

BURNOUT SYNDROME AMONG AGRICULTURAL OFFICERS IN KERALA STATE

**By
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THESIS

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree of**

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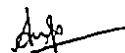
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I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "**Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State**" is a bonafide record of research work done by me during the course of research and that the thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award to me of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title, of any other University or Society.

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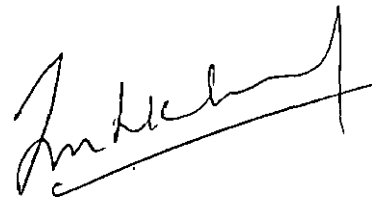
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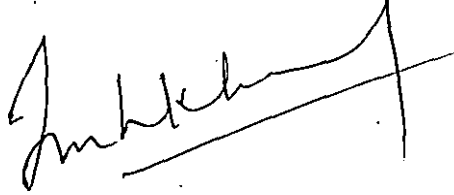


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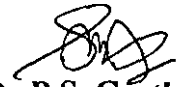
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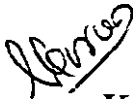
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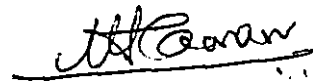
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Anju Annie Cyriac

Affectionately dedicated to

my

Daddy and Amma

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Introduction

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Speedy development of agriculture is essential for the progress of any developing country where economy depends mainly on agriculture and India is no exception to this. To achieve this, proper planning and implementation of agricultural development programme, coupled with successful transfer of useful technology from scientists to farmers is essential.

The State Departments of Agriculture in India occupy a strategic position among agricultural development organizations in meeting the agricultural development needs of the country. The performance of Indian agriculture in the recent past has been appreciable. Five year plans had resulted in spectacular increase in agricultural production with a compound growth rate of 2.5 per cent per annum over the last three decades (Datt and Sundharam, 1997).

In Kerala, the extension service in the field of agriculture is mainly organised by the Department of Agriculture. To make the planning of any development programme relevant and meaningful, it should be carried out at the grass root level.

Taking this into account, the Kerala State Department of Agriculture was restructured in 1987 after the winding up of T&V system. Accordingly, 'Krishi Bhavans' were started in every panchayat of the state. At the base level, village panchayat is the basic unit for development and hence all the agricultural development programmes are conceived, developed and implemented through the panchayat level units.

The Agricultural Officer is the administrative head of the Krishi Bhavan along with two to three Agricultural Assistants. Apart from the role as an expert in

the field, he/she also has to act as a co-ordinator of various activities for agricultural development, as planner and so on. Krishi Bhavans also have to deal with wide cross section of the population including farmers, input suppliers, politicians and multitude of others and has to tackle several problems in its smooth running. Since Krishi Bhavans are responsible for the agricultural development in that area, the Agricultural Officers have to devote their entire time and attention in extension and other developmental activities to create an impact to increase the production and productivity of the crops in that unit.

To fulfil all the tasks assigned to his position, an Agricultural Officer should have a correct perception of the duties to be performed by him and need a congenial work environment which shall be free from any physical or psychological stress.

Organizational stress is a process by which an institution becomes deformed, slowly and systematically by the constant malfunctioning of some systems. Stress is becoming important for individuals and also for organizations because of its negative effects. By reducing or by managing stress, these effects may be significantly reduced, benefiting both the individual and the organizations.

Role based stress has an impact on the continuing pattern of interpersonal relations and on the psychological and even physical well being of the focal person as well as on their role performance. The performance of a person working in an organization depends on his own potential effectiveness as a person, his technical competence, his managerial experience etc., as well as the way in which he performs the role in the organisation.

When an employee enters into an organization, a role is projected to him; he receives some expectations from other members and accordingly respond to these expectations. In the total set of role expectations, if one experiences

inconsistency, incompatibility or controversy, then the stage is normally called as stressful situation.

The effects of such stressful situations that result from overwork and unmet expectations can be seen in the condition of 'burnout'. Employees suffering from burnout become less energetic and less interested in their work. They are emotionally exhausted, apathetic, deprived, irritable and bored. They tend to find fault with all aspects of their work environment including co-workers and react negatively to the suggestions of others.

The management and authorities of an organization must try to keep the employees free from various role stress to derive greater satisfaction and to show better performance and also that organizational climate must be improved and it must be changed for achieving goals of the organization.

Being a complex organization with vast responsibilities, there is every chance of persistence of job stress in the Krishi Bhavan. The manifestation of the challenging job in the Krishi Bhavan may cause undue hardships leading to burnout. The Agricultural Officers are to be trained to minimize their unwanted stress and maximise their satisfaction with the help of healthy interventions so that all the concerned may be benefited. But in the present situation, however, no special focus is being given to them who are vital for agricultural development.

Keeping this in view, the present investigation was undertaken to study the "Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State" with the following specific objectives.

1. To identify the emotional exhaustion of the Agricultural Officers in Kerala in the context of their work environment.
2. To analyse the depersonalization effect on the Agricultural Officers.

3. To analyse the extent of personal accomplishments of the Agricultural Officers.
4. To suggest effective measures for reducing the burnout feeling of Agricultural Officers in the state.

Scope of the study

The present study is an attempt to understand the emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment of the Agricultural Officers in Kerala state. It is believed that this study would contribute to a great extent to understand the stress symptoms which have its own effect on the total efficacy of agricultural developmental scenario of the state. Further, the study also puts forward certain suggestions to overcome burnout symptoms as perceived by the Agricultural Officers, which if adopted, may improve their performance by providing them a feeling of challenge, higher job satisfaction, creativity, effectiveness etc. This may lead to an improvement in the agricultural production needed to feed the growing population by efficiently utilizing the available resources.

Limitations of the study

The study was conducted in a systematic way following the procedure and approach of social science research. However, since the project was undertaken as a part of the requirements of Master's degree programme of the researcher, the concept of burnout could not be studied in greater depth and in more comprehensive manner due to constraints of time and resources. It is also admitted that since the investigation was based on the perceptions of the respondents in the Krishi Bhavan, there could be personal bias and prejudice, which might have affected the results, even though all possible care was taken to avoid them.

Presentation of the study

The study has been spread out under six chapters as described. The first chapter includes the introduction. The second chapter includes theoretical orientation which deals with review of literature related to the field. The third chapter explains the methodology used in the process of investigation. The fourth chapter contains the results of the study. The fifth chapter brings out the discussion of the findings of the study and the sixth chapter summarise the findings. The last chapter is followed by references, appendices and the abstract of the thesis.

Theoretical Orientation

CHAPTER-II

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

For an empirical study on Burnout Syndrome among Agricultural Officers, it is worthwhile reviewing literature on the concept of burnout, factors affecting it and the components of burnout, which have relevance to the topic of study.

