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The Relationship Between Burnout Among Secondary School Counselors and Selected Personal and School Variables

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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SELECTED
PERSONAL AND SCHOOL VARIABLES**

Paula P. Johnson

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Lindenwood

University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

2000

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to: (1) assess the level of burnout and stress of public school counselors, (2) determine if public school counselors differed in the reported level of burnout based on selected personal variables, and selected school variables. A convenient, volunteer sample was used from 42 public school counselors in a suburban area of St. Louis, Missouri. The instruments used for the study were the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Form Educational) and a demographic questionnaire.

The findings suggested that that level of burnout in the sample was in the moderate range on the Emotional Exhaustion subscale and in the low range for both the Depersonalization and the Personal Accomplishment subscales. There was no statistically significant relationship between the level of burnout in school counselors and selected personal variables, and selected school variables.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Since burnout is extremely costly to society, burnout is the focus of much research. An abundance of information exists on the subject of burnout and stress. In the past two decades, these topics have been the focus of many conferences, articles, books, and seminars.

Pines and Aronson (1988) define burnout as the “state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in situations that are emotionally demanding” (p. 9). Maslach (1982) defines burnout as the “syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do people work of some kind. Burnout is the response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing with other human beings, particularly when they are troubled or having problems” (p. 3). The symptoms of burnout can be physical, intellectual, social, psych-emotional, and spiritual (Cedoline, 1982). Cedoline refers to job burnout as an “occupational hazard” and a “phenomenon induced by distress” (p. 17).

Stress on the other hand is defined by Cedoline (1982) as “any perceived event that causes a demand on one’s mind or body. The stressor can be physical or psychological, actual or imagined” (p. 1). Cedoline (1982) adds that “stress becomes a problem when it ceases to be healthy stimulus, but instead creates a burden the individual cannot handle without harmful effects.

The inability to cope with stress appears to result in lower worker morale, high worker absenteeism, impaired job performance, high turnover, and numerous physical illnesses (Cedoline, 1982). Cedoline adds that sixty to eighty percent of doctors’

caseloads are directly related to distress. Physicians can find no physiological foundation for ninety percent of the hypertension diagnosed in Americans today. The majority of lost work time is due to worker distress.

Stress becomes a problem when it ceases to be helpful. The burden created by harmful stress is certain to have detrimental effects on the individual and is thusly defined by physicians as distress (Cedoline, 1982).

How can stress lead to burnout? Stress can be beneficial if it triggers and improves performance. But, since stress is the body's physical, mental, and chemical reactions to all the things that surround it and impinge on it, stress can also be destructive and lead to burnout.

Burnout is the reaction to harmful stress. Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments that can occur among individuals who do people work of some kind. Burnout is the response to chronic emotional stress and with no support system when dealing with other human beings, particularly when they are troubled or having problems.

Much of the early research done on the subject of burnout focused on the burnout of individuals in the health care profession: physicians, dentists, nurses, and social workers. This research then spread to encompass teachers and principals; the two most obvious groups in another service oriented profession, public education. Research has now spread to encompass individuals in administration, public employees, and many others (Cedoline, 1982).

Counselors' burnout has been documented. (Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen, 1984) noted that the undefined nature of the counselor's role creates an additional source of

stress. The pressures of meeting deadlines, the lack of successes with clients, and the pressures resulting from intense interactions with people have all contributed to the stress placed on the counselor (Savicki and Cooley, 1982).

Much of the burnout on counselors stems from attempting to meet the many demands of the position and performing many nonprofessional duties (Olson and Dilley, 1988). Role conflict, role ambiguity, and quantitative overload were found to be the major sources of stress in a study by Sears and Navin (1983). These factors also were found to be major stressors in studies by Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen (1984) and by Hutchinson, Barrick, and Groves (1986). Counselors reported the highest level of role conflict, and the second highest level of role ambiguity, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization in a study of five groups (school counselors, teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, and reading specialists) of education professionals (Pierson-Huberty and Archambault, 1987). These findings are consistent with the other research done by Maslach and Pines (1987), Cherniss (1980), and Farber (1984).

Maslach (1982) states that it is important to look at the basic demographic data of a group when investigating the concept of stress and burnout. Factors such as age, gender, level of education, marital status, experience, and other school variables, when examined with the levels of burnout, may give the researcher an understanding of the factors that are associated with the risk of burnout.

Apparently very little research exists which investigates the link between the characteristics of counselors and their level of burnout. Research done by Etzion and Pines (1986) found differences in the level of burnout in men and women in the human service professions. Huberty and Huebner (1988) found that age was related to the level

of burnout in school psychologists, thus corroborating the results of an earlier study done by Cummins and Nall (1982). The understanding of any links, which exist between demographic factors and burnout, could be helpful so that in the future the level of burnout of school counselors could be better managed or controlled.

The rationale of the study is centered on the increasingly demanding role of the school counselor; and the importance of knowing the current status of the level of burnout of the counselors. The current study will determine the level of burnout of public school counselors in the St. Louis county districts. School counselors will self-report all information on the Maslach Burnout Inventory and on a demographic questionnaire.

The counselors are keys to meeting the needs of the youth of today. If the counselors are subject to much stress, they can not help others to deal effectively with their own stresses.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to assess the levels of burnout in public school counselors and determine if they differed in the level of burnout based on selected personal and school situation. The following demographics/personal variables will be examined in relations to burnout: gender, age, teaching experience, counseling experience, marital status, level of education. In addition the school type, counselor/student ratio school variables will be examined in relations to burnout.

School counselors will self-report all measures of burnout on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Form Educational) by Maslach, Jackson, and Schwab) (1996) and data on selected personal and school variables will be gathered from the demographic questionnaire.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The phenomenon of stress is not new. Stress has been recognized and carefully thought about throughout the major portion of the twentieth century. In 1908 Jacobson began his studies on stress. He used the term “muscle tension” rather than stress, distress, or burnout. Jacobson believed that people live in a tense world and the result is tension disorders such as high blood pressure, peptic ulcers, spastic colons, and premature heart attacks. He believed that through the avoidance of tension and the use of relaxation techniques, people could postpone the onset of tension disorders (Jacobson, 1978).

Hans Selye was a pioneer in stress research. Selye began to examine the body’s physiological reaction to stress in 1926. In 1977 he defined stress as “the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it”(Selye, 1977, p.7). Selye believed that individual could adapt to the stress but that over time the stress would cause the body to wear out quicker. He felt that people could not evade stress but should do their best to evade undue stress and to try to relax whenever possible.

Definition and Causes of Stress

There are many definitions of stress. They range from one-word, simplistic responses to complex medical definitions. However, they all appear to contain the same basic elements: the physical, emotional, and mental effects of dealing with too many people with too few resources and too little chance to succeed (Greenberg, 1984).

Farber (1991) provides the following definition and causes of stress:

“ Stress occurs when there is a substantial imbalance (perceived or real) between environmental demands and the response capability of the individual. As

environmental demands increase or an individual's response capacity decreases, the likelihood of stress becoming a negative experience-and ultimately effecting a burned-out state-becomes more probable." (p. 30)

With the effects of stress well documented, it is easy to imagine the overall effect these stressors have had on society. Stress caused more than 20 million people in the United States to suffer from hypertension. The majority of a physician's caseload appears to be due to stress related disorders (Cedoline, 1982). Paul J. Rosch, the president of the American Institute of stress and professor of psychiatry at New York Medical College, has stated that stress is a key reason for the exceedingly high cost of health-care. He adds that stress costs exceed \$200 billion a year in absenteeism, accidents, health-care insurance, and lost productivity. "It's causing unprecedented burnout, cynicism, sickness, and absenteeism, States Rosch (Hendrick, 1993). Rosch notes that the rates of alcoholism, suicide, accidents, and diseases like cancer are linked to stress and the incidence of these effects of stress are also on the rise.

