CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
6.1 SUMMARY

The term "Burnout" formed part of the everyday vocabulary. Some used it as an excuse, some as a badge of honour, while still others as a negative symptom of the time in a fast changing society. More often it was known to be a human malfunction caused by the continued, unresolved, and job related stress among normal employees, particularly in the service sector. It resulted in, once committed and dedicated persons, either abandoning their profession or remaining in the same profession, but not motivated to provide the effective services they once had. In recent years, the mushrooming of different specialities accounted for a sharp increase in the proportion of professionals, most of whom took refuge in an organisational setup, reducing their control over work. This heightened the potential for conflict between the professional and the organisation and the consequent burnout. Teachers were no exception. Especially, in the face of the increasing social and the institutional pressures on the teachers to perform their duties efficiently, making it necessary to understand the factors, which induced in them stress and their burnout.

The present study was designed to examine the psychological burnout among the teachers in special and regular schools, within the framework of Cherniss (1980a). Cherniss' (1980a) proposed that the burnout was experienced because of the dynamic interactions between the attributes of the individual and the institutional environment. The objectives of the research were:

6.1.1 OBJECTIVES:

(1) To examine the relationship of teachers' demographic factors with burnout and the outcome measures.
(2) To examine the differences in career orientations of teachers in special and regular schools and the subsequent experience of burnout.

(3) To examine the differences between male and female teachers of special and regular schools having varied levels of experience, on worksetting, personal and stress factors, burnout, and outcomes.

(4) To examine the relationship among the worksetting, personal, and stress factors and burnout in teachers of special and regular schools.

(5) To examine the role of worksetting, personal and stress factors in the burnout of teachers in the two types of schools, as proposed in the Cherniss model.

(6) To examine the relationship between burnout and outcome measures in teachers of special and regular schools.

6.1.2 HYPOTHESES

The main hypotheses formulated were as follows:

1. The demographic characteristics will be significantly related to burnout and outcome measures in teachers of special and regular schools.

2. The effects of gender, school type and years of experience will be significant on worksetting factors (leadership, stimulation, feedback, interaction with colleagues, orientation, autonomy, workload, reality shock, scope of student contact, social isolation, role conflict and role clarity) separately and interactively.

3. Teachers of special and regular schools will significantly differ in their career orientations.

4. Teachers of different career orientations will differ significantly in the level of burnout experienced in the two types of schools.
5. The effects of gender, school type and years of experience will be significant on personal factors (supports and demands) separately and interactively.

6. The effects of gender, school type and years of experience will be significant on stress factors (organisational climate, lack of stimulation and fulfillment, problems with students, bureaucracy, incompetence) separately and interactively.

7. The effects of gender, school type and years of experience will be significant on burnout factors (greater self-interest, reduced work goals, emotional detachment, emotional detachment from colleagues, lessened idealism, lessened personal responsibility) separately and interactively.

8. The effects of gender, school type and years of experience will be significant on outcomes separately and interactively.

9. There will be significant intercorrelations among the worksetting, personal and stress factors, burnout and the outcome measures in teachers of special and regular schools.

10. Worksetting, personal and stress factors will significantly predict burnout in the teachers of special and regular schools.

11. Burnout will significantly predict the outcome measures in the teachers of special and regular schools.

6.1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

An ex post facto $2 \times 2 \times 3$ factorial research design was used. Three main sources of variance were gender (A), school type (B) and years of experience (C). These provided for four types of interaction effects: gender $\times$ school type, gender $\times$ years of
experience, school type x years of experience, and gender x school type x years of experience.

6.1.4 SAMPLE

The sample was identified through a two stage procedure, namely, the schools and the teachers. The selection of schools was done by using purposive sampling, namely that all should be the government aided schools. Six regular and ten special schools were selected from the available list. At a second level, all the willing teachers were identified. The sample included 308 full time male and female teachers. There were 120 teachers from the regular schools, and 188 teachers from special school categories, namely, 58 from the mentally retarded schools, 59 from deaf and dumb schools, 56 from blind schools and 15 from the spastic schools. In all, the sample included 142 male teachers and 166 female teachers.