The popularity of the concept of stress has broadened in the physiological field where it was first introduced, and the use of stress terminology continues to flourish in the psychological field as well. During the last 15 years the term stress has come to be widely used in relation to work organisations (Agarwala *et al.*, 1979). Burnout is a final consequence of stress and has implications for both people and organisations. It occurs in different forms in the organisation. Between 1974 and 1982, forty eight attempts were made to define burnout (Perlman and Hartman, 1982). While each of these attempts focussed on a specific aspect of burnout, it was only in 1982, that a consolidated definition appeared, which views burnout as a function of 3 concerns: (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) lowered job productivity, (c) over depersonalisation.

The present chapter examines the available literature on burnout having a bearing on the study in question. That will serve as a precursor for the present study and will help in relating its findings with those of former studies.

The available literature related to the topic is presented under the following major heads:

- 2.1 Meaning of Burnout
- 2.2 Burnout - related concepts
- 2.3 Factors affecting burnout

- 2.4 Components of burnout
- 2.5 Conceptual frame work for the study

2.1 **Meaning of Burnout**

Moss (1981) defined burnout as a general feeling of exhaustion that develops when an individual simultaneously experiences too much pressure and too few sources of satisfaction.

Pines *et al.* (1981) defined burnout as a state of mind resulting from prolonged exposure to intense emotional stress and involve three major components such as Physical, emotional and mental exhaustion.

Perlman and Hartman (1982) defined burnout as chronic emotional stress with (a) emotional or physical exhaustion, (b) lowered job productivity and (c) over depersonalization.

Jackson *et al.* (1986) opined that burnout develops with the people having high aspirations and strong motivation to get things done who are especially vulnerable when the organization suppresses or limits their initiative while constantly demanding that they serve the organizations own ends.

Voelkl *et al.* (1986) defined burnout for the purpose of their study as a destructive outcome from stress in which individuals become physically, emotionally and attitudinally exhausted.

David (1990) suggested that burnout is a psychological consequence of stress which is a serious consideration for management because burnout individuals pull their organizations down with them.

Lee and Ashforth (1996) defined burnout as a general feeling of exhaustion that develops when a person simultaneously experiences very much pressure and has too few sources of satisfaction.

Pareek (1997) explained burnout as the harmful effect of stress resulting in a loss of effectiveness and defined it as the end result of stress experienced, but not properly coped with, resulting in exhaustion, irritation and ineffectiveness.

2.2 Burnout - related concepts

Golenbienski (1982) observed that organisational development philosophy and methods ameliorate the conditions that can lead to burnout and also will help in dealing with burnout as a phenomenon that can help in timely identification of cases of early burnout.

Jackson and Maslach (1982) described burnout as an umbrella term referring to the three related but loosely coupled components such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments, which are conceptually distinct but are not assumed to be empirically uncorrelated.

Maslach (1982) observed that current burnout research continues to focus on employees in the human service sector requiring large amount of contact with people in need of aid.

Paine (1982) reported that burnout syndrome can lead to at least four types of stress related consequences such as, depletion of energy reserves, lowered resistance to illness, increased dissatisfaction and pessimism, increased absenteeism and inefficiency at work.

Silverstein (1982) in his research, documented the occurrence of burnout in 25 different occupations involving human service roles.

Maslach and Jackson (1984a) observed that in most of the human service occupations, handling of one's case load is the primary determinant of reactions to one's job and this case load size is associated with burnout.

Green and Walkey (1988) identified that high scores on the burnout scale are related to exhaustion and work overload in various occupations.

Krone *et al.* (1989) reported significant incidence of high burnout according to Maslach's three domains, especially on the emotional exhaustion (28%) and depersonalization (20%) subscales.

Wolpin *et al.* (1991) analysed the longitudinal data on teachers and school administrators in Canada and reported that burnout was responsible for their reduced job satisfaction.

Pines and Guendelman (1995) stated that for human service professionals, work provides an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the people at work and also to the society at large. They added that when work does not provide that, it will result in burnout.

From the above reviews, it can be summarised that burnout will retard the employee's interest towards the job and if manifested over a long period, can result in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments.

2.3 Factors affecting burnout

For the present study, 11 related factors were selected and related reviews are presented below:

2.3.1 Extent of external influence

Jhamtani and Singh (1987) reported that political influence had a significant influence on the Agricultural and Panchayat Units as a result of which the Department loses technically qualified and experienced men.

Mandal (1995) highlighted that political influence was one of the major obstacles for the village level workers - the lowest level in rural development administration - in order to correctly fulfil the requirements of their job.

These findings indicated a positive relationship between extent of external influence and burnout.

2.3.2 Team work

According to Davis (1972) team work, as an area of management practice, is the integration of people into work situation in a way that motivates them to work together productively, co-operatively with economic, psychological and social satisfaction.

As Saksena (1982) states, it is important that employees will not only be able to work but be willing to work in a team as well. This willingness is based largely on managing ability to integrate the interest and needs of their employees with the objectives of the organisation.

Samantha (1985) reported that lack of actual team spirit among the scientists in ICAR institutes was one of the main factors affecting the productivity of the research organization.

Vallen (1993) observed that lack of co-operative team work had a positive significant influence on employees burnout.

Based on the above reviews, a negative significant relation was assumed between team work and burnout.

2.3.3 Technical competency

According to Bhandari (1959), Agricultural Officers should be thorough in technical knowledge as applied to local conditions. They should understand the extension methods and techniques. They should have adequate initiative to study the local problems and to report the same to the laboratories. They should have the ability to solve the problems by offering suitable solutions. They should have ability to work with groups and to encourage progressive leaders.

Meggison (1968) emphasised that the competence of a manager varies with his ability to empathise with his subordinates, to foresee and evaluate events objectively and to adapt to changes in environment.

Zaltman and Duncan (1977) stated that the change agents are likely to be competent if they stimulate the user's problem solving process and are sufficiently knowledgeable about the research and development processes that produce solutions. They also observed that the single and most necessary trait the change agent must possess is technical competence in the assigned tasks.

Bhagat and Allie (1989) defined sense of competence as "individual's internal, psychological feelings concerning how competent they seem to be themselves, but not necessarily how competent they really are".

The result of Bhagat and Allie's investigation also indicated that neither organisational nor personal stressors were related to performance. Sense of competence, however, was positively related to performance ratings.

Sabarathnam (1990) observed that stress is increased when a person believes that he or she lacks competence to meet a particular demand.

Verma (1990) observed that with low level of skill and knowledge, employee cannot perform their job efficiently.

Nehru (1993) reported positive and significant relationship between technical competency and job efficiency of Agricultural Officers.

Sternberg (1994) stated that triarchic theory of intelligence provides examples of several ways in which high levels of ability could mitigate the impact of stressors on performance.

Based on the previous reviews, technical competency was assumed to have a negative relationship with burnout feeling of Agricultural Officers.