Burnout and Stress

Farber (1984) best summarized the relationship between stress and burnout. He stated: ...it should be noted that both the popular press and the professional literature have often confused or equated "stress" with burnout. Though these concepts are similar, they are not identical. Burnout is more often the result not of stress (which may well be inevitable in the helping professions) but of unmediated stress-of being stressed and having no "out", no support system. (Farber, 1984).

Farber also noted that stress could have both positive and negative effects, while the effects of burnout are never positive. Farber also termed burnout “the most widely known stress-related syndrome affecting professional workers” (Farber, 1983, p.243).

Aronson and Pines (1988) described the relationship between stress and burnout in the following way:

Stress, in and of itself, does not cause burnout. People are able to flourish in stressful, demanding careers if they feel valuable and appreciated and that their work has significance. They burn out when their work has no meaning and stress continuously outweighs support and rewards. Welch (1983) defined burnout as experiencing too much or too little stress. The determining factor as to the amount of stress needed or tolerated is the individuals. Maslach (1982) depicted burnout as the result of stresses that arises from the social interactions between the helper and the client.

Freudenberger's View of Burnout

Freudenberger was the first to give an account of the “burnt out” syndrome. In a 1973 article, he described the physical and psychological states of certain volunteers who were working with drug abusers. This was actually a description of his own mental and physical condition while he was serving as a volunteer in a treatment center for drug abusers. Freudenberger (1974) summarized a “burnt out” condition as occurring most in the dedicated and committed....those who work too much, too long, and too intensely” (p. 161).

From 1973 to present, the term burnout has been used to describe the demoralization of human service workers (Farber, 1991). Farber noted that although there is no consensus definition of burnout, it generally is the result of worker's reacting to stress by

overworking to the point of collapse or a discrepancy in the worker's input (investment) and his/her output (satisfaction and gratification), both of which result in feelings of detachment, emotional exhaustion, and loss of feelings of concern for those individuals with which one works.

Farber (1991) added that true burnout, as opposed to tedium or other ailments related and similar to tedium, can only be found in human service workers. Only in the human service professions does the utilization of oneself as the tool in face-to-face work with needy clients provide the opportune conditions for true burnout.

Burnout Statistics

It is highly likely that teacher burnout has always been present, just called by other names: job dissatisfaction, demoralization, and discontent (Farber 1991). Teachers' morale was a concern of Waller (1932) who noted that large class sizes, isolation and loneliness, and community scrutiny and pressure could adversely affect teacher morale.

In 1979 a survey done by Learning found that 93 percent of all respondents had feelings of burnout ("Readers Report," 1979). Another survey done by Farber (1984) showed 77 percent of urban teachers and 70 percent of suburban teachers reporting feeling burned out sometimes during every month.

In a 1984 study, Birmingham found 54 percent of all teachers and 81 percent of middle school teachers were dissatisfied. In a 1987 survey Harris and Associates found 14 percent of respondents dissatisfied with teaching as a profession and 52 percent of all respondents had considered leaving the teaching profession. Goodlad (1984) found 31 percent of all respondents would choose teaching as a career again. In 1979 NEA survey

found that 44 percent of all teachers were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied and that 41 percent would either not or be likely not to select teaching again as a career.

Cedoline (1982) reported that estimates of teacher burnout range from a low of 10 percent to a high of over 90 percent. Farber (1991) reached the conclusion that between 5 percent and 20 percent of all teachers are burned out and that an additional 30 percent to 35 percent are seriously dissatisfied with the profession of teaching. Cherniss (1980) has suggested that every human service worker has experienced some burnout. Truch (1980) found that 90 percent of all teachers experienced some symptoms of burnout and 25 percent have experienced more serious burnout. Schlansker (1987) reported that up to 25 percent of teachers may be experiencing damaging levels of burnout. In 1986 Dworkin determined that between 28 percent and 37 percent experienced serious levels of burnout.

There is evidence that school counselors find their occupations to be almost as stressful as do teachers and other educators. Sears and Navin (1983) found that 65 percent of the counselors surveyed stated that their jobs were either moderately stressful or very stressful. Olson and Dilley (1988) stated that there is sufficient evidence that school counselors can not meet all demands placed upon them.

Causes of Burnout

The causes of burnout are relatively similar to the causes of stress. Burnout is caused by unrelieved and continued stress (Farber, 1984). Kyriacou (1987) adds that burnout is caused by prolonged stress. Pines and Aronson (1988) add that burnout is the result of work that has no meaning and the stresses of work are greater than the rewards of work.

Edelwich (1980) suggested the following as reasons for the high level of burnout among those in the helping professions: high initial enthusiasm and noble aspiration, lack of clear criteria to measure accomplishments, low pay for all levels of skill, education and responsibility, upward mobility only through administration channels, high public visibility and general lack of understanding and suspicion of occupation.

Pines and Aronson (1988) believed that the major cause of burnout was the work environment. If the work environment provided highly motivated workers with few rewards and many stressors, which could not be modified, failure of the workers was inevitable. This failure causes burnout because these workers care too much and have no other way to cope with the devastating experience of failure.

Maslach (1982) divided the causes of burnout into three categories. The three categories stem from involvement with people, from the job setting, and the personal variables.

Maslach referred to the involvement with people when she stated:

“The Dealing with people can be very demanding. It takes a lot of energy to be calm in the midst of crises, to be patient in the midst of frustrations, to be understanding and compassionate when surrounded by fear, pain anger, and shame. While some people can find the energy to do it occasionally, and some people have the resources to do it often...it is very hard to do it all the time.”(p.17)

Faber (1991) established three categories of sources of burnout. The first category is the individual risk factors including personality type, life changes, and various demographic factors. The second category is the organizational (job-related) factors, which include administration, clients or students behavior, violence, bureaucracy,

isolation, accountability, inadequate training, facility inadequacies, loss of autonomy, poor salary, and public criticism. The third category of burnout sources is that involving the role of the employee. This category includes role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload.

Symptoms of Burnout

Cardinell (1980) placed symptoms into two groups, the physical symptoms and the behavioral symptoms, while Spaniol and Caputo (1979) classified the symptoms of burnout into three categories similar to medical categories: first degree, second degree, and third degree.

First degree shows signs and symptoms of burnout are occasional and short-lived. By providing distraction such as rest, relaxation, exercise, hobbies, or "time out" one can successfully return to a normal level of job satisfaction. The second-degree symptoms become more regular, last longer, are more difficult to overcome. Normal attempts to rest and relax do not appear to be effective. After a night of sleep, the sufferer wakes up tired. Even after a weekend the victim is still tense and not ready to take on a full day's work without feeling tired. By the end of the week, the worker is exhausted and needs to dip deeply into his or her reserves to gain new energy. A cynical attitude develops and is usually directed toward supervisors, supervisees, and recipients of services or products. Mood changes are noticeable. Concern over effectiveness becomes a central and disturbing issue. At the third degree level symptoms are continuous. Often, physical and psychological problems develop that are not quickly relieved with conventional medical or psychiatric attention. Self-doubt about one's competence becomes pervasive. Depression and negative feelings toward self are rampant, with limited insight on the part

of the sufferer regarding their causes. Social withdrawal from work and personal friendships becomes apparent. Serious consideration is given to finding another job or simply quitting the profession altogether. Family problems can intensify and lead to marital separations. (p. 54)

Pines and Aronson (1988) noted that burnout had three components. These components of burnout are physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, and mental exhaustion.

