

Perceived Organizational Support and Teacher Burnout: *A Correlational Study of Secondary School Teachers in India*

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Abstract: *This research investigates the critical relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and occupational burnout dimensions among secondary school educators across India. Utilizing a quantitative, cross-sectional survey methodology gathering empirical data from 308 teachers handling grades 6–12, the study measures individual variances through the 8-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES). Quantitative analytical results reveal that teachers experience a moderate baseline level of POS ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.54$) paired with moderate overall job burnout ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.52$). Crucially, Pearson correlational assessments highlight a robust, statistically significant negative relationship between POS and total teacher burnout ($r = -0.47$, $p < 0.01$). Deeper factor examinations indicate substantial shielding effects against emotional exhaustion ($r = -0.48$, $p < 0.01$) and depersonalization ($r = -0.41$, $p < 0.01$), alongside a positive link to enhanced feelings of personal accomplishment ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$). Demographic cohort breakdowns via ANOVA and t-tests confirm severe systemic stress points affecting temporary or contractual staff and low-income bracket teachers. Thematic evaluations of qualitative inputs further establish workload relief, managerial recognition, and robust work-life boundaries as key structural interventions required to reinforce educational retention.*

Keywords: perceived organizational support, teacher burnout, emotional exhaustion, secondary school teachers, job resources, educational administration, work-life balance

1. Introduction

Secondary school teaching is a demanding profession that requires teachers to manage academic, emotional, administrative, and interpersonal responsibilities every day. In India, increasing curriculum demands, administrative workload, digital responsibilities, and pressure from parents can contribute to prolonged stress and professional burnout, often seen through emotional exhaustion, detachment, and a reduced sense of professional effectiveness.

In this context, Perceived Organizational Support (POS)- the extent to which teachers feel valued, respected, and supported by their institution- may play an important role in reducing burnout. Therefore, the present study focuses on examining the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and professional burnout among secondary school teachers in India. Understanding this relationship can help identify ways in which schools can better support teachers, protect their well-being, and improve the quality and stability of education.

1.1 Theoretical Background and Cross-Cultural Rationale

Historically, professional burnout was individualistic, viewed primarily as a failure of personal resilience or cognitive coping. Contemporary organizational psychology, however, highlights structural work-environment design. While foundational theories linking institutional support networks to reduced educator stress were largely validated in Western cultural settings, applying these frameworks to Indian secondary education addresses distinct regional

characteristics. Indian educational institutions frequently present centralized administrative designs, diverse institutional management types, highly variable compensation structures, and intense societal accountability linked to high-stakes student performance metrics.

1.2 Need and Significance of the Study

Existing literature in India heavily emphasizes higher university education or early primary development sectors, leaving the highly stressful secondary tier (Grades 6 to 12) under-examined. This project directly addresses this gap by analyzing how support frameworks impact three distinct burnout dimensions. By assessing moderating demographic variables- such as private premium versus state-funded institutional setups, secure permanent tenures versus precarious contractual agreements, and clear income brackets- this study provides actionable, data-driven frameworks for school trustees, principals, and state planning boards to build supportive institutional environments.

2. Review of Literature

The conceptual intersection between institutional health metrics and employee psychological well-being is heavily grounded in three prominent structural frameworks:

- **Organizational Support Theory (OST):** Eisenberger et al. (1986) proposed that employees judge how much their organization values and cares about them through its policies, resources, and leadership. When teachers feel supported, they are more likely to remain committed and experience less emotional withdrawal.

- **Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory:** Hobfoll (1989) suggested that stress occurs when people feel that their personal resources are being threatened or lost. Organizational support can help teachers protect their emotional resources and cope better with workplace demands.
- **Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model:** Demerouti et al. (2001) explained that burnout can develop when job demands, such as workload and administrative pressure, outweigh available resources. Support from the organization can act as an important resource that helps reduce the impact of these demands.

