CHAPTER III
PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES
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Researchers have shown increasing interest in psychological burnout in organisations during the past few years (Shirom, 1989; Journal of Health and Human Resources Administration, 1984, 1986, 1989) because of its theoretical and practical importance. Another factor that motivated researchers is that it being a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism toward one’s work result from chronic organisational stressors (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Therefore, it caught attention of organisational researchers. In addition, it is also associated with alcohol and drug abuse and family and work-related problems (Dorian and Taylor, 1984; Violanti, Marshal and Howe, 1983).

Concern over job-stress and burnout condition has been especially evident among the health professions. The responsibility for human health and life, that is so often a part of those jobs, is believed to lead to high stress, which in turn takes a heavy toll on the employee’s own health and well-being (Hoiberg, 1982; Lewy, 1981).

Sarason (1977) has noted that detrimental implications of disillusionment in human service workers extend “far beyond the spheres of their individual existence.” A doctor, who wades in an unending stream of patients who are sick, upset, angry and frightened by their illness or its
implications, is especially at risk for burnout. Burnout among physicians does not affect them alone but also their tens of millions of patients as well. Therefore, medical professionals seem to be the most appropriate sample for the study.

The review of literature indicated the significant role of personal, organisational and socio-demographic variables on experience of burnout stress syndrome. The evidence is yet equivocal.

Amongst personal variables much of the work is done on personality factors in which various aspects of personality are studied with burnout stress syndrome (BOSS). Most of the studies have taken one or two aspects of personality as correlates of BOSS. Conceptual data concluded a burnout-prone personality with certain specific characteristics of behaviour pattern. Existing literature lacks the verification of burnout-prone personality as independent variable for BOSS in totality. Literature indicates the need for a study to find the effect of related behaviour pattern on BOSS.

Jayaratne (1991) analysed that the organisational variables appear to be strongly associated with job-satisfaction and burnout as compared to client factors. Researchers have already given much attention to the work-related factors of BOSS. A good deal of literature is available that how the work-related aspects, quantity and
quality of performance and attitudes related to job are affected by BOSS. Whereas the requirement is to study that how BOSS is affected by various available factors present at working conditions, like nature and type of job, workload etc. and to what an extent these factors affect the severity of the problem. The mere knowledge of association of various work-related variables with BOSS is not sufficient. There is a need to concentrate on finding out the effects of work-related factors on BOSS to provide directions for elimination of the causes of problem.

Present Study

Researches have come up with the assumption that years of experience on job and perceived nature of job are better predictors of BOSS. Hence, the need is to compile the years of experience and nature of job and study its effect on BOSS.

Socio-demographic variables related to background ethnic groups etc. have been established as non-significant factors of BOSS. Years of experience on job and sex-difference are found to be much relevant. 'Gender' differences have been studied quite extensively. However, the available literature for it is full of controversies and contradictions. The literature is observed in three categories—first category literature finds no significant difference in feeling of BOSS among the two groups. Second category establishes that emotional exhaustion is more severe problem among females, whereas, depersonalization is more a problem of males. Third
category reverses the second, finding and reports emotional exhaustion as more a problem for males and depersonalization of females. However, the third dimension of BOSS, i.e. reduced personal accomplishment, is still unsettled. This empirical contradiction suggests further exhaustive systematic study on the factor of 'Gender' as a predictor of BOSS.

Burnout requires empirical verification in the Indian setting. Doubts about its existence, degree of prevalence, causative factors and ideological influences can only be answered by relatively more organized and systematic research designs with comparatively more sensitive parametric analysis in the area.

Present study is planned in a multivariate factorial design to study the effect of Type A/B behaviour pattern, gender difference and job-level on BOSS. It would also study the association of some personal and job-related factors with BOSS. The design would help in finding interactive effects of the three independent variables simultaneously. Moreover, parametric analysis would enhance the predictive value of factors under study.

The present investigation would be carried out in three parts. First part would deal with 'causal' approach in which Type A/B Behaviour pattern, Gender and Job-level on BOSS would be studied. Type A Behaviour Pattern is almost similar
to the given burnout-prone-personality (Maslach, Pines etc. 1983, 1986, 1987). Its consideration as independent variable of study would verify whether the given specific personality characteristics really affect the BOSS and to what level they are significant.

The introduction of 'Gender' as an independent variable would come out with factors other than "women's work" and "men's work" and would contribute to the controversial literature on it.

Moreover, the 'Junior' and 'Senior' levels of doctors would not only serve as a 'within' variation among the same profession but also deal with the two important work-related factors of years of experience and nature of job in cumulative way. Among doctors, too, the 'junior' doctors, i.e. house-surgeons or registrars have to do more of case work, whereas 'senior' level doctors i.e. lecturers and above, are concerned more with consultative work. The work requirements in both the categories being different, the job-level would also be taken as an independent variable.

The second part of the study would deal with the 'associative' approach in which the relationship of BOSS with Organisational Role Stress, Hard-driving and Competitiveness, Job-involvement and Speed and Impatience would be found. The third part of the study would be focused more on
Job-involvement and Speed and Impatience would be found. The third part of the study would be focused more on objective-based analysis. It would consist of the analyses of the 'level' of scores on three dimensions of BOSS, 'variance' of total scores of Organisational Role Stress scale along with its equation to Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Reduced Personal Accomplishment.

AIMS AND HYPOTHESIS

Present research has been undertaken with the following aims.

- To explore the existence of BOSS in Indian work set-up.

- To study the impact of TA/B Behaviour Pattern on BOSS amongst medical professionals of North India.

- To study the 'gender' difference in BOSS among medical professionals.

- To study the effect of difference on job-level among medical professionals.

- To study the interactive effect of TA/B BP, Gender and Job-level on BOSS amongst medical professionals.
To study the relationship of BOSS with Job-involvement; Speed and Impatience; Hard-driving and Competitiveness.

To determine feasibility of Maslach's model in Indian set up.

To study the relation and equation of BOSS with ORS in Indian Work set up.

To open up new vistas for further research on the concept in India.

HYPOTHESES

The work has been carried out in the light of the work done by Maslach (1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981 and 1986), Maslach and Jackson (1981 and 1984). The present study seems to be almost preliminary in Indian context as multivariate studies on this variable seem to have not been undertaken. It is expected that there might be some cultural differences in the experience of such phenomena. Therefore, the hypotheses derived on the basis of work done by researchers in another culture may not be exactly applicable. Keeping in view the above factors, following hypotheses had been formulated -

1. Type A/B Behaviour Pattern' (TA/B BP) would have variable effect on the three components of Burnout
Stress Syndrome (BOSS) i.e. Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP) and Reduced Personal Accomplishment (PA).

2. 'Gender' would have variable effect on the three components of BOSS i.e. EE, DP and PA.

3. 'Job-level' would have variable effect on three components of BOSS i.e. EE, DP and PA.

4. 'Type A/B Behaviour Pattern' (TA/BBP), 'Gender' and 'Job-level' would have interactive effects on the three components of BOSS i.e. EE, DP and PA.

Hypotheses for Part-II of the study

5. "Organisational Role Stress" (ORS) may have relationship with the three components of BOSS i.e. EE, DP and PA.

6. 'job-involvement', 'Speed and Impatience', 'Hard-driving and competitiveness' may have relationship with three components of BOSS i.e. EE, DP and PA.

Since Part III of the study would deal with objective based analysis, no hypothesis is being formulated.