6.1.5 VARIABLES

The following variables were included in the research:

Matching Variables:

1. Gender - Males and Females.
2. School type - Special and regular schools.
3. Years of experience
   - Less experienced (<5 years)
   - Moderately experienced (5-10 years)
   - More experienced (>5 years)
Independent variables: These included the demographic variables (namely, age, marital status, socio-economic characteristics and the level of education), personal variables (career orientations, supports and demands outside the work), worksetting variables (leadership, stimulation, autonomy, workload, role conflict and ambiguity, role clarity, teaching orientations, scope of student contact, social isolation, interpersonal interactions, feedback and the reality shock), stress variables (organisational climate, problems with students, bureaucracy, incompetence and lack of stimulation and fulfillment).

Dependent variables: The burnout (reduced work goals, greater self-interest, lessened personal responsibility, lessened idealism, emotional detachment and emotional detachment from colleagues) and the outcome variables (psychosomatic symptoms and intentions to quit).

Since the analysis was done at two different levels, at one level, the demographic, worksetting, personal and the stress factors constituted the independent variables, while the burnout constituted the dependent variable. At a second level, the burnout was taken as an independent variable, and the outcomes as the dependent variable.

6.1.6 TOOLS

The scales were developed to measure the variables in the framework of Cherniss (1980a). In addition to these, some variables implicated in the previous researches, like, reality shock, and role conflict and ambiguity were included under worksetting factors (Jackson, Schwab and Schuler, 1986). The items developed were pretested, modified, and tested again till satisfactory. These were then factor analyzed.

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and the newly generated factors were renamed and used in the detailed analysis.

The tools of data collection were as follows:

1. Proforma for demographic characteristics to obtain information on gender, age, marital status, socio-economic status, years in teaching and levels of education.
2. Scale for career orientations, which included four career orientations (social activists, careerists, self-investors and artisans), as devised by Burke and Greenglass (1988).
3. Scale for personal supports and demands outside the work, developed new.
4. Worksetting scale included 47 items based on 12 dimensions, identified earlier. This was developed new. It contained 8 items drawn from the Role Questionnaire developed by Rizzo, House and Lirtzman (1970).
5. Stress scale developed on the lines of the stress profile scale for teachers used by Wilson (1979).
6. Burnout scale developed new.
7. Outcome scale developed new on the basis of Burke and Greenglass (1989). The reliability of all the scales developed was greater than .60.

6.1.7 FINDINGS

The findings were as follows:

1. The demographic characteristics (age, socio-economic status, marital status, and the level of education) of the teachers in special and regular schools were not related to burnout and the outcome measures. A mixed evidence was available about the relationship of demographic characteristics and burnout in the past. Thus the available researches supported as well as contradicted the present findings (Barad, 1979;
Belcastro and Hays, 1984). Despite the non-significant relationship a meaningful trend was observed indicating that the older teachers, and those having higher education experienced greater burnout. Teachers who came from higher socio-economic status felt more responsible for the students and were involved with them, but had become less idealistic over the years. In regular schools, though the teachers retained their original workgoals, except for the married one's, they also became less idealistic. Those teachers with higher levels of education had much higher intentions to quit teaching, but the actual turnover was much less.

2. The teachers in special and regular schools varied in their career orientations. Though, the teachers in two types of schools were comparable on the careerist orientation, artisans were found to represent the largest group (58 percent) of teachers in special schools. The results were in line with the expectations as there appeared to be a fit between the expectations of the individuals and the demands in the special schools. Self-investors as a group was comparatively small in the two types of schools. This was a positive finding indicating the dedication of teachers in India.

3. Self-investors experienced greater burnout as compared to social activists, artisans and careerists in regular schools, while in special schools the careerists, self-investors, artisans and social activists experienced similar burnout. These findings were unexpected and different from the previous researches (Burke and Greenglass, 1988), in which the social activists were found prone to experience burnout, and the self-investors were less susceptible to experience burnout.