The physical exhaustion of burnout is increased frequency of accidents, increased susceptibility to illness and psychosomatic complaints. The emotional exhaustion is feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and entrapment. These can lead to emotional breakdowns or thoughts of suicide. Therefore some emotional symptoms can be fatal.

The mental exhaustion includes the development of negative attitudes towards one's self, one's occupation and life in general. This leads to lowered self-esteem, feelings of inadequacy, incompetence, and inferiority.

Farber (1991) grouped the effects of burnout into three categories. These categories are the physical and psychological problem category, the interpersonal relationship problem category, and the professional or job problem category.

Maslach (1982) stated:

“People pay a heavy price for being their brother (and sister's) keeper. The emotional exhaustion and cynicism of burnout are often accompanied by a deterioration in physical and psychological well being. Relationships with other people suffer, both on and off the job.... The burned-out provider is prone to health problems, psychological impairment, loss of self-esteem, and a growing

dissatisfaction with the job.” (p. 73)

Stress in Educators

Educators have been found to be very susceptible to stress and burnout as a result of their professional responsibilities. Although there has been a great deal of research done on stress and burnout in educators, most of it has focused on the classroom teacher and relatively little has been done on stress and burnout in other educators.

“Teachers are expected to work miracles day after day then get only silence from students, pressure from principals, and criticism from irate parents” (Ginsberg, Schwartz, Olson, & Bennett, 1987, p. 4). This statement sums up one of the prevalent attitudes towards educators today. The pressures which result in stressors for educators are diverse and numerous. The ability of educators to cope effectively with these stressors varies from person to person and throughout the school year. What acts, as a stressor for one teacher may not affect another (Frey & Young, 1983).

Greenberg (1984) noted the following job related stressors for teachers: role definition, role ambiguity, role overload, polyphasic though (thinking about more than one thing a time), responsibility for others, lack of participation, work schedule and overload, salary.

School Counselors Duties and Responsibilities

School counselors are very significant members of the school community and they are quite susceptible to burnout. The school counselor has many diverse roles. Recently, the Missouri Department of Education defined the roles of the school counselor. According to the Missouri Department of Education the roles of the counselor should include:

program management, guidance, counseling, consultation and student advocacy, coordination, and assessment (Missouri Department of Education, 1998).

School counselors perceive their primary role and function as that of providing individual and group counseling to students for social and emotional adjustment, academic advisement and planning, and career/life planning.

The school counselors, no matter what level of counseling they are performing (i.e., elementary, middle school, high school, or special education), perceive the main role and functions of school counselor to be one of counseling students. Counseling as defined by the school counselor, is a process of using their training in counseling techniques and theory to assist students with issues ranging from personal, social, and emotional concerns, to academic and vocational advisement. This assistance is aimed at helping the student to become better adjusted, with the idea that this will, in turn, clear the way for the student to become more successful academically. They seek to optimize the educational and emotional well being of the student.

Robbins (1993) has noted that the role of the school counselor is becoming increasingly complex. Once a profession devoted to guidance, testing, and assessment, this role has extended from within the walls of the school into the homes and personal lives of students, parents, and the conscience of the community as a whole. (p. 398) Robbin's remarks highlight the importance of understanding the role and function of school counselors.

According to Scholten (1991) the literature in school counseling consistently states "... the counselor's role should focus upon the student's occupational, educational, and

personal/social needs. Emphasis should be placed upon current educational; future career decisions; and present/future, personal/social needs" (p. 16).

Bailey, Deery, Gehrke, and Perry (1989) report a similar characterization of the role and functions of a school counselor by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). However, in addition to the counseling functions stipulated above, the authors note that the ASCA would add the functions of program development, ongoing self-audit, and program evaluations.

Hays and Johnson (1984) characterized one of the functions of school counseling as that of advocacy. In this regard, the authors note that there are future challenges facing school counselors concerning such matters as school philosophy, parent conflict with counseling measures and strategies, and other such issues.

Edwards (1995) views the school counselor's role and functions as not specifically limited to students. Rather, Edwards states that school counselors must work to foster a sense of belonging in teachers as well. If the school counselors assist the teachers to feel connected to the school, then teachers can likewise help their students feel like they, too, belong.

However, the authors have noted that counseling, in general, has at its disposal more tools and knowledge than ever before. It is, therefore, recommended that school counseling must rise above the current crisis and develop its own image and scenarios for the future.

The perception of the actual and ideal roles of school counselors held by administrators and school counselors were assessed by Oshiro (1981). It was determined that counselors currently are burdened with numerous clerical responsibilities which are

in conflict with their desires to allocate a greater part of their time of working directly with students. To handle the clerical duties that school counselors currently are performing, a more practical and relevant Pupil Personnel Credential training program was recommended for the training of counselor practitioners.

Dethlefsen (1988) has noted that there has been extensive criticism of schools for allowing counselors to be used for duties that lie beyond defined counselor roles. In an effort to determine if counselors were being misused in this manner, Dethlefsen used nine questions designed to ascertain differences in actual and ideal roles of school counselors as perceived by school counselors, principals, and counselor educators. Twenty-three schools were selected using a random stratified selection process. A counselor and principal from each school were selected and interviewed. Three counselor educators, from three universities in the area, were also randomly selected to participate.

Findings of the study revealed a significant positive correlation for these groups concerning perceptions of secondary school counselors' roles. These findings suggested that school counselors and principals had high levels of agreement not only in terms of their views of the school counselor's role, but also in terms of their views of the school counselor's ideal role. Based on these findings, Dethlefsen (1988) concluded that school counselors in this area of the country were probably not being misused by being assigned tasks and functions that were unsuited to their defined roles.

A consistent, clear definition of counselor's functions is important for a strong counseling profession. Counselors need to be trained to perform their duties effectively.

School Counselor Stress and Burnout

Over the past several years, several studies have been conducted which focus on stress and burnout in school counseling (Moracco, 1981; Butcke, 1984; Boy & Pine, 1980). Moracco compared teachers with counselors using a career choice evaluation item, which showed that 80% of counselors responding would choose their career again versus 48% of the teachers responding. Butcke developed a stress inventory, which uses decision-making, financial security, non-professional duties, job overload, and professional relationships as indicators of occupational stress. This study concluded that role conflict is a chief source of burnout and stress among counselors. Boy and Pine's earlier year's supports that the different views about counselor's role can be conceptualized as role ambiguity and foster on the job stress and burnout. There is evidence that school counselors find their occupation to be almost as stressful as do teachers and other educators, which lead to burnout.

In 1983, Sears and Navin reported that 65 percent of the counselors surveyed stated that school counseling was either moderately stressful or very stressful. Pierson-Hubeny and Archambault (1987) found that school counselors reported the second highest level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, as reported on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, when compared to teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, and reading specialists. Olson and Dilley (1988) reported high levels of counselor stress as a routine part of their job.

In another study the primary sources of stress for school counselors appeared to be role ambiguity, role conflict, and task overload (Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen, 1984). Hutchinson, Barrick, and Groves (1986) reported that counselors' work overload (the

result of too many non-counseling duties) was the major source of stress for counselors. In a study of school counselors by Lynch (1989), counselors reported that the excessive use of counselors for non-guidance activities was the source of burnout.