2.3.4 Managing problems

Mathew (1982) reported that stress arises only when the people realise that they can not manage problems adequately under a difficult situation.

Jhamtani and Singh (1987) reported positive and significant influence of the dimension 'Managing problems' on the organizational environment of a developing department. It was further stressed that instead of letting the time to take care of the problems, conscious efforts should be made to arrive at final solutions.

Ottaway and Bhatnagar (1988) reported that women managers brought new insights and view points to management problems which lead to more effective performance.

The above reviews indicate that 'Managing problems' is a variable which could have significant negative relationship with burnout.

2.3.5 Clarity of task

French and Caplan (1973) identified lack of clarity of task, role conflict and role overload as the general type of role stressors common in an organization.

Weed *et al.* (1976) inferred that greater task difficulty and ambiguity caused greater stress.

Schuler (1977) found that lack of clarity of role had a more negative impact on performance among those who lack relevant job experience.

Harigopal and Ravikumar (1979) observed that lack of clarity of task was negatively related to job involvement and intrinsic motivation.

Vansell *et al.* (1981) concluded that individual differences pertaining to the perception, adaptability and need for clarity of task moderate the stress-strain relationship.

Srilatha (1988) observed that stress can be minimised by having clarity regarding one's role including the definition of task, responsibility and authority.

Pavelka (1993) reported that clear cut task positively affect job satisfaction and negatively affect job stress.

Zohar (1994) inferred that task clarity had direct effect on employee's powerfulness thus increasing the service quality leading to lessened job stress.

Frone *et al.* (1995) viewed that high level of job involvement and role clarification training could significantly reduce the stressful effects of role ambiguity.

Ahmad and Mehta (1997) opined lack of clarity of task as a stresser resulted in job dissatisfaction and high job-related tension. They also indicated that lack of clarity of task was negatively correlated with three indices of work related satisfaction, namely influence at work, amenities at work and job satisfaction.

Based on the above reviews, a negative significant relationship was anticipated between clarity of task and burnout.

2.3.6 Job satisfaction

Rizzo *et al.* (1970) reported that stress can result in decreased job satisfaction and low level of performance and effectiveness.

Keller (1975) reported that role conflict is negatively correlated with satisfaction with respondent's pay, supervision and promotion.

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the perception of one's job as fulfilling or allowing the fulfilment of one's important job values, provided these values are compatible with one's needs.

Sinha *et al.* (1976) defined job satisfaction as a mental state of an individual in an organization when he feels satisfaction in performing the job of his position.

Mohanty (1988) stated that job satisfaction is the result of various attitudes that the worker holds towards his job, towards related factors and towards life in general.

Reddy and Jayaramaiah (1988) found that job effectiveness of village extension officers in the T & V system of Andhra Pradesh had positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction.

Sharma *et al.* (1988) reported that the role performance of Rural Agricultural Extension Agents was significantly and positively related to their job satisfaction.

Reddy (1989) found that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job performance of Agricultural Officers working under T & V system of Andhra Pradesh.

Hoss (1991) concluded that job rotation improves total output, increase job satisfaction, and reduces psychological or mental stress.

Pavelka (1993) indicated that as levels of role conflict and role ambiguity increases, job satisfaction decreases and the level of job stress increases.

Vallen (1993) revealed that job satisfaction is directly related to employee turnover and indirectly to absenteeism and burnout.

In view of the above reviews, it was decided to include this component in the study in order to verify its negative relationship on the burnout of the Agricultural Officers.

2.3.7 Self-confidence

Pandayaraj (1978) found positive and significant relationship between self confidence and communication behaviour of Junior Agricultural Officers.

Edelwich and Brodsky (1980) reported a sense of confidence that they can control their own destinies and can solve their own problems will increase an employee's success rate and so make his work more satisfying.

Cox and Mackay (1981) suggested that stress arises when there is imbalance between the perceived demand and the person's perception of his/her confidence to meet the demand.

Loganathan (1988) observed that confidence of the entrepreneur had significant association with entrepreneurial development and performance.

Srilatha (1988) reported that organizational stress, role ambiguity and role overload were negatively and significantly associated with three factors of self confidence, namely, job knowledge, work planning and upward communication.

Based on the above findings, self confidence was expected to have a negative relationship with burnout.

2.3.8 Job commitment

Hamner and Tosi (1974) examined the relationship of role conflict and role ambiguity with job involvement. A negative relationship was observed between role stress and job involvement.

Madhu and Harigopal (1976) reported role ambiguity to be negatively related with job commitment.

Ambastha (1980) reported that farm scientists with more job commitment had more communication with various categories of farmers and extension personnel.

Prasannakumar (1985) reported positive and significant relationship between task identity and organizational commitment of Assistant Agricultural Officers working under the T & V system in Karnataka.

Nath (1988) reported a negative relationship between organizational role stress and job commitment. He further observed that burnout typically strikes those employees who are highly dedicated and committed to their work.

Reddy and Jayaramaiah (1988) reported that organizational commitment of the village extension officers working in the T & V system of Andhra Pradesh had positive and significant relation with their job effectiveness.

Based on the previous findings a negative significant relationship between job commitment and burnout of Agricultural Officers was anticipated in the present study.

2.3.9 Rationality in decision making

Supre and Singh (1969) inferred that the act of an individual is considered rational to the extent he justified his selection of most effective means, from among the available alternatives on the basis of scientific criteria for achieving maximum ends.

Herbert (1977) assumed that an effective manager use bounded rationality to pick an alternative that satisfies the need in limited time and information.

Sawant and Thorat (1977) found positive and significant correlation of rationality in decision making with adoption of improved farm practices.

Einhorn and Hogarth (1982) viewed that individuals who weigh their options and calculate optimal levels of risk are rational in their decision making.

The above studies indicate a positive influence of rationality in decision making on the job performance of the individual and hence a negative relationship with burnout was assumed in the present study.

2.3.10 Organisational climate

According to Taylor and Bowers (1970) organizational climate is the perceived characteristics of organizational practices by most people in the organization and affects overt behaviour within the organization.

Sharma and Prasad (1972) inferred that the productive efficiency of an organization depends mainly on the conduciveness of its working environment which can and should be reflected in the extent of satisfaction of the person.

Albrecht (1979) opined that stress is simply a factor of organizational life and many of the cause and effects of stress are subject to change when they are approximately managed.

Sen (1982) found that organizational climate and locus of control are significant determinants of coping styles of stress.

Keenan and Newton (1984) reported that environmental frustration is an important source of stress in organizational life.

Jhansi Rani (1985) inferred that there is no significant relationship between organizational climate and extension productivity of agricultural scientists.

Singh (1987) viewed that with a change in the perceived level of dimensions of organizational climate, the level of both felt role stress and job satisfaction varied inversely.