4. The perceptions of the worksetting differed significantly between the male and female teachers in the two types of schools. Female teachers perceived their worksetting as more positive compared to their male counterparts. They perceived the
worksetting as more stimulating, allowing for greater scope of student contact and lesser conflicts. The results were in line with the expectations, and could be explained by using the arguments of teaching being a female dominated profession (Greenfeld, Greiner and Wood, 1980).

Teachers in special and the regular schools perceived their worksetting differentially, with teachers of special schools perceiving more workload, more intense and frequent contacts with the students, more social isolation and greater conflict than the teachers of regular schools. The results conformed to the findings in the past (Bensky, Shaw, Gouse, Bates, Dixon and Beane, 1980; Weisopf, 1980; DeShong, 1981; Shaw, Bensky and Dixon, 1981; Epstein, 1990).

Teachers, who were more experienced, perceived fewer interpersonal interactions but less of isolation and conflicts in both the special as well as the regular schools.

5. Lack of proper training, a worksetting factor, emerged to be a good predictor of burnout in teachers of special schools. The worksetting in special schools showed direct relation to burnout, and also indirectly through the stress score. The worksetting factors of workoverload, lack of orientation, lesser interpersonal interactions, more role conflicts were related to greater self-interest. Greater social isolation led to the reduction in work goals. Also those special educators, who faced more role conflict became emotionally detached.

For the teachers in regular schools, the relationship between the worksetting and the burnout was not significant. However, its association with burnout through the stress score was significant, implying that the worksetting was a necessary condition of burnout, but the stress provided the sufficient condition for burnout. These results
were found confirmed by the regression analysis, in which the worksetting factors did not emerge as significant predictor of burnout, though, greater social isolation, lack of feedback, and greater role conflict showed some relevance.

6. Female teachers had more demands to cope outside the work situation than the male teachers, and the demands were much greater for the less experienced female teachers. On the other hand, more experienced male teachers received lesser support from significant others, but they perceived lesser demands imposed on them. The results also revealed that the moderately experienced teachers in regular schools, and the less experienced teachers in special schools received lesser support.

7. The composite score on personal factors did not significantly relate to and predict the burnout in teachers. These findings were consistent with the previous researches (Constable and Russell, 1986; Russell, Altmaier and Van Velzen, 1987), but did not conform to the propositions of the Cherniss model (1980a). Despite the limited usefulness of personal factors, a few meaningful correlates of burnout emerged. The lesser support received from the family, by the teachers in special and regular schools, contributed to their reduced workgoals, while the excessive demands imposed resulted in their emotional detachment from their colleagues, and made them suffer from psychosomatic symptoms. In teachers of special schools excessive demands were found related to the lessened personal responsibility.

8. Male and female teachers differed in their experience of stress in the two types of schools. The results were consistent with previous research (Samad, 1986). Less experienced teachers were found to experience greater stress than the moderately and more experienced teachers. The findings also revealed that the teachers in special schools had greater stress than the teachers in regular schools.
9. The stress significantly predicted burnout among the teachers in special and regular schools. These results conformed to the previous findings (Shaw, Bensky and Dixon, 1981; Jackson and Schuler, 1983). Lack of stimulation and fulfillment, bureaucratic hindrances and incompetence had significant correlations with lessened personal responsibility. The significant stress predictors of burnout included incompetence, problems with students, bureaucracy and the organisational climate.

The significant correlates for the special school teachers were organisational climate and lessened personal responsibility, while the bureaucratic hindrances, lack of stimulation and fulfillment, and problems with students were related to emotional detachment. However, the lack of stimulation and fulfillment was found to be the only significant predictor of burnout among the stress factors. The findings of the research provided some support to the Cherniss model (1980a).

10. A moderate level of burnout was experienced by the teachers in special and regular schools. This finding was consistent with other researches in India (Jain, 1991; Joshi and Misra, 1992; Bagchi, 1993; Ratan, 1993; Misra, 1994). It could be attributed to the cultural style of responding to questionnaires, context and norms.