As the role of the school counselor becomes more demanding, it is necessary to know the current status of the level of burnout of the counselors. The counselors are keys to meeting the needs of the youth of today. If the counselors are subject to too much stress, they can not help others to deal effectively with their own stresses.

Demographic Variables

There is a great deal of conflicting evidence regarding the relationship of selected variables to the level of burnout. Some studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between the level of burnout and selected personal (gender, age, year's experience, level of education and marital status) and school variables (school type, counselor/student ratio). Other studies do not support these findings.

Gender In a 1989 study Lynch (1989) found there to be no significant difference in the level of burnout reported by male and female school counselors surveyed using the MBI, the Counselor Occupational Stress Inventory, and the Quality of Teacher Work Life. Farber (1982) found no significant differences in the feelings of burnout, lack of commitment, and lack of gratification between males and females in his 1982 study of teachers.

Other researchers, however, have found differences. Maslach (1982) states "...Men show slightly more of one aspect of burnout, and women show more of another. Women tend to experience more emotional exhaustion.... However, men are more likely to have depersonalized and callous feelings about the people they work with" (p. 58). Mazer and

Griffin (1980) found that male teachers had significantly higher levels of stress than their female counterparts. On the other hand, Calabrese (1987) found that the stress levels of male teachers were significantly lower than the stress levels of female teachers.

Age In a study of 469 teachers in Massachusetts, Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) found that teachers in the 20 to 39 age range demonstrated significantly higher levels of burnout than teachers 50 years of age or older. In a study by Moracco, Danford, and D'Arienzo (1982) younger teachers reported higher levels of emotional exhaustion than their older counterparts. These results were similar to those found by Harmer (1979) who reported that teacher stress decreased with an increase in teachers' age. Maslach (1982) noted that "burnout is greatest when people workers are young and is lower for older workers" (p. 59).

Treacy (1979) noted that teachers in the 31 to 40 age group reported the highest levels of stress and the 41 to 50 age group reported the next highest level of stress. These results were the findings of a 1979 New York State United Teachers Study (NYSUT, 1979).

However, Trendall (1989) reported finding no significant relationship between the age of teachers and their level of stress. This study included 277 teachers from elementary and secondary levels. Blanchard (1990) reported finding differences in the burnout scores for assistant principals of different ages, but these differences were too small to be significant. _

Experience Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) reported that there was no significant relationship between the years of teaching experience and level of burnout in a study of Massachusetts teachers. These findings were similar to the findings of Milstein and

Golaszewsk (1983) who found no relationship between years of experience and level of burnout. Bortwick, Thornell, and Wilkinson (1982), however, found that the teachers with the lowest years of experience exhibit higher levels of burnout. Cartee (1992) reported that first year teachers from rural school district in South Carolina reported the highest level of stress. This is supported by the findings of Maslach and Jackson (1981) who stated that burnout is most likely to occur in the first few years of the career and that the teacher with the fewer years of experience is most likely to leave the profession. Cherniss (1980) stated that the first few years if a teacher's career were the most critical; after the fifth year the level of burnout decreases. Raquepaw (1984) reported finding that the frequency of teachers' thoughts about leaving the profession of education was negatively correlated to the years of experience of the teacher.

This finding is consistent with the finding of Maslach and Jackson (1981) in placing the new teacher most at risk for leaving the profession.

Education While most of the literature supports the idea that the higher the level education of the helper the lower the level of burnout, a few have not shown a significant relationship between the two variables. Fimian (1987), Borthwick, Thornell, and Wilkinson (1982), Schwab and Iwanicki (1982), and Raquepaw (1984) reported observing no significant difference in the burnout scores for teachers with different levels of educational preparation. The same results were seen by Brissie, Hoover-Dempsey, and Bassler (1988) in a survey of 1213 elementary school teachers.

Cedoline (1982) notes "Several types of job training are necessary to prevent occupational distress. The most obvious area is adequate initial preparation" (p.56). He continues by stating that to prevent high levels of burnout those people in the helping

professions need training in communication skills and stress management in addition to adequate preparation.

Maslach (1982) found "the greatest amount of burnout is found for providers who have completed college but have not had any postgraduate training. Maslach is referring to burnout in the helping professions, not just in the field of education.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) had also reported significant differences in the level of burnout of individuals with different levels of education, in a survey of those in the health and service occupations. In their research, Maslach and Jackson (1981) found those in the helping professions with lowest level of education had the highest level of Emotional Exhaustion and the highest level of Depersonalization.

In a study of 147 school counselors, Stickel (1991) reported that counselors with lower degree levels had significantly higher scores on the depersonalization section of the MBI.

Martial Status Maslach (1982) noted that single workers experience the most burnout and married workers experience the least burnout. She added that divorced workers generally fall in the middle between the other two groups. The single workers had the highest level of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, and the lowest level of Personal Accomplishment of all the martial status categories in a study by Maslach and Jackson (1981).

Schafer (1978) stated that the unmarried, divorced, and unhappily married are more likely to burn out than those workers who are happily married do. Schlansker (1987) agreed that the single are more at risk for burnout that the married.

Gold (1987) observed that in a study of elementary and junior high school teachers the single teachers had greater risk of burning out than their married colleagues. Farber (1984) reported the same observation.

School Type In a study Connolly and Sanders (1988) found that secondary teachers had significantly higher levels of stress than did elementary school teachers. Schwab, Jackson, and Schuler (1986) reported finding that middle and high school teachers are more likely to burn out, they have more negative feelings toward their students, and they have fewer feelings of personal accomplishment than elementary teachers do. Cole (1989) found that secondary teachers in South Carolina felt more stress than did the elementary teachers.

Anderson and Iwanicki (1984) and Birmingham (1984) reported finding from their studies that middle school, junior high school, or senior high school teachers are more likely to burnout than the teachers who work in elementary schools. Schlansker (1987) agreed that secondary teachers are at a higher risk for burnout than are elementary teachers.

Youree (1985) found that middle school teachers had higher levels of burnout. Borthwick, Thornell, and Wilkinson (1982) found that elementary teachers had significantly lower scores in the depersonalization scale and significantly higher scores in the personal accomplishment area of the MBI, than middle and high school teachers indicating that the elementary school teachers were less burned out than their middle and high school colleagues on the areas of personal accomplishment and depersonalization. Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) found that the elementary teachers scored higher on the personal accomplishment area of the MBI and lower on the depersonalization section of

the MBI than either teachers in middle or secondary schools. This is in agreement with the results found by Borthwick, Thornell, and Wilkinson, (1982).

Counselor/ Student Ratio Most available research does support the belief that the number of contacts, whether they be clients, students, etc., that an individual is responsible for is related to the level of burnout of the teacher or counselor. This research is consistent for teachers, school psychologist, and school counselors.

In a study of school psychologists, Huberty and Huebner (1988) reported that case overload was significantly related to burnout. The heavy demands of too many contacts appeared to be one of the causes of additional stress and subsequent burnout. In a 1991 study, Stickel (1991) found that the greater the number of students a counselor is responsible for, the greater the degree of emotional exhaustion.

Summary of Research

The review of the literature has provided many definitions, symptoms, and causes of stress and burnout along with school counselor's duties and responsibilities. The review has also indicated that personal and school variables may be related to the level of burnout observed in the specific population of those in a profession in education. The relationships observed were not consistent throughout all the research, yet there were general trends, which were observed.