Nath (1988) mentioned that several behavioural scientists in India have long recognised some variables such as organizational climate, role stress and locus of control as crucial causal factors for job involvement.

Khanna (1985) observed that achievement and extension climate had a positive effect on the organizational effectiveness.

The above findings indicate a direct influence of organizational climate on organizational effectiveness and thus a negative relationship with burnout was assumed.

2.3.11 Attitude towards job

Finley *et al.* (1955) believed that efficiency of workers would be increased if positive attitude towards work were encouraged.

Homans (1955) opined that the only factor that was found to be continuously related with increased output in the organization was the job attitude of employees.

Mehta (1955) observed that no other factor of production played so dominant role in the determination of organizational productivity as the attitude of workers towards their jobs.

Ganguly (1958) viewed that an increase in productivity can be obtained through favourable shift in the job attitude of employees.

Mongia (1976) emphasised that high productivity could be achieved if the attitude of the workers towards their work is maintained at favourable level.

Based on the above findings, a negative relationship between attitude towards job and burnout was assumed.

2.4 Components of burnout

2.4.1 Emotional exhaustion

Salye (1978) reported that stress will develop General Adaptation Syndrome which consist of three stages namely Alarm reaction, Stage of resistance and State of exhaustion. He further added that in the last stage, the adaptation energy is exhausted and the resistance level tend to decline.

Maslach and Jackson (1981b) suggested that emotional exhaustion can also manifest itself when workers who are in the business of dealing with other people lose their ability to be at peak performance in dealing with others.

Maslach (1982) defined emotional exhaustion as the feeling of being drained and empty that is caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands, often brought about by work overload or unrealistically high expectations.

Maslach and Jackson (1982) inferred that job burnout is the extreme case of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion. They further added that when stressors seem to be unavoidable and sources of relief seem to be unavailable, people feel totally drained and hate going to work.

Maddi and Kobasa (1984) investigated the factors causing some people to be exhausted and drained by stressful events and found that the ability to handle stress is a function of four characteristics such as personal style and personality, social support, constitutional predisposition and health practices.

Rodin (1985) observed that there are emotional demands of being in a helping profession.

Jackson *et al.* (1986) emphasised that high expectations about what they should accomplish will motivate the clients to expend large amount of emotional exhaustion on their job, leading eventually to exhaustion.

Fernandes and Murthy (1989) observed significant correlation between stress and emotional exhaustion.

Joshi and Singhvi (1993) reported highest mean scores on emotional exhaustion intensity and emotional exhaustion frequency which indicate that the respondents show high degree of burnout.

Pattanayak *et al.* (1995) inferred that emotional exhaustion can lead to stress related consequences such as depletion of energy receivers, lowered resistance, illness, increased dissatisfaction and pessimism and increased absenteeism and inefficiency at work.

Subudhi (1997) reported that work experience appeared to be the single significant correlate of emotional exhaustion which contribute 43 per cent variation.

The above reviews reveal that emotional exhaustion is the major constituent of burnout and the employee should find ways and means to minimise it in order to be efficient in his job.

2.4.2 Depersonalization

Lief and Fox (1963) opined that depersonalizing clients may minimise potentially intense emotional arousal that could interfere with functioning in crisis situations.

Maslach (1973) reported that depersonalization is an important aspect of stress reactions among human service employees to deindividuate and depersonalize clients.

Maslach (1982) suggested that depersonalization is a feeling of callousness and cynicism and a reduced sensitivity towards others.

Savicki and Cooley (1983) observed that rigid and controlling administrative practices can involve depersonalization.

Maslach and Jackson (1984b) argued that depersonalization develops as a coping response to work over load.

Jackson *et al.* (1986) emphasised that unmet organizational expectations imply a dehumanizing organization to which employee may develop a feeling of becoming more dehumanizing and depersonalizing themselves.

Fernandes and Murthy (1989) reported non-significant relationship between stress and depersonalization.

Mishra (1994) revealed that personal characteristics and organizational conflicts contributed much to depersonalization but they did not make much contribution to stress and personal accomplishment.

The findings indicate that depersonalization is strongly associated with stress and will reduce the employee's accomplishments in the organization once he/she felt depersonalized.

2.4.3 Low personal accomplishment

Riffel (1971) reported an inverse relationship between role stress and lack of intensity of personal accomplishment.

Faire (1976) opined that an early sign of burnout is when the employees put in more time and accomplish less because of their exhaustion.

Abramson *et al.* (1978) showed that people in situations where efforts repeatedly fail to produce positive results develop symptoms of stress and depression.

Maslach (1982) reported that reduced sense of personal accomplishment is due to the feeling that one's actions and efforts are wasted and worthless.

Pestonjee (1987a) viewed that it is natural and healthy to maintain optimal levels of stress and opined that success, achievement and higher productivity and effectiveness call for stress.

Fernandes and Murthy (1989) revealed a non-significant relationship between stress and personal accomplishment.

Joshi and Singhvi (1993) showed high mean scores in personal accomplishment which means that employees have lower degree of burnout.

Mishra (1994) reported that personal accomplishment was determined more by sex than by any other variable.

Wesley (1997) observed that greater the stress, less will be the employees' productivity which affect the organizational objectives for which coping strategies have to be adopted.

By synthesizing the above reviews, it becomes evident that lack of personal accomplishment is a major contributor of burnout.

2.5 Conceptual frame work for the study

The seventeenth century has been called the Age of Enlightenment; the eighteenth, the Age of Reason; the nineteenth, the Age of Progress and the twentieth, the Age of Anxiety and Stress (Coleman, 1976). Thus it is evident that the interest in 'stress' has been rising with advancement of the present century. The term is generally used in two major ways; to label situations that tax a person's physical or psychological resources and to refer to the emotional response of the person to such situations. It includes not only anxiety but other negative or aversive emotional states as well. Psychologically stress has been defined as the reaction accompanying the perceived or assumed inability to deal with the system input (Sanders, 1980).

Lazarus (1966) propounded cognitive stress theory stating that perception and individual colouring play an important part in the development of stress.

In the field of work and organizational psychology too, the concept of stress has obtained its own position under the label of organizational job stress (Newman and Beehr, 1979).

Job stress refers to the situation wherein job related factors interact with the worker to change his or her psychological or physiological condition such that the person is forced to deviate from normal functioning.

Although stress reactions depend on what an individual considers dangerous or threatening, people vary greatly in general vulnerability to stress. According to Xie and Johns (1995), employees in a situation of work overload; if did not feel competent to cope with the required tasks, reported a high level of stress.

Fox *et al.* (1993) explained that higher the job demand and the lower the control over those demands, the higher will be the measures of stress.

Komhauser (1965) found that alienation from work, together with a number of physical complaints accompanying such an alienation, are found more often in people who perform monotonous, strictly controlled and supervised work at an assembly line.