11. Male and the female teachers did not differ significantly in the experience of burnout. The moderately experienced teachers felt greater burnout, than the less and more experienced teachers. The findings made a departure from the trends of the previous researches, which reported that the less experienced teachers experienced greater burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981; Zabel and Zabel, 1982; Schwab and Iwanicki, 1982, 1984). Contrary to the expectations no differences were found between the teachers of special and regular schools.

12. In teachers of special schools, the lack of proper training and the lack of
stimulation and feeling of fulfillment were found good predictors of burnout. In case of regular schools, the lack of feedback, more problematic students, greater role conflict, bureaucratic hindrances, orientation, and levels of competence were significant in the prediction of burnout.

13. Teachers with moderate and more years in teaching were more vulnerable to psychosomatic disorders, like headache, stomachache, insomnia etc, compared to the less experienced teachers. Though the findings were in line with the expectations, these did not have much empirical support, because of the lack of researches using years of experience and psychosomatic symptoms as variables. The results revealed that the male teachers, with moderate years in teaching special children, were more susceptible to psychosomatic symptoms and greater intentions to quit teaching. No significant gender differences were found in the experience of psychosomatic symptoms and intentions to quit teaching. This finding had the support in Burke and Greenglass (1989).

14. There was a significant positive association between burnout and the outcome measures. In special schools, the burnout was found related to the psychosomatic symptoms and intentions to quit. This was in conformity to the findings of the previous researchers (Morgan and Krehbiel, 1985; and Jamuna and Ushashree, 1990). The burnout factors were good predictors of outcome measures (psychosomatic symptoms and intention to quit) in teachers of special and regular schools, accounting for a variance of 45 percent and 26 percent respectively. The results were in conformity to the previous researches (Burke, Deszca and Shearer, 1987; Burke and Greenglass, 1989a). In special schools, the relevant predictors of the outcome measures were lessened personal responsibility, emotional detachment, emotional detachment
from colleagues, reduction in workgoals and lessened idealism, while in teachers of regular schools lessened idealism was the only relevant predictor of outcome measures.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Some of the broad conclusions were:

1) The demographic characteristics of the teachers and the personal variables were not found important in the experience of burnout, unlike the Cherniss model.

2) The negative perceptions of worksetting induced excessive stress in teachers and resulted in their subsequent burning out in special as well as regular schools.

3) In the two types of schools, the male and female teachers experienced similar levels of burnout.

4) A moderate level of burnout was experienced by all teachers. Teachers in special schools did not experience burnout greater than those in regular schools.

5) Teachers in their midcareer were more susceptible to the experience of burnout, than the novices and those with longer experience in teaching.

6) Teachers in their midcareer experienced higher burnout, tended to become more vulnerable to the negative consequences of burnout both in special and regular schools.

7) The worksetting in regular schools was the necessary condition but the stress was the sufficient condition to cause burnout.

8) The worksetting of special schools alone as well as in interaction with stress the could predict the variance in teacher burnout.
9) An absence of sufficient interpersonal interactions and positive feedback, bureaucratic hindrances, greater role conflict and difficult and problematic students were good predictors of burnout.

10) Burnout frequently caused psychosomatic symptoms and intentions to quit teaching in teachers of special and regular schools.