The studies supported the examination of possible differences among counselors based on selected personal, school variables. The hypothesis for this study is there are no statistical significant relationship in the level of burnout in school counselors based on selected personal variables: (gender, age, teaching experience, counseling experience, marital status, level of education), or school variables: (school type and counselor/student

ratio). Measures used in research were the Maslach Burnout Inventory Form ED, a job responsibility and a demographic questionnaire.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The population from which the sample was drawn included all secondary public school counselors at Hazelwood School District and the surrounding area.

The socioeconomic status of the areas is mostly middle class with a predominant population of Caucasians. The Hazelwood suburban area has added new development.

A convenient volunteer sampling method was used, subjects were drawn from several junior and senior high schools. The final sample was comprised of 42 school counselors of whom 11 were male (26.2%) and 31 were female (73.8%). The sample included 33 Caucasians (78.7%) and 9 African Americans (21.3%).

The school counselor's age ranged from 25 to 61 years of age, with nearly half more than 46 years of age. More than 50% had less than 10 years of counseling experience and one-third of the sample had less than 5 years of experience. More than one quarter of the sample had less than 5 years of teaching experience. About 90% of subjects had at least a master's degree. Nearly half had a Masters+30 at least. Three quarters of the subjects worked in a high school setting and one quarter worked in the middle schools. Three quarters of the sample was also married. For all the counselors the counselors/student ratio was 1 for 300.

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the sample by demographic variables.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Sample by Demographic Variables.

Number of Variables	Respondents	Percentage
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	31	73.8
Male	11	26.2
<u>Age</u>		
<25	2	4.8
26-35	8	19.0
36-45	11	26.2
46-50	15	35.7
51-55	5	11.9
56-60	1	2.4
<u>Counseling Experience</u>		
0-5	14	33.3
6-10	10	23.9
11-15	8	19.0
16-20	5	11.9
21-25	4	9.5
26-30	1	2.3
>30	0	0.0
<u>Teaching Experience</u>		
0-5	11	26.2
6-10	8	19.1
11-15	5	11.9
16-20	8	19.1
21-25	6	14.3
26-30	4	9.4
>30	0	0.0
<u>Educational Level</u>		
BS	3	7.2
MA	16	38.1
MA+15	2	4.8
MA+30	17	40.4
MA+45	2	4.8
Ph.D or Ed.D	2	4.8

Table 1. (continued)

<u>Marital Status</u>		
Married with spouse	32	76.2
Married, without spouse	0	0.0
Legally Seperated	1	2.4
Divorced	5	12.0
Never Married	4	9.5
Widowed	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
 <u>School Type</u>		
Middle	10	24.0
High	32	76.0
 <u>Counselor Student Ratio</u>		
1 for every 300 to 350	24	57.1
1 for every 350 or more	18	42.9

Instruments

The instrument used in this study were the Maslach Burnout Inventory Form Educators Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996) and a demographic questionnaire (copies of both are found in the appendix).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory Third Edition

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was developed to standardize the measure of an individual's experience of burnout. It has been fifteen years since the initial publication of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). At this time, there was an enormous amount of interest in the phenomenon of burnout, but very little in the way of guiding theory or empirical research. The MBI is now recognized as the leading measure of burnout. More than ten years has passed since the original Maslach Burnout Inventory was adapted for use in the education field. The Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES) has been extensively used to identify burnout levels of individuals who work in school settings (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

The MBI-ES is a 22-item inventory. It measures the same three-burnout subscales as the other MBI surveys. The only modification of items in the MBI-ES has been to change the word "recipient" to "student." The Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscale assesses feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. The Depersonalization (Dp) subscale measures an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's service, care, treatment, or instruction. The Personal Accomplishment (PA) subscale assesses feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people. The frequency that the respondent experience feelings related to each

subscale is assessed using a six-point, fully anchored response format. (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

Burnout is conceptualized as a continuous variable, ranging from low to moderate to high degree of experienced feelings. It is not viewed as a dichotomous variable, which is either present or absent. At present, scores are considered high if they are in the upper third of the normative distribution, average if they are in the middle third, and low if they are in the lower third. Given the limited knowledge about the relationships between the three aspects of burnout, the scores for each subscale are considered separately and are not combined into a single, total score. Thus, three scores are computed for each respondent. (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

Any researcher in a controlled setting can do the administration of the test. The MBI-ED takes about 10-15 minutes to fill out. It is self-administered. Scoring the MBI-ED involves computing the average rating on the 0 to 6 frequency ratings across the items within each of the three subscales. (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

Two studies substantiated the validity and reliability of the MBI-ES with these changes. Factor analytic studies by Iwanicki and Schwab (1981), with 469 Massachusetts teachers, and by Gold (1984), with 462 California students support the three-factor structure of the MBI-ES. In regard to reliability, Iwanicki and Schwab report Cronbach alpha estimates of .90 for Emotional Exhaustion, .76 for Depersonalization and .76 for Personal Accomplishment while Gold reports estimates of .88, .74, and .72, respectively (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

Probably the most valuable use of the MBI-ES is at the school district level to detect potential problems. The measure provides a crucial perspective on the health of an

organizational climate for teachers as well as students. The MBI-ES can be administered to all members of a school district anonymously, then analyzed by various populations.

More recently, the MBI-ED has been tested using confirmatory factor analysis. Lee and Ashforth (1993) confirmed the three-factor model of burnout with confirmatory factor analysis based upon three composite score indicators for each of the three subscales. They found the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization factors to be distinct but highly correlated, and both of these subscales were more highly correlated with measures of psychological and physiological strain than was Personal Accomplishment. In contrast, Personal Accomplishment was more closely related to control-oriented coping.

The Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic and job responsibility questionnaire was designed to provide background information on the school counselor and the school. The questionnaire was developed after reviewing several previously developed questionnaires, which had been used in other educator's studies. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. Questions 1 through 9 requested personal and school information. Question 10 through 15 requested the counselors to rank order six general duties of counselors from the duty on which they spent the most time to the duty on which they spent the least time. Several school counselors reviewed the original demographic questionnaire. Several changes were made in order to exclude ambiguities and to provide more integral information.

Procedures

Design.

The design of research for the current study is correlational. The purposes of this study were to determine the level of burnout in public school counselors and to determine if public school counselors differed in the reported level of burnout based on selected personal and school variables. The prediction is that there are no statistical significant differences in the level of burnout in school counselors based on selected personal variables or school situations.

The population of the current study was secondary school counselors. For the sample, the researcher used a convenient sampling in which counselors from three high schools and three middle schools in the Hazelwood School District were used. Also, a few other school counselors were used from surrounding school districts to complete the testing instruments. The questionnaire and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), for ED, were mailed to the sample of 42 school counselors. All counselors participated in the study.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory Form ED by Maslach, Jackson & Leiter and demographic questionnaire were sent to each counselor in the district. Answers to the instruments were placed on the instruments themselves by each respondent and later transferred to scan sheets by the researcher. The MBI-ED should have taken about 10 to 15 minutes to fill out.

Data Analysis The analysis of data included the examination of means and frequencies and the utilization of t-tests. Mean scores were determined for each level of each variable for the measures of burnout. Frequencies and percentages of respondents falling into each level of each variable were determined for the three measures of

burnout. T-tests were employed to determine the difference in the level of burnout reported by the respondents, based on the personal or school variables.