French and Caplan (1973) succeeded in finding a number of stress inducing factors within organization and in indicating their effects.

Parasuraman and Alutto (1981) identified a number of sources of stress in the work environment and examined the relationship of contextual, task and role related variables to such stress.

In the conceptual frame work, the present study on Burnout Syndrome among Agricultural Officers was designed. All the probable variables influencing burnout were conceived within the frame work of the study and the conceptual model is depicted in Fig.1.

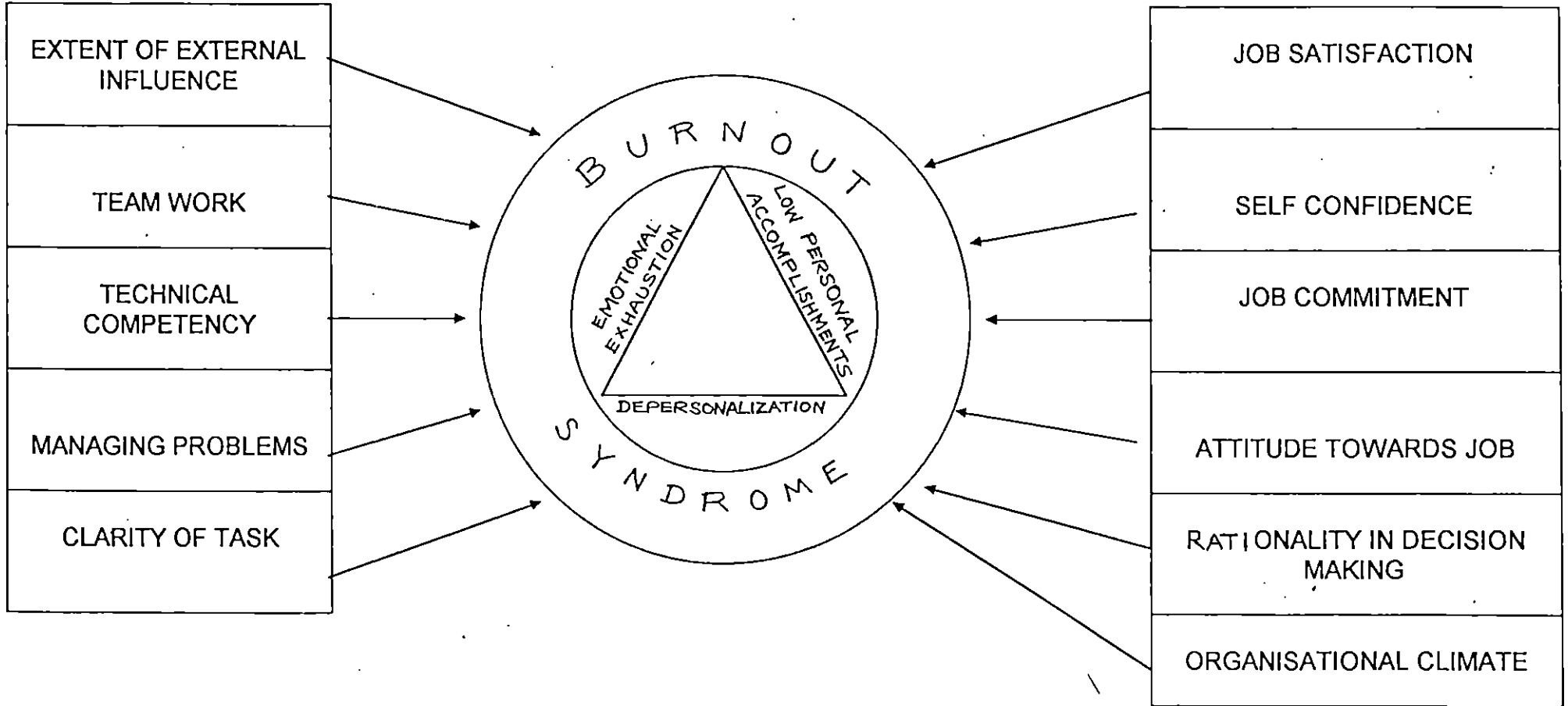


Fig. 1 Conceptual model for the study

From the conceptual model, it can be observed that the three components namely, emotional exhaustion, low personal accomplishments and depersonalization constitute the burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala. In the present study, the factors that are assumed to have influence on burnout, were extent of external influence, team work, technical competency, managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction, self-confidence, job commitment, attitude towards job, rationality in decision making and organizational climate. These factors are shown by unbroken lines pointing towards burnout.

Methodology

CHAPTER-III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the description of the methods and procedures adopted in conducting the present research study. The various aspects are furnished in this chapter under the following subheadings.

- 3.1 Research Design
- 3.2 Locale of the study
- 3.3 Selection of sample
- 3.4 Selection of variables for the study
- 3.5 Operationalisation and measurement of variables
- 3.6 Methods of data collection
- 3.7 Suggestions to reduce burnout syndrome as perceived by the Agricultural Officers
- 3.8 Statistical tools used

3.1 Research Design

Expost facto design was employed in the present study. It is a design in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variable because their manifestations have already occurred and they are less manipulable.

3.2 Locale of the study

The study was conducted in three districts of Kerala state, representing the North, Central and South zones. One district was randomly selected from each zone. The randomly selected districts are Kasargode, Thrissur and Kottayam. The map showing the location of the study is given in Fig.2.