2.1 Empirical Context and Identified Research Gaps

Existing research generally shows that supportive work environments are linked to lower levels of burnout. However, there is limited research on how different forms of organizational support- such as emotional support, practical assistance, and recognition- relate to burnout among secondary school teachers in India. There is also limited evidence on how job security and differences in employment status and salary may influence this relationship. This study therefore focuses on these factors within the Indian secondary education context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Framework, Problem Statement, and Core Objectives

This study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational survey design to examine the relationship between **Perceived Organizational Support (POS)** and **Teacher Burnout**, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The main focus is to understand how perceived institutional support is related to burnout among secondary school teachers in India.

To address this problem, the primary operational objectives are defined as follows:

- Empirically measure baseline levels of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and total burnout values.
- Evaluate the specific directional correlation between POS and individual burnout sub-dimensions.
- Determine statistically significant variances in POS and burnout scores based on institutional profiles, tenure status, and salary groups.

3.2 Study Hypothesis

- H1: There is a statistically significant, negative relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and overall professional burnout levels among secondary school educators in India.
- H1a: High POS significantly correlates with reduced baseline scores for Emotional Exhaustion.
- H1b: Elevated POS significantly correlates with lowered manifestations of worker Depersonalization.
- H1c: Strong institutional support pathways show a direct positive correlation with feelings of Personal Accomplishment.

3.3 Operational Variable Definitions

- **Perceived Organizational Support (POS)** is measured using the validated 8-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8), reflecting how strongly teachers feel their school values their contribution and well-being.
- **Teacher Burnout** is measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators Survey (MBI-ES) across three dimensions: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Reduced Personal Accomplishment.

3.4 Sampling Design and Demarcated Boundary Criteria

Data collection utilized non-probability convenience and snowball sampling methodologies across online Google Forms and selective printed field distributions over 4–6 weeks. The finalized, validated sample consists of 308 active educators. Eligible participants were restricted to active secondary teachers (Grades 6 to 12) with at least one year of continuous service at their current school. Primary educators, higher education university faculty, and non-teaching administrative support personnel were excluded.

3.5 Psychometric Instrumentation and Measurement Tools

The diagnostic survey incorporated two primary psychometric scales:

- Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8): A refined 8-item Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree) assessing structural care, demonstrating robust internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.82$).
- Maslach Burnout Inventory Educators Survey (MBI-ES): A 22-item professional tracking tool evaluating frequency metrics (0 = Never to 6 = Every Day) across three sub-scales: Emotional Exhaustion ($\alpha = 0.91$), Depersonalization ($\alpha = 0.87$), and Personal Accomplishment ($\alpha = 0.85$).

3.6 Data Analytical Framework and Ethical Oversight

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 26 and JASP software. Statistical methods included descriptive baseline metrics, two-tailed Pearson correlations for linear association mapping, independent sample t-tests for binary cohorts, and multi-factor one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) followed by Tukey's HSD post-hoc testing for multi-group comparisons. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were categorized using inductive thematic analysis. Ethical controls ensured voluntary participation, informed consent, complete data anonymization, and access to professional counseling info for individuals showing high distress.

4. Results and Data Analysis

4.1 Demographic Evaluation of the Sample Population

The analyzed cohort of 308 educators exhibits a diverse mix of demographic and professional backgrounds, summarized below in Table 4.1.

Characteristic Profile	Category Grouping	Frequency (N)	Percentage Value (%)
Gender Spectrum	Female Cohort	235	76.30%
	Male Cohort	73	23.70%
Institutional School Profile	Unaided Private (Premium Status)	94	30.50%
	Unaided Private (Low-Fee Status)	82	26.60%
	Government-Aided Setup	57	18.50%
	Government / State-Run Institution	75	24.40%
Active Teaching Experience	1 to 5 Years	98	31.80%
	6 to 10 Years	84	27.30%
	11 to 15 Years	62	20.10%
	16 to 20 Years	31	10.10%
	More than 20 Years	21	6.80%
Employment / Tenure Status	Permanent / Confirmed Staff	248	80.50%
	Temporary / Contractual Staff	60	19.50%
Monthly Income Bracket	Below 20,000 INR	43	14.00%
	20,000 - 30,000 INR	84	27.30%
	30,000 - 40,000 INR	76	24.70%
	40,000 - 50,000 INR	57	18.50%
	Above 50,000 INR	48	15.60%

4.2 Descriptive Metrics and Baseline Distribution Statistics

The sample demonstrates moderate overall baseline scores for both Perceived Organizational Support and job burnout dimensions, as detailed in Table 4.2.