Chapter 4

Results

The descriptive statistics for the burnout variables are presented on Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Burnout & Subscales	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std Deviation
EE	42	0	44	17.6	9.78
DP	42	0	33	13.2	8.30
PA	42	18	47	36.8	7.7

Based on the criterion scores provided in the manual all scores were categorized into subscales. For the EE subscale low burnout ranged from 0 to 16, moderate burnout ranged from 17 to 26, and high scores range from 27 to 54.

For the Depersonalization subscale low scores representing low level of burnout from 0 to 8, moderate scores representing the range from 9 to 13, and high scores representing range from 14 to 30.

On the personal Accomplishment subscale the opposite relationship exists. The higher the score is on the subscale, the lower is the level of burnout. Low scores on personal accomplishment range from 0 to 30, moderate scores range from 31-36, and high scores range from 37 to 48.

Tables 4 thru Table 8 present the data obtained from the analysis of counselors' response with regard to the relationship between personal characteristics and the level of burnout. Tables 9 and table10 present the data obtained from the analysis of counselors' response with regard to the relationship between school variables and the level of burnout (see Appendix). The following pages represent the mean scores for each of the demographic variables on each subscale of the MBI.

Gender The emotional exhaustion scores for the males ($m=17.58$), ($sd=9.29$) and females ($m=18.0$) ($sd=11.6$). The mean depersonalization scores for males ($m=13.48$), ($sd=8.53$) and females ($m=12.45$), ($sd=7.94$). The mean personal accomplishment scores for males ($m=36.45$), ($sd=8.11$) and females ($m=37.82$), ($sd=7.07$).

Age The emotional exhaustion scores for ages under 25 ($m=20.0$), ($sd=11.14$), ages 26-35 ($m=19.0$), ($sd=10.78$), ages 36-45 ($m=18.0$), ($sd=12.95$), ages 46-55 ($m=18.0$), ($sd=12.95$), over 55 ($m=21.6$), ($sd=13.39$). The depersonalization scores for ages under 25 ($m=11.34$), ($sd=7.09$), 26-35 ($m=11.37$), ($sd=9.17$) ages 36-45 ($m=17.55$), ($sd=10.06$) ages 46-55 ($m=11.28$), ($sd=6.71$) ages over 55 ($m=13.4$), ($sd=7.63$). The personal accomplishment scores for ages under 25 ($m=39.0$), ($sd=4.58$), ages 26-35 ($m=35.62$), ($sd=9.39$), ages 36-45 ($m=38.73$), ($sd=7.81$), ages 46-55 ($m=36.57$), ($sd=7.18$), ages over 55 ($m=34.0$), ($sd=10.46$).

Counseling Experience. The emotional scores for counseling experience between 0-5 years ($m=18.71$), ($sd=10.99$), 6-10 years ($m=15.50$), ($sd=7.93$), 11-15 years ($m=15.25$), ($sd=6.88$), 21-25 years ($m=18.25$), ($sd=4.19$), 26-30 years ($m=30.0$). The depersonalization scores for counseling experience between 0-5 years ($m=11.21$), ($sd=7.57$), 6-10 years ($m=13.30$), ($sd=9.84$), 11-15 years ($m=18.38$), ($sd=8.24$), 16-20 years ($m=38.20$), ($sd=6.97$), 21-25 years ($m=12.25$), ($sd=8.01$), 26-30 years ($m=18.0$). The personal accomplishment scores for counseling experience between 0-5 years ($m=38.71$), ($sd=6.24$), 6-10 years ($m=34.80$), ($sd=10.55$), 11-15 years ($m=36.75$),

(sd=6.54), 16-20 years (m=38.20), (sd=5.54), 21-25 years (m=38.25), (sd=5.56), 26-30 years (m=18.0).

Teaching Experience The emotional scores for teaching experience between 0-5 years, (m=21.09), (sd=11.50), 6-10 years (m=20.25), (sd=11.37), 11-15 years (m=14.0), (sd=9.87), 16-20 years (m=13.62), (sd=2.32), 21-25 years (m=13.34), (sd=3.32), 26-30 years (m=22.5), (sd=14.43). The depersonalization scores for teaching experience between 0-5 years, (m=11.09), (sd=9.30), 6-10 years (m=13.62), (sd=7.78), 11-15 years (m=13.20), (sd=7.12), 16-20 years (m=16.12), (sd=10.33), 21-25 (m=11.0), (sd=4.65), 26-30 years (m=15.75), (sd=10.01). The personal accomplishment scores for teaching experience between 0-5 years (m=36.18), (sd=7.61), 6-10 years (m=35.0), (sd=11.88), 11-15 years (m=40.0), (sd=6.20), 16-20 years, (m=39.75), (sd=4.98), 21-25 years (m=32.17), (sd=6.04), 26-30 years (m=39.25), (sd=5.90).

Levels of Education The emotional scores for counselor's educational background BA/BS (m=17.0), (sd=4.60), MA/MS (m=16.06), (sd=9.11), MA+15 (m=22.5), (sd=10.60), MA+30 (m=18.53), (sd=11.50), MA+45 (m=10.5), (sd=3.53). PHD/Ed, (m=27.0), (sd=4.24). The depersonalization scores for counselor's educational backgrounds BA/BS (m=13.33), (sd=17.09), MA/MS (m=11.87), (sd=7.65), MA+15 (m=15.5), (sd=4.94), MA+30 (m=18.53), (sd=14.53), (sd=8.13), MA+45 (m=5.50), (sd=6.36), PHD/Ed, (m=18.0), (sd=0.0). The personal accomplishment scores for counselor's educational backgrounds BA/BS (m=34.3), (sd=10.01), MA/MS (m=37.44),

(sd=8.00), MA+15 (m=37.0), (sd=1.41), MA+30 (m=36.65), (sd=7.13), MA+45 (m=44.50), (sd=.7071), PHD/Ed (m=29.0), (sd=15.56).

Marital Status The emotional scores for counselor's that are married (m=16.37), (sd=9.50), separated (m=28.0) (sd=0.0), divorced (m=16.8), (sd=5.76), never married (m=26.75), (sd=12.86). The depersonalization scores for counselor's that are married (m=13.15), (sd=8.83), separated (m=21.0), (sd=0.0), divorced (m=13.60), (sd=6.02), never married (m=11.25), (sd=7.71). The personal accomplishment for counselor's that are married (m=37.68), (sd=7.38), separated (m=47.0), (sd=0.00), divorced (m=26.80), (sd=4.55), never married (m=39.75), (sd=4.03).

School The emotional scores for middle school counselors (m=16.30), (sd=8.83). The depersonalization scores are (m=12.20), (sd=9.77). The personal accomplishment (m=39.90), (sd=5.66). The emotional scores for high school counselors (m=18.12), (sd=10.15). The depersonalization scores are (m=13.53), (sd=7.92). The personal accomplishment scores are (m=35.84), (sd=8.17).

To examine the relationship between select demographic variables and burnout, Pearson R Correlation's were computed.

Table 3. Pearson Correlation's between demographic variables and burnout subscale scores.

Demographic Variables	EE	DP	PA
Age	-.064	-.007	-.098
Counseling Experience	.082	.096	-.155
Teaching Experience	-.178	.121	.046
Education	.136	.092	-.034

Based on the Pearson R values on Table 3 there is apparently little correlation between any given pair of variables.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of burnout of school counselors in public schools, and to determine if the observed level of burnout was significantly different for counselors with different personal and school variables. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was employed to measure the level of burnout, and a demographic questionnaire was used to record the demographic data from the counselors.

