained to correlational structure. Nonetheless, strong relationship has significant ramifications. School counsellors are an asset. To secure and bolster them in conceivable ways ought to be each school's essential objective. With respect to school counsellors, issues identified with pressure and burnouts have turned into a worry. Studies have demonstrated the nearness of burnout among emotional well-being experts. It is assessed that between 10-20% of school counsellors may not be happy with their employments which make them vulnerable to professional exhaustion and burnout (Wilkerson and Bellini, 2006). Despite the fact that school counsellors may get preparing to assist students with extreme introducing issues, they get almost no preparation in how to manage their very own pressure, which can prompt burnout (Emerson et.al, 1996). Empathy can assist counsellor dealing with troublesome circumstance and stressors at work bringing about burnout. Lobby and associates (2000) looked at empathy levels in an example of therapists and their self-report appraisals of their expert viability. It was discovered that respondents with higher scores on empathic concern and point of view taking, and lower scores on close to home pain announced more prominent fulfillment with their work.

Empathy plays a basic relational and societal job, empowering sharing of encounters, needs, and desires among people and giving an emotional extension that advances prosocial behaviour. This limit requires an impeccable interchange of neural

systems and empowers us to see the feelings of others, impact them emotionally and psychologically, to take in the point of view of others, and to recognize our very own and others' feelings.

The information demonstrates that emotional weariness and depersonalization results because of decrease in empathy. Accordingly, the most significant inference for school counsellors is to maintain appropriate levels of empathy. It is recommended that encouraging empathy aptitudes ought to be consolidated as a significant part in counsellor training so as to expand their adequacy so they are fit for battling circumstances prompting burnout. Hands on experience workshops and talks by experts on counsellor's empathy will be useful in creating mindfulness among counsellors to figure out how to manage burnout by being empathetic. Empathy is a noteworthy viewpoint that attracts people to helping professions and plays a pivotal job in understanding the level of others' experience. Empathy is an unpredictable capacity empowering people to comprehend and feel the emotional conditions of others, bringing about caring conduct. Because of comparative nature of work, the connection among empathy and burnout may likewise be significant to the other mental health occupations too. Future research should concentrate on longitudinal investigations to decide the components that may impact empathy and burnout levels to give a superior comprehension of these two key elements.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

These conclusions are of immense significance for the counsellors working in schools. School counsellors are more prone to experience burnout because of the professional stress involved due to the nature of their jobs such as role ambiguity, role conflict etc.

- 1) Although burnout has been studied before by other researchers but only few have specifically focussed their investigation on school counsellors and barely any studies in Indian context. There is a need to examine the impact of burnout by discipline. It is important to know if some particular professionals are at a higher risk simply due to the nature of their profession and if so what may be the reasons behind it.
- 2) The relationship between burnout and empathy has also not stated any clear results. Some researches show burnout as the main cause of decrease in empathy whereas other studies signify that being empathetic may lead to burnout. Also there are some research studies indicating that being empathetic may actually safeguard person from experiencing burnout and

empathy fatigue. Thus it is important to investigate the relation between empathy and burnout among school counsellors since theoretically they are expected to be negatively correlated with empathy

3) Findings of the present research study explain the important revelations for training school counsellors in order to increase their effectiveness. There should be small capsule courses or psycho-educational workshops creating awareness about burnout among school counsellors and offering them strategies to deal with it, thereby maintaining adequate empathy.

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