11) Overall, a limited support was available to the Cherniss model in the present findings.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present study seem to have a number of pedagogy, theory, research and policy related implications:

6.3.1 Pedagogy: There was sufficient evidence in the data to indicate the gaps in the professional training provided to the teachers, especially the special educators, which resulted in their burnout. Almost all the special educators included in the study observed that their training programme was not relevant and useful in practice. Thus, the training programmes for the teachers should be improved drastically in contents and methodology. The National Policy on Education (1986) and National Policy Education Review Committee (1992) recognized the need for overhauling the teacher education system for the educational reorientation. The existing training programmes were quite weak on the dimension of the development of interpersonal skills to be able to relate to coworkers, administrators and students. This implied that well thought out teachers' training programme should be designed by the training institutes like District Institute of Educational Technology (DIET) and State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), besides the teachers's training colleges and institutes to
improve the efficiency of the teachers, and thereby preventing or reducing the chances of their burnout. The existing gaps in the teachers education programme may be filled by focussing on some of the points mentioned below:

(i) The teachers training programme should be made more reality oriented. There must be less reliance on theories, but more on practical knowledge and ability to innovate in the given situation. The National Policy on Education (1986) has also spelt out the need for this.

(ii) A noted gap in the existing training programmes was of inadequate interpersonal skills, which were fundamental to all education, inclusive of special education. Teachers required good interpersonal sensitivity and skills to understand their own emotional and motivational conditions and that of the colleagues, parents and students. This need was extremely high in special schools, as the poor training, in this area tended to increase the teachers' sense of inadequacy, self-doubts and other doubts. They needed to be given adequate practice to develop these skills and apply them during their professional training. This would require incorporation of new modules in interpersonal skills.

(iii) The existing training programmes failed to emphasize the organisational conflict situations and the needed resolution strategies, when in conflict with the co-workers or the administrators. A typical teacher trainee was trained to work in a school as such, but not as part of a bureaucratic system. Thus, when one went to the school, one found oneself in a conflicting situation. The teachers, during the training, must be exposed to a realistic school situation in which one had to be more than a teacher and ingrained with skills for achieving satisfactory conflict resolution.

(iv) In addition to the adequate and meaningful pre-service training programme,
in-service and refresher courses should be frequently organised for the benefit and growth of the teachers. Such programmes should be related to the specific needs of the classrooms. In-service orientation programmes should take care of the future needs of the teachers, update their knowledge and skills, evaluation of their work and follow up. Although, the National Policy on Education Review Committee (1992) has recommended the need for an in-service education programme once in every five or six years, for all teachers, but their was a need to increase the frequency of such programmes.

(v) The training programmes may incorporate some modules on various stress reduction and group support techniques. Teachers may be inducted in methods of workshops to be able to lessen isolation and enhance group support through sharing of problems and solutions.

The changes in contents and methods of pedagogy would be effective only when the school settings from which the stress emanates were also altered. A truly comprehensive approach to burnout would entail well coordinated efforts of the community, parents, administrators, teachers and their unions.

6.3.2 Theory and Research: The status of the theory regarding burnout in India was still primitive making it difficult to comment. The findings of the present research showed a weak support for the Cherniss model. Cherniss (1980a) indicated a significant association between the various panels of variables, namely the worksetting, personal and the stress factors, separately and together with burnout. The findings of the present research showed that the worksetting, personal and the stress factors separately were not sufficiently powerful to cause burnout. However, the interactions among these (worksetting, personal and stress factors) were found effective in the
prediction of burnout. This deviation in findings had implications for the Cherniss model, as these pointed out the 'culture specificity' of the model, since the Cherniss model was proposed and developed in West. It was perhaps not valid in the same form to the Indian context. This was more so because of the individualistic nature of the Western society, and the collectivistic orientation of the Indian society. The findings thus seem to extend support to the interactionistic perspective, which states that the causes of burnout did not reside solely in the individual or in the environment, rather it was a function of both the individual and the environmental influences. These results were supported by previous researches on burnout (Jain, 1991 and Dixit, 1992). It appeared that the model need to be modified to be more applicable and relevant to the Indian Social setting.