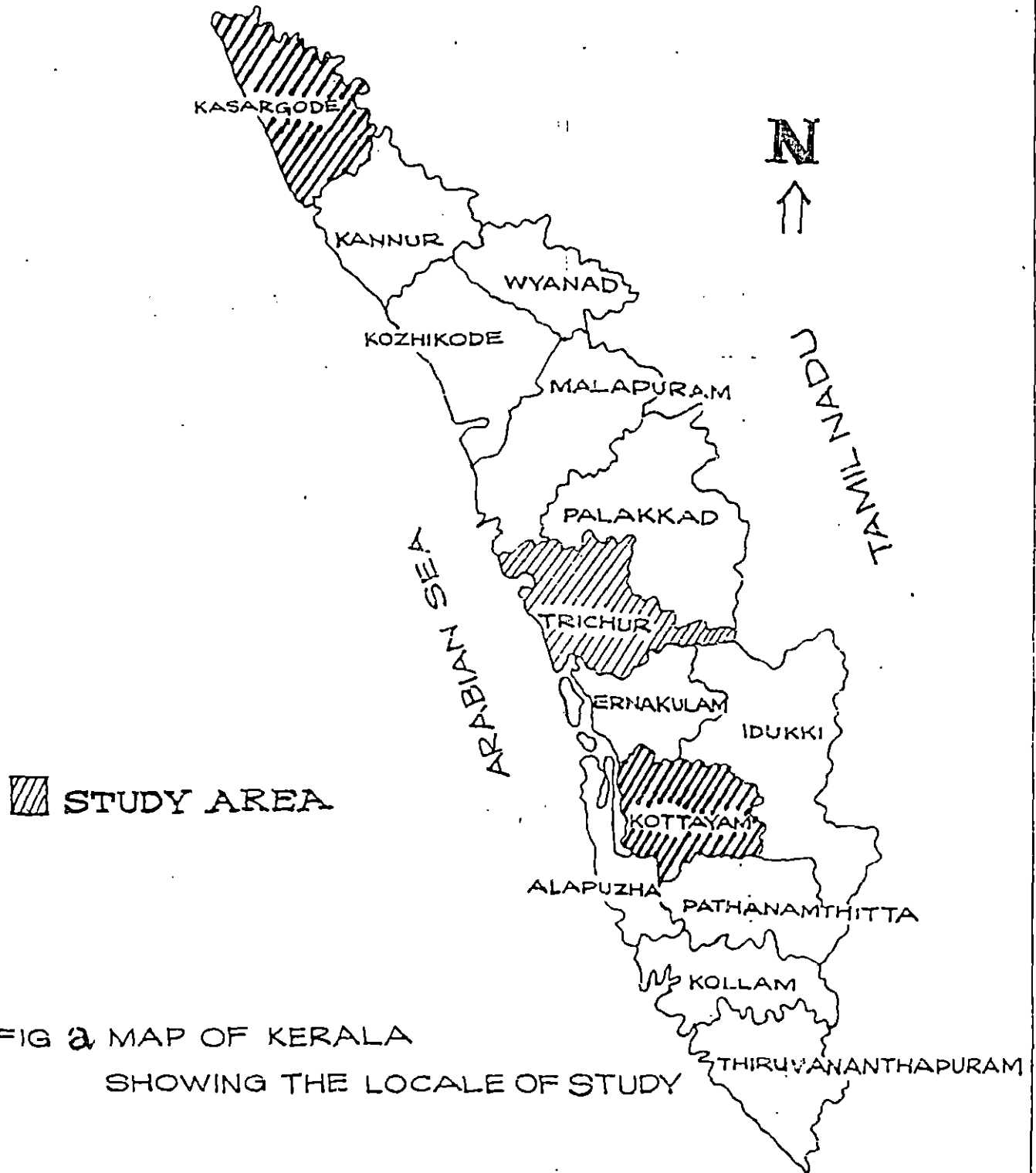


FIG 2 MAP OF KERALA
SHOWING THE LOCALE OF STUDY

The base level units of the State Department of Agriculture are the Krishi Bhavans. The Agricultural Officer is the administrative head of the Krishi Bhavan, who is supported by two to three Agricultural Assistants, who form the field level grass root functionaries. The Krishi Bhavans included in the present study were taken from the selected three districts.

3.3 Selection of the sample

The unit of analysis for the present study comprised of Agricultural Officers of different Krishi Bhavans in the selected three districts. The details of all Agricultural Officers were gathered from the office of the Principal Agricultural Officers of Kasargode, Thrissur and Kottayam and a list was prepared for each district which served as the sampling frame. From the list so prepared, the respondents were selected following the stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation. Accordingly 35 Agricultural Officers were selected from Kottayam, 18 from Kasargode and 47 from Thrissur. Thus a total of 100 Agricultural Officers formed the sample of the present study.

3.4 Selection of the variables for the study

3.4.1 Selection of the dependent variables

The very objective of the study necessitated the three components of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment to be considered as the dependent variables for the study.

3.4.2 Selection of the personal and situational factors affecting burnout

With regard to the personal and situational factors affecting burnout, a list of 29 variables which were found relevant was prepared based on extensive search of literature and by discussion with experts in the field. This list was examined critically and rated by extension scientists of Kerala Agricultural University, Agricultural Officers of the Krishi Bhavan and also by a few scientists

of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, with the relevancy of each variable on a five point continuum ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with weightages of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The list was given to a sample of 55 judges of which only 34 responded. The final variables were selected based on the coefficient of agreement value of the variables calculated as

$$\text{COA} = \frac{\Sigma X}{Y \times N} \times 100$$

where,

X = Weightage obtained by a variable

Y = Maximum potential score of a variable

N = Number of judges

The personal and situational factors affecting burnout with their coefficient of agreement score is presented in the Appendix-I.

As it was not possible to consider all the factors which had obtained high coefficient of agreement value to be included in the study due to time constraints and other limitations, it was decided to include only those factors having coefficient of agreement above 80 per cent in the final study.

Accordingly, only 11 factors were selected. The selected factors were; extent of external influence, team work, technical competency, managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction, self-confidence, job commitment, attitude towards job, rationality in decision making and organizational climate.

3.5 Operationalisation and measurement of variables

3.5.1 Operationalisation and measurement of dependent variables

Burnout has been operationally defined as the syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishments of an

Agricultural Officer which manifests in negative attitude and behaviour towards his job due to over work load and over contact with clients.

The three components of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment were selected as the dependent variables for the present study.

For this study, emotional exhaustion was operationally defined as a state of mind caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands made on Agricultural Officers by work over load or unrealistically high expectations about their job.

Depersonalization was operationally defined as a way of treating Agricultural Officers like mere objects by the higher officials, which is reflected in the use of object labels when referring to them.

Low personal accomplishment was operationally defined as a state of stress and depression which an Agricultural Officer develops when his actions and efforts repeatedly fail to produce any positive results.

Burnout is the final consequence of stress. Burnout is measured in different ways by the researchers.

Maslach and Jackson (1978) measured the three dimensions of burnout by using job-stress-burnout scale and are reported to be independent of another.

Maslach and Jackson (1984a) measured burnout using Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which is found to have psychometric properties.

In addition to burnout, different forms of stress are measured by different researchers in many ways.

Holmes and Rahe (1967) developed Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) which was used by most investigators in India to obtain a global index of life stress.

Horowitz et al. (1977) developed life event questionnaires for measuring presumptive stress and determined new weights for the same.

Srivastava (1985a) constructed occupational stress index and the employee's motivational schedule and were administered to the respondents to classify them in to different motivation groups to test the difference in stress scores.

Ushasree and Jamuna (1990) used Bhushan's Teacher's Role Conflict Inventory and an adapted version of Seidman and Zanger's Burnout Scale to assess to role conflict and job stress among selected school teachers.

For the present study, the three dimensions of burnout were measured by constructing a set of statements for each dimension. A group of statements were prepared based on extensive review of literature and discussion with experts. These statements were administered to a non-sample of 30 respondents in a pilot study prior to the preparation of the final interview schedule. They were asked to respond to each statement on a five point continuum as follows:

- SA - Strongly agree
- A - Agree
- UN - Undecided
- DA - Disagree
- SDA - Strongly disagree

The total score of each statement were found out separately. The final statements were selected based on the coefficient of agreement calculated as,

$$\text{COA} = \frac{\Sigma X}{Y \times N} \times 100$$

where,

X = Weightage obtained by a statement

Y = Maximum potential score of a statement

N = Number of judges

All those statements having coefficient of agreement of 80 per cent and above were included in the final interview schedule.