The hypothesis was supported in the current study and findings. The hypothesis is as follows: There are no significant differences in the level of burnout in school counselors based on selected personal and school variables.

The school counselors reported in this study an average level of burnout as measured by the Emotional Exhaustion subscale. They reported low levels of burnout as measured by the Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment subscales.

The analysis of data obtained from the school counselors in relation to the personal and school variables provides additional information. No significant relationship in the level of burnout for males and females was observed. The analysis of the burnout scores of the males and females in the study does follow the pattern seen by Maslach and Jackson (1981), in which females score higher on the Emotional Exhaustion subscale and lower on the Depersonalization subscale. However, the magnitude of the difference is too small to be significant. The results of this study support the findings of Lynch (1989) whose research did not find a significant relationship in the level of burnout of men and women counselors.

The differences in the burnout scores for counselors of different ages were not large enough to be statistically significant. These findings support the findings of Farber 1991 and others who determined that although slight differences did exist, they were not great enough to be significant.

School Counselors under the age of 25 demonstrated a high level of emotional exhaustion, a moderate level of depersonalization, and a lower level of personal accomplishment score. Other researchers (Maslach and Jackson, 1981; Farber 1982) however, have also found that younger counselors exhibit higher levels of burnout.

No significant relationship was observed when the years of teaching or counseling experience were examined. This finding supports a 1989 study by Lynch, who found no significant relationship in the length of experience and the level of burnout of school counselors. The only pattern that existed among the school counselors was the increase in the level of emotional exhaustion as the years of counseling experience increased.

A significant relationship between the level of education of school counselors and their level of burnout was not found. This finding was supported by the research of Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) which found no significant relationship in the level of burnout of teachers and the level of education. The findings are not supported by the research of Maslach and Jackson (1981) and Farber (1991) who found that the higher the level of education, the lower the level of burnout for teachers.

No significant relationship in the level of burnout of school counselors in relation to their marital status was found. Although some differences existed between some groups and the mean score of the whole sample, these differences were too small to be significant. These findings support the earlier research of Schwab and Iwanicki (1982)

who found no significant relationship between marital status and the level of burnout. These findings are not consistent with the findings of Gold (1987), and Schafer (1978) who found the married worker to be the least likely to be burned out.

Although no significant relationship was found to exist between the level of burnout of public school counselors and the school type in which they are employed, the pattern of scores was consistent with the expected results. High school counselors reported the highest levels of emotional exhaustion, and high school counselors reported the highest level of depersonalization and the lowest level of personal accomplishment. Anderson and Iwanicki (1984) found that high school teachers reported a higher level of burnout than did middle school teachers.

There were no significant relationship in the level of burnout in school counselors and the number of students served by the counselors. This finding is not consistent with the earlier research in which Stickel (1991), Cedoline (1982) reported the larger the caseload or class sizes the higher the level of burnout.

The results of this indicate that public school counselors in Missouri exhibit a moderate level of emotional exhaustion, a low level of depersonalization, and a high level of personal accomplishment. The results of this study are similar to the results obtained by Lynch (1989) in a study of randomly selected school counselors. Lynch reported low levels of burnout in the counselors who participated in the study and found no significant relationship between the level of burnout of the counselors and any personal or school variables included in the study.

Limitations of the Current Study

The limitations imposed on the study as a result of the self-selection of the sample and the self-reporting nature of the surveys must be noted. Self-selection of the sample may result in a bias in the sample and the self-report questionnaire relies on the respondent to provide accurate and truthful responses. As with any case, there is also the chance of bias with convenient and volunteer samplings. Lastly, the sample size and the sample limitation also limit the generalization of the study.

The fact that the research was drawn from mainly one high school leads to more possible bias. The research would prove to be more valid if a cross sectional study was used such as by comparing different high schools in the same area. Another study could be conducted by using different high schools in different geographic regions; also comparing rural with urban areas.

Implications of Findings

To know that the students in the public schools have access to school counselors who are not emotionally exhausted and have not stopped caring about the students is very important. To know that counselors feel a great sense of accomplishment from their work with the students is equally important. Educators must work hard to maintain this positive attitude in all those who work with the young people.

More important, however, is the need that educators must continue to address the problems of burnout in education and those problems must be addresses with more than words.

Farber (1991) stated:

Burnout, with all its symptoms, is itself symptomatic of the seemingly intractable problems present in many American schools. No one should think that it would be quickly or easily diminished or erased, since it is the consequence of each burned-out teacher's profound and complicated psychological conclusion that his or her work is not efficacious. As such, burnout will itself be a substantial obstacle to educational reform and improvement, at least for several years. The situation calls for careful diagnosis and treatment for all affected individuals and groups in the schools.

Nostrums—whether organizational, rhetorical, or therapeutic—will not suffice.

(p. xiii)

Future research should be implemented to determine if the types of duties taking up the majority of the counselor's time are significantly related to the level of burnout of the school counselor. In this study, school counselors reported registration, grades, scheduling, and crisis coordination as taking up the most time. The next five areas school counselors listed in order of most time spent on to least time spent on were: 1. administration and clerical 2. special education 3. college and career counseling 4. individual, small groups, and/or classroom. Other researchers have suggested that the variety of duties performed by the counselors may be a major reason for the high level of burnout.

It would further benefit research to determine the effect of multiple variables on the level of burnout of school counselors. This study investigated the effect of each variable by itself. To know if two or more variables acting together were related to the level of burnout of school counselors would be beneficial.

Appendix A

Table 4. Percent and Frequency of Counselors by Gender at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion			
	Low	Moderate	High
Females	14 (33.3)	6 (14.4)	11 (26.2)
Males	7 (16.6)	1 (2.4)	3 (7.2)
Total	21 (49.9)	7 (16.6)	14 (33.4)
Depersonalization			
	Low	Moderate	High
Females	25 (60.0)	5 (12.0)	1 (2.4)
Males	10 (23.8)	1 (2.4)	0
Total	35 (83.4)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.4)
Personal Accomplishment			
	Low	Moderate	High
Females	1 (2.4)	3 (7.2)	27 (64.3)
Males	1 (2.4)	0	10 (23.8)
Total	2 (4.4)	3 (7.2)	37 (88.1)

The first figures are the numbers of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category

Table 6. Percent and Frequency of Counselors by Year of Counseling Experience at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion			
	Low	Moderate	High
0-5	11 (26.2)	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)
6-10	4 (9.5)	5 (12.0)	1 (2.4)
11-15	4 (9.5)	0	4 (9.5)
16-20	2 (4.8)	2 (4.8)	1 (2.4)
21-25	2 (4.8)	0	2 (4.8)
26-30	0	1 (2.4)	0
Total	23 (54.8)	9 (19.2)	10 (23.9)
Depersonalization			
	Low	Moderate	High
0-5	12 (28.6)	2 (4.8)	0
6-10	9 (21.4)	1 (2.4)	0
11-15	6 (14.3)	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)
16-20	4 (9.5)	1 (2.4)	0
21-25	3 (7.1)	1 (2.4)	0
26-30	0	1 (2.4)	0
Total	34 (80.9)	7 (16.8)	3 (4.8)
Personal Accomplishment			
	Low	Moderate	High
0-5	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	12 (28.6)
6-10	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	8 (19.0)
11-15	0	0	8 (19.0)
16-20	0	1 (2.4)	4 (9.5)
21-25	0	1 (2.4)	3 (7.1)
26-30	0	0	1 (2.4)
Total	2 (4.8)	4 (9.6)	36 (85.7)

The first figures are the number of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category.