The finding of moderate level of burnout experienced by the teachers in the two schools, and particularly in the special schools indicated that they have had activities and people in the environment outside their work, which gave their life a meaning to develop their creative and humanitarian interests. The future researchers should thus attempt to identify the meaningful groups domains in a person's life such as the use of the existential perspective in understanding burnout (Pines and Aronson, 1988; Pine, 1990a; 1992b, 1994). Most researches in the past concentrated primarily on the work sphere (Cherniss, 1980a, 1980b; Farber, 1983; Freudenberger, 1980; Jones, 1981; Paine, 1981; Maslach, 1982; Pines and Aronson, 1988), but the belief of burnout being limited to work was not true. It also happened in other spheres of human endeavour which were imbued with existential significance, such as marriage (Pines, 1988), politics (Gomes and Maslach, 1991; Pines, 1992c), unemployment and corruption etc.
6.3.3 Policy: (i) The findings indicated that the negative aspects of the worksetting were related to stress and subsequent burnout among teachers. This should have strong implications for the policy makers. This aspect was to some extent covered by the National Policy on Education (1986). The policy stated that the involvement of teachers in the planning and management, and in creation of opportunities and atmosphere, were necessary to promote autonomy among them. In addition to these factors, other dimensions of worksetting like scope for feedback to teachers about their efforts, lessening of excessive paper work in the schools, increasing teacher-student ratio to facilitate interactions between the teacher and the students, and decentralization required the attention of the policy makers to make worksetting less stressful for the teachers, and thereby reducing the chances of burnout among them.

(ii) As discussed earlier, there was a need to implement the internship model of teacher training for special educators. The plea for which was strongly made by the NPERC (1992). This would help in the development of requisite skills and attitudes in the teachers.

(iii) Absence of sufficient opportunities for interactions with colleagues deprived the teachers the much needed support. The policy makers should look for mechanisms in-built in the system for the teachers to vent out their stress, anxieties and despair, like provisions for individual counselling or the formation of support groups.

(iv) The use of sectarian approach by policy makers to deal with the problems of the teachers was not effective. Rather, there was a need for a holistic approach in the policy which would include teacher education, structural aspects of the job and the monetary aspects.
6.4 LIMITATIONS

1. One of the major limitations of the present study was that it used the cross-sectional data, to examine a developmental model. As a result, it could not trace the impact of change over time in all its complexity, occurring within the dynamic interactions among the attributes of the individual teacher and their environment. The time constraints, made the longitudinal study impossible. The inferences about the causality were thus meager and limited.

2. The data were drawn from a Metropolitan city only because of which the findings had limited generalisability. It should be replicated on samples in different cities and in different types of schools.

3. Some of the questions in the study focussed on the administration of the schools, which were answered by many subjects reluctantly. Some of these may not be their honest responses. It may thus be necessary to cross check the responses provided by the teachers, by using additional methods of gathering data, such as the use of interview and critical incident techniques.

4. Cherniss model (1980a) did not consider the personality characteristics of the individual as important in the experience of burnout. These were also not included in the present research. However, it seems that it would be useful to incorporate the personality variables in the future researches. Further, teachers showing burnout could be asked to explain the causes from their own perspective.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHES

A few suggestions may be enumerated for further explorations:

(1) The use of worksetting, personal and stress factors resulted in a low prediction of
burnout, as there was conceptual interdependence among the burnout factors, and this was also shown by the data. The future research should thus focus to probe into the details of relationship resulting in improved methods of measurement of burnout.

(2) Since burnout has usually been described as a process, it will be of greater relevance to study it in a longitudinal study. The future researchers should attempt this, and also focus on the complex and dynamic interactions of the attributes of the individual and the environmental stressors on a sustained basis.

(3) Future research should address to the issue of burnout for different teacher groups and in different school settings, (tribal, non-tribal; rural, urban) settings to test the generality of the phenomena.

(4) Cherniss model was only weakly supported. The future researches should test the validity of the model on teachers at different levels and also on other professionals in the service sector to indicate conclusive usefulness of the model in Indian cultural context.

(5) The researchers should experiment with different methods to build a composite picture of the causal factors leading to the experience of burnout.

(6) The use of an interactionistic perspective may be helpful in the investigations on burnout. Future researchers may also differentiate across the different training programmes and attempt to identify the most and least vulnerable teachers groups and the school settings in order to discern clearly the causal factors of burnout.