The statements with their coefficient of agreement score is presented in Appendix II. The scores obtained for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment and burnout were made into indices by using the formula as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Score obtained}}{\text{Maximum possible score}} \times 100$$

These indices were used for categorization of the Agricultural Officers based on their extent of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishments and burnout.

3.5.2 Operationalisation and measurement of factors affecting burnout

1. Extent of external influence

It is operationalised as the degree of extraneous influence on officials during the process of taking decisions and execution of his duties.

This variable was measured by a scale used by Nambiar (1998) with suitable modifications to suit the study. The scoring pattern was,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements. The total score was the summation of scores obtained by each item. The range of scores was from 7-35.

2. Team work

It is operationalised as the healthy relationship that exist among officials in work situation which promotes team spirit, mutual trust and participative culture.

Team work was measured using the scale developed by Chattopadhyaya (1982) with a slight modification to suit the study. The scores were assigned to the statements following the scoring pattern as

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements. The scores were within the range of 7-35.

3. Technical competence

It refers to the knowledge and proficiency possessed by a respondent in relation to various job activities with respect to principles and procedures which equip the Agricultural Officer to execute his job effectively for the client system.

Technical competence was measured using the scale followed by Mathew (1989) with modifications to suit the study. The scoring was done on a 5 point continuum with scores as:

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scores were within a range of 11-55.

4. Managing problems

It refers to the ways and means by which the Agricultural Officers of the Krishi Bhavans resolved interpersonal and inter organizational problems that may arise with respect to his job activities.

The scale used by Sen (1982) with modifications was followed for the study. The scoring pattern was,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements. The scores were within the range of 7-35.

5. Clarity of task

It refers to the extent to which the tasks can be clearly spelled out so that it becomes more vivid, apparent and comprehensible by the Agricultural Officers.

The scale used by Nambiar (1998) with slight modification was used for measuring clarity of task.

The scoring pattern is as below:

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The range of scores varied from 7-35

6. Job satisfaction

It is operationalised as the degree of satisfaction that the Agricultural Officers derive out of various aspects of their job such as professional activities, salary, job security, praise and recognition for good work etc.

Job satisfaction was measured in the present study following the scale developed by Laharia (1978) with modifications. The scoring pattern used was,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The range of scores varied from 9 to 45.

7. Self confidence

It refers to the evaluation by the Agricultural Officers about his own ability, initiative and enthusiasm to fulfil his goals.

Self confidence was measured for the present study following the scale developed by Pandyaraj (1978) with suitable modifications. The scores assigned were,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The total score was obtained by summation of weights over all items for a respondent. The range of scores varied from 6-30.

8. Job commitment

It refers to the extent of involvement of the Agricultural Officer in different activities in relation to his job.

The scale employed by Joseph (1983) with suitable modifications was used for quantifying this variable. The scoring pattern was,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scoring pattern was reversed for the negative statements. The range of scores varied from 5 to 25.

9. Attitude towards job

It is operationalised as the mental disposition of an Agricultural Officer towards his job and his willingness to react in one way or other to the specific factors related to the job.

The scaling technique used by Likert (1932) with slight modification in the scoring pattern was used to suit the study. The scoring pattern followed was as below:

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The range of scores was from 6-30.

10. Rationality in decision making

It refers to the positive trait of a respondent of being perceived by others as logical and reasonable.

The scale developed by Vipinkumar (1994) with necessary modifications was used to suit the study. The scoring pattern used was,

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Score</u>
Most favourable	2
Favourable	1
Least favourable	0

The range of scores was from 0-6

11. Organisational climate

It refers to the total perception and appraisal by an Agricultural Officers about the physical and socio-psychological environment which prevails in the Department in which they work.

The scale employed by Prakasam (1986) with necessary modification was used to suit the study. The scoring pattern used was,

<u>Response</u>	<u>Score</u>
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

The scale constitute of 7 items with the scores ranging from 7-35.

3.6 Method of data collection

A structured interview schedule was prepared for collecting the data which was pretested and finalised based on the pilot study. The pilot study was conducted in three non-sample areas which closely resembled those selected for main study. Interview schedule for the pilot study was administered for 30 respondents and their responses were recorded. Necessary modifications were made so as to remove ambiguity and to keep a logical sequence. The schedule presented in the Appendix III was finalised for collecting the data from the Agricultural Officers.

The data collection was done during the months of February-May 1999. Personal interview method was used to collect the data.

3.7 Suggestions to reduce burnout syndrome as perceived by the Agricultural Officers

Based on discussion with Agricultural Officers, experts in Agricultural Department and also through relevant review of literature, few suggestions to reduce the burnout feeling were identified. They were listed and included in the interview schedule. The response to each suggestion was obtained on a five point continuum viz., Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly disagree with weights 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, respectively. The cumulative value for each suggestion was worked out and based on this value, suggestions to reduce burnout syndrome were ranked.

3.8 Statistical tools used for the study

The following statistical procedures were employed to analyse the data collected from the respondents which were tabulated and computed.

1. Correlation analysis

Pearson's coefficient of correlation was calculated to find out the intensity of association between the dependent variable and the factors affecting burnout. The formula used was,

$$r = \frac{\text{Cov}(x_i, y)}{V(x) V(y)}$$

$$\text{Cov}(x_i, y) = \frac{1}{n} \left[\Sigma xy - \frac{\Sigma x \Sigma y}{n} \right]$$

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{n} \left[\Sigma x^2 - \frac{(\Sigma x)^2}{n} \right]$$

$$V(y) = \frac{1}{n} \left[\Sigma y^2 - \frac{(\Sigma y)^2}{n} \right]$$

where,

r = correlation coefficient
 x = factor affecting burnout
 y = dependent variable
 n = number of observations

2. Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis was done to determine the net contribution of each of the factors to the dependent variable and to know the percentage of variation that a set of factors jointly explains on the dependent variable. The regression equation is in the form of,

$$y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + \dots + b_nx_n$$

where,

y = component, a = intercept
 x₁, x₂ x_n = factors
 b₁, b₂ b_n = regression coefficients

Coefficient of determination (R^2) was estimated from the regression equation. A significant R^2 suggests the desirability of regression analysis in predicting the dependent variable. The test of significance of regression coefficients (b 's) was carried out with the help of 't' values computed.

3. Step-down regression analysis

Step-down regression was employed to obtain information regarding the best set of components and the relative contribution of each of these components in contributing to the variation after eliminating unimportant components. It selects the best subset of components in predicting variation in dependent variable.