Diagnostic Variable	Mean Score	Standard Deviation (SD)	Min Value	Max Value	Alpha (α)
Perceived Org Support (SPOS-8)	4.89	1.54	1	7	0.82
Emotional Exhaustion (MBI Sub-facet)	2.76	1.89	0	6	0.91
Depersonalization (MBI Sub-facet)	1.69	1.73	0	5.78	0.87
Personal Accomplishment (MBI Sub-facet)	4.87	1.44	0.63	6	0.85
Total Combined Burnout Score	2.85	1.52	0.18	5.59	0.89

Interpretation: The mean POS score of 4.89 on a 7-point scale reflects a moderate level of perceived organizational support, indicating that while teachers generally feel somewhat valued, substantial variance exists across schools. The moderate-to-high baseline for Emotional Exhaustion ($M = 2.76$) highlights significant emotional depletion among portions of the sample. Depersonalization scores remain relatively low ($M = 1.69$), while strong feelings of Personal Accomplishment ($M = 4.87$) suggest that educators maintain

a solid sense of instructional efficacy despite systemic workspace stressors.

4.3 Inferential Statistics: Linear Association and Matrix Breakdown

Two-tailed Pearson correlation matrix evaluations show highly significant relationships across all primary study hypotheses, as outlined in Table 4.3.

Psychometric Construct Matrix	1. POS	2. EE Facet	3. DP Facet	4. PA Facet	5. Total Burnout
1. Perceived Org Support (POS)	1	-	-	-	-
2. Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	-0.48**	1	-	-	-
3. Depersonalization (DP)	-0.41**	0.62**	1	-	-
4. Personal Accomplishment (PA)	0.35**	-0.29**	-0.38**	1	-
5. Total Combined Burnout	-0.47**	0.91**	0.78**	-0.55**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); $N = 308$.

Statistical Verification: The strong negative correlation between POS and total burnout ($r = -0.47$, $p < 0.01$) confirms that high levels of organizational support explain approximately 22% of the variance in teacher burnout scores. This confirms H1. POS demonstrates its most robust negative relationship with Emotional Exhaustion ($r = -0.48$, $p < 0.01$), confirming H1a and highlighting its protective value against emotional depletion. It also shows a significant inverse relationship with Depersonalization ($r = -0.41$, $p < 0.01$), confirming H1b, and a positive correlation with

Personal Accomplishment ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$), confirming H1c.

4.4 Multi-Cohort Group Variance Evaluations

To analyze the impact of structural job design variables, the sample was evaluated across institutional school types, employment tenures, and income groups, as summarized in Table 4.4.

Demographic Cohort Type	Sample Size (N)	POS Mean	EE Mean	DP Mean	PA Mean
[School Type] Unaided Private Premium	94	5.12	3.18	1.89	4.72
[School Type] Unaided Private Low-Fee	82	4.67	2.92	1.78	4.85
[School Type] Government-Aided Structure	57	4.85	2.48	1.52	4.93
[School Type] Government / State-Run	75	4.76	2.32	1.43	5.02
[Tenure Status] Permanent Contracted	248	4.98	2.64	1.59	4.96
[Tenure Status] Temporary / Contractual	60	4.52	3.27	2.08	4.52
[Salary Bracket] Below 20,000 INR	43	4.41	3.42	2.12	4.31
[Salary Bracket] Above 50,000 INR Group	48	5.34	2.18	1.28	5.21

Inferential Analysis Highlights:

- **Institutional Variances (ANOVA):** School types showed distinct differences. Premium private schools reported significantly higher POS scores compared to low-fee private operations ($p < 0.05$) and state-run institutions ($p < 0.01$). However, premium private school teachers also reported significantly higher Emotional Exhaustion scores than government school staff ($F = 9.24$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.08$). Conversely, government school teachers reported higher baseline Personal Accomplishment scores ($M = 5.02$) than premium private school teachers ($M = 4.72$).
- **Tenure Metrics (t-test):** Contractual and temporary staff experienced significantly lower POS ($M = 4.52$) and higher burnout metrics across all dimensions, including higher Emotional Exhaustion ($M = 3.27$), compared to permanent colleagues ($t = -4.12$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 0.54$).
- **Salary Gradient (ANOVA):** Higher compensation brackets strongly correlate with higher POS and reduced burnout. Teachers earning below 20,000 INR reported the highest levels of Emotional Exhaustion ($M = 3.42$) and Depersonalization ($M = 2.12$), alongside the lowest scores for Personal Accomplishment ($M = 4.31$; $F = 8.93$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.11$).

4.5 Inductive Qualitative Evaluations and Teacher Feedback

Inductive thematic tracking of open-ended teacher recommendations regarding stress reduction revealed prominent structural and institutional themes, detailed in Table 4.10.

Core Extracted Theme	Response %	Representative Teacher Context Quotes
Recognition Frameworks	18.80%	"Acknowledge and appreciate our real classroom efforts instead of exclusively highlighting minor errors."
Work-Life Separation	14.60%	"Enforce mandatory weekend off periods; strictly prohibit scheduling digital meetings during holidays."
Strategic Communication	12.30%	"Improve structural distribution of tasks; minimize last-minute adjustments to timetables."
Empathetic Management	11.40%	"Management must try to step into a teacher's shoes to understand daily operational strains."
Teaching Resources	9.40%	"Provide modernized functional aids and upskilling in AI tools to optimize lesson planning tasks."
Compensation Security	7.10%	"Ensure reliable, timely monthly salary releases and stable annual increments to maintain motivation."

4.6 Comprehensive Discussion of Findings

The quantitative and qualitative results strongly align with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The highly significant negative correlation between POS and emotional exhaustion ($r = -0.48$) identifies organizational support as an essential systemic buffer. Premium private institutions present a distinct corporate paradox: higher resource allocation and recognition pathways elevate POS, but high-performance expectations, intense accountability metrics, and extended working hours increase emotional exhaustion. Conversely, government school educators benefit from structural resources like high job security and clear boundaries, which mitigate exhaustion despite lower perceived support scores. The data also show that low salary levels and temporary contractual arrangements create cumulative professional vulnerabilities, greatly accelerating burnout risk.

5. Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Primary Empirical Findings

This study confirms a robust negative relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and teacher burnout ($r = -0.47$, $p < 0.01$) among secondary educators in India. Temporary contractual workers and low-income educators face the highest risk of burnout across all dimensions. Additionally, a distinct operational paradox appears within premium private schools, where high institutional support coexists with elevated emotional exhaustion due to high job demands.

5.2 Strategic Implications and Recommendations

- **For School Leaders and Administrators:** Schools should reduce unnecessary non-academic workload, provide adequate administrative support, and recognise teachers' efforts through regular feedback and appreciation. Clear work-life boundaries, timely communication about schedule changes, and equal opportunities for professional development can also help teachers feel more supported.
- **For Educational Policymakers:** Policies should focus on fair pay, greater job security for temporary teachers, and reasonable limits on non-academic duties assigned to teachers.
- **For Teacher Training Programs:** Teacher education should include practical training in stress management, healthy coping strategies, and ways of effectively communicating workplace needs.

5.3 Methodological Limitations and Future Research Pathways

This study uses a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish definitive causal directions. The data rely on self-report measures, which may introduce social desirability bias, and the convenience sampling method means findings should be generalized to broader Indian regions with appropriate caution. Future research should utilize longitudinal designs to track burnout variations over time, explore self-efficacy as a mediating variable, and conduct comparative regional studies across different states.

5.4 Final Concluding Remarks

Perceived Organizational Support should be seen as an essential need in secondary education rather than simply an additional benefit provided by schools. When teachers feel valued, respected, and supported by their institutions, and have access to fair resources, they are less likely to experience prolonged emotional exhaustion. Supporting the psychological well-being of teachers is therefore important not only for their own well-being but also for maintaining the quality of teaching, creating a stable school environment, and contributing to the overall development of students across India.

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