Table 7. Percent and Frequency of Counselors by years of Teaching Experience at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion				
	Low	Moderate	High	
0-5	5 (12.0)	3 (7.1)	3 (7.1)	
6-10	4 (9.5)	2 (4.8)	2 (4.8)	
11-15	2 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)	
16-20	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	1 (2.4)	
21-25	3 (7.1)	0	3 (7.1)	
26-30	2 (4.8)	0	2 (4.8)	
Total	20 (47.7)	9 (21.4)	13 (31.0)	

Depersonalization				
	Low	Moderate	High	
0-5	9 (21.4)	2 (4.8)	0	
6-10	6 (14.3)	2 (4.8)	0	
11-15	5 (12.0)	0	0	
16-20	7 (16.7)	1 (2.4)	0	
21-25	5 (12.0)	1 (2.4)	0	
26-30	4 (9.5)	0	0	
Total	36 (85.9)	6 (14.4)	0	

Personal Accomplishment				
	Low	Moderate	High	
0-5	0	1 (2.4)	10 (23.9)	
6-10	0	0	8 (19.0)	
11-15	0	1 (2.4)	4 (9.5)	
16-20	0	1 (2.4)	7 (16.7)	
21-25	0	1 (2.4)	5 (12.0)	
26-30	0	0	4 (9.5)	
Total	0	4 (9.6)	38 (90.6)	

The first figures are the numbers of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category.

Table 8. Percent and Frequency of Counselors by Marital Status at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion			
	Low	Moderate	High
Married With	15 (35.7)	6 (14.3)	10 (23.9)
Married WO			
Separated			
Divorced	4 (9.5)	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)
Never Married	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)
Widowed			
Other			
Total	20 (47.6)	8 (19.1)	14 (33.5)
Depersonalization			
	Low	Moderate	High
Married With	28 (66.7)	3 (7.2)	0
Married WO			
Separated			
Divorced	6 (14.3)	1 (2.4)	0
Never Married	3 (7.2)	1 (2.4)	0
Widowed			
Other			
Total	37 (88.2)	5 (12.0)	0
Personal Accomplishment			
	Low	Moderate	High
Married With	0	2 (4.8)	29 (69.0)
Married WO			
Separated			
Divorced	0	2 (4.8)	5 (11.9)
Never Married	1 (2.4)	0	3 (7.2)
Widowed			
Other			
Total	1 (2.4)	4 (9.6)	37 (88.1)

The first figures are the numbers of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category.

Table 9. Frequency and Percent of Counselors Level of Education at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion			
	Low	Moderate	High
BS	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)
MA	10 (23.9)	3 (7.2)	3 (7.2)
MA+15	2 (4.8)	0	0
MA+30	7 (16.7)	4 (9.5)	6 (14.3)
MA+45	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	0
Ph.D or Ed. D	1 (2.4)	0	1 (2.4)
Total	22 (52.6)	9 (21.5)	10 (26.3)
Depersonalization			
	Low	Moderate	High
BS	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)	0
MA	13 (31.0)	2 (4.8)	1 (2.4)
MA+15	2 (4.8)	1 (2.4)	0
MA+30	15 (35.7)	2 (4.8)	0
MA+45	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	0
Ph.D or Ed. D	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)	0
Total	33 (76.3)	9 (21.6)	1 (2.4)
Personal Accomplishment			
	Low	Moderate	High
BS	0	0	3 (7.2)
MA	0	1 (2.4)	15 (35.7)
MA+15	0	0	2 (4.8)
MA+30	0	2 (4.8)	15 (35.7)
MA+45	0	1 (2.4)	1 (2.4)
Ph.D or Ed. D	0	0	2 (4.8)
Total	0	4 (9.6)	38 (90.6)

The first figures are the numbers of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category.

Table 10. Percent and Frequency of Counselors by School Type at each Level of Burnout.

Emotional Exhaustion			
	Low	Moderate	High
Middle	7 (16.7)	3 (7.1)	5 (12.0)
High	11 (26.2)	7 (16.7)	9 (21.4)
Total	18 (42.9)	10 (23.8)	14 (33.4)
Depersonalization			
	Low	Moderate	High
Middle	14 (33.3)	1 (2.4)	0
High	25 (59.6)	0	2 (4.8)
Total	39 (92.9)	1 (2.4)	2 (4.8)
Personal Accomplishment			
	Low	Moderate	High
Middle	0	1 (2.4)	14 (33.3)
High	2 (4.8)	2 (4.8)	23 (54.7)
Total	2 (4.8)	3 (7.2)	37 (88.0)

The first are the numbers of counselors in each category (frequency) and the figures in parentheses are the percent of the group in each category.

Christina Maslach • Susan E. Jackson • Richard L. Schwab

Educators Survey

The purpose of this survey is to discover how educators view their job and the people with whom they work closely.

On the following page there are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way *about your job*. If you have *never* had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. An example is shown below.

Example:

HOW OFTEN:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

HOW OFTEN

0 - 6

Statement:

_____ I feel depressed at work.

If you *never* feel depressed at work, you would write the number "0" (zero) under the heading "HOW OFTEN." If you *rarely* feel depressed at work (a few times a year or less), you would write the number "1." If your feelings of depression are fairly frequent (a few times a week, but not daily) you would write a "5."



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Educators Survey

HOW OFTEN:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

HOW OFTEN
0 - 6

Statements:

1. _____ I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. _____ I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. _____ I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4. _____ I can easily understand how my students feel about things.
5. _____ I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.
6. _____ Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
7. _____ I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.
8. _____ I feel burned out from my work.
9. _____ I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
10. _____ I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
11. _____ I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
12. _____ I feel very energetic.
13. _____ I feel frustrated by my job.
14. _____ I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
15. _____ I don't really care what happens to some students.
16. _____ Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
17. _____ I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.
18. _____ I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.
19. _____ I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
20. _____ I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
21. _____ In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.
22. _____ I feel students blame me for some of their problems.

(Administrative use only)

cat.

cat.

cat.

EE: _____ DP: _____ PA: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Question in this section do not use all the same scale. Please just circle the appropriate response for each question.

1. What is your gender?
A. Female B. Male
2. What is your age?
A. Under 25 B. 26-35 C. 36-45 D. 46-50
E. 51-55 F. 56-60 G. Over 61
3. How many total years of counseling experience have you had?
A. 0-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 16-20
E. 21-25 F. 26-30 G. More than 30
4. How many total years of teaching experience have you had?
A. 0-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 16-20
E. 21-25 F. 26-30 G. More than 30
5. Which of the following best describes your educational preparation?
A. BS B. MA C. MA+15 D. MA+30
E. MA+45 F. Ph.D or Ed. D
6. What is your marital status?
A. Married living with spouse
B. Married, not living with spouse
C. Legally separated
D. Divorced
E. Never married
F. Widowed
G. Other
7. I currently work in:
A. Middle school B. High school
8. My school is located in:
A. A large city (50,000 or more population)
B. A suburban area around a large city
C. A small city (city with less than 50,000 in population)
D. A rural area

9. Students served per counselor. _____

Please rank the six categories of job responsibilities below beginning with the number 1, the duty that you spend the greatest amount of time doing, to 6, the duty you spend the least amount of time doing. Circle the appropriate rank for each item.

Administrative and clerical duties

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

College and career counseling

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Counseling (individually small group, classrooms)

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Registration, scheduling, grades, crisis coordination

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Special education related duties

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Standardized testing, test interpreting, test score analysis

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

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