4. Path coefficient analysis

Path coefficient analysis explains the cause and effect relationship between the dependent variables and the factors affecting burnout. It is possible to represent the whole system of variables in the form of a diagram known as "path diagram".

Path coefficients are standardised regression coefficients. If 'y' is the effect and 'x' is the cause, the path coefficient for the path from cause 'x_i' to the effect 'y' is defined as,

$$P_{iy} = \frac{b_i \sigma_{x_i}}{\sigma_y}$$

where,

b_i is the partial regression coefficient of y on x_i

The statistical analysis was done using the computer facility available at the Department of Agricultural Extension, College of Horticulture, Vellanikkara.

Results

CHAPTER-IV

RESULTS

Keeping the objectives of the study in view, the results of the study are presented in this chapter under the following main headings.

- 4.1 Categorization of respondents based on their level of emotional exhaustion
- 4.2 Categorization of respondents based on their extent of depersonalization
- 4.3 Categorization of respondents based on their perception of lower personal accomplishments
- 4.4 Categorization of respondents based on their level of burnout
- 4.5 *Relationship between emotional exhaustion and the selected personal and situational factors*
- 4.6 *Relationship between low personal accomplishment and the selected personal and situational factors*
- 4.7 *Relationship between depersonalization and the selected personal and situational factors*
- 4.8 *Relationship between burnout and the selected personal and situational factors*
- 4.9 *Contribution of the affecting factors in explaining variations in burnout. Result of Multiple Linear Regression*
- 4.10 *Relative importance of selected factors in explaining variations in burnout: Result of Step down regression analysis*
- 4.11 *Direct and indirect effects of factors affecting burnout: Result of path analysis*
- 4.12 *Suggestions as perceived by the Agricultural Officers to reduce burnout syndrome*
- 4.13 *Empirical model showing the relationship between selected personal and situational factors and burnout*

4.1 Categorization of respondents based on their level of emotional exhaustion

Table 1: Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their emotional exhaustion index

Sl.No.	Category	Range	Frequency
1	Low	<50	12
2	Medium	50-75	7
3	High	75-90	19
4	Very high	>90	62

Emotional exhaustion index was calculated for 100 respondents and the indices ranged from 44 to 100.

Based on the range of indices, the respondents were grouped into four categories. It could be observed from the Table 1 that 62 per cent of the respondents came in the 'very high' emotional exhaustion category.

The rest of the respondents were distributed among the low (12%), medium (7%) and high (19%) categories.

4.2 Categorization of respondents based on their extent of depersonalization

Table 2: Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their depersonalization index

Sl.No.	Category	Range	Frequency
1	Low	<50	11
2	Medium	50-75	8
3	High	75-90	13
4	Very high	>90	68

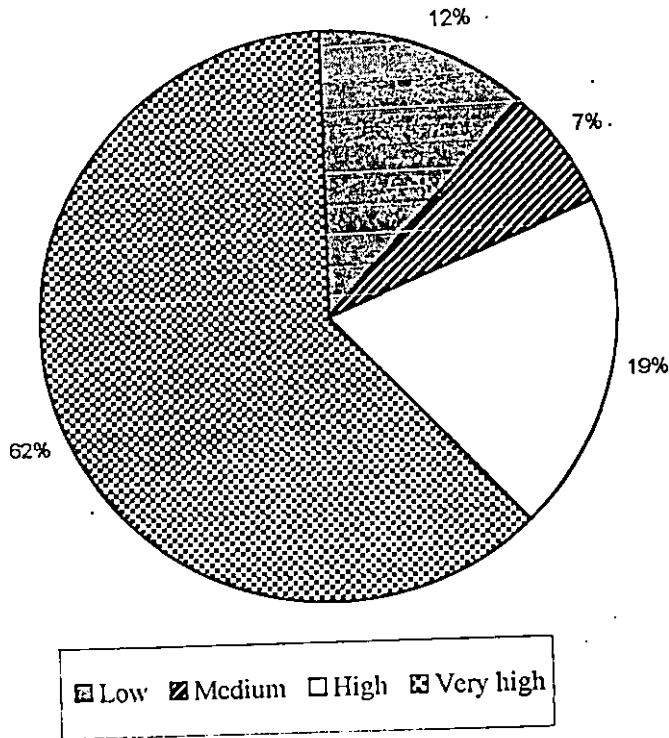


Fig.3. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their level of emotional exhaustion

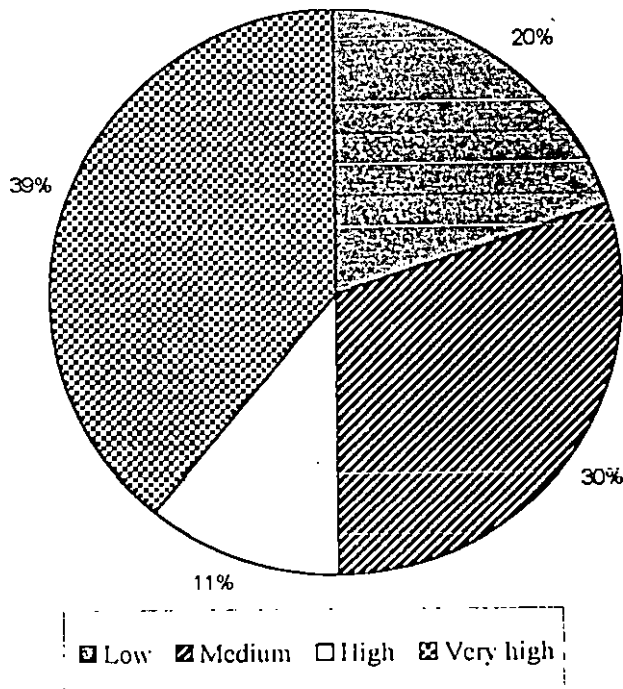


Fig.4. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their extent of depersonalization

Depersonalization index was calculated for 100 respondents and it ranged from 42 to 100.

Based on the range of indices, the respondents were grouped in to four categories. It could be observed from the Table 2 that 68 per cent of the respondents came under 'very high' category. The rest of the respondents were group as low (11%), medium (8%) and high (13%) categories.

4.3 Categorization of the respondents based on their perception of low personal accomplishments

Table 3. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their low personal accomplishment index

Sl.No.	Category	Range	Frequency
1	Low	<50	20
2	Medium	50-75	30
3	High	75-90	11
4	Very high	>90	39

The personal accomplishment index was calculated for 100 respondents and the indices ranged from 40 to 98.

Based on the range of indices, the respondents were grouped in to four categories.

It could be observed from the Table 3 that 39 per cent of the respondents came under 'very high' category. Among the rest, 20 per cent were in low, 30 per cent in medium and 11 per cent were in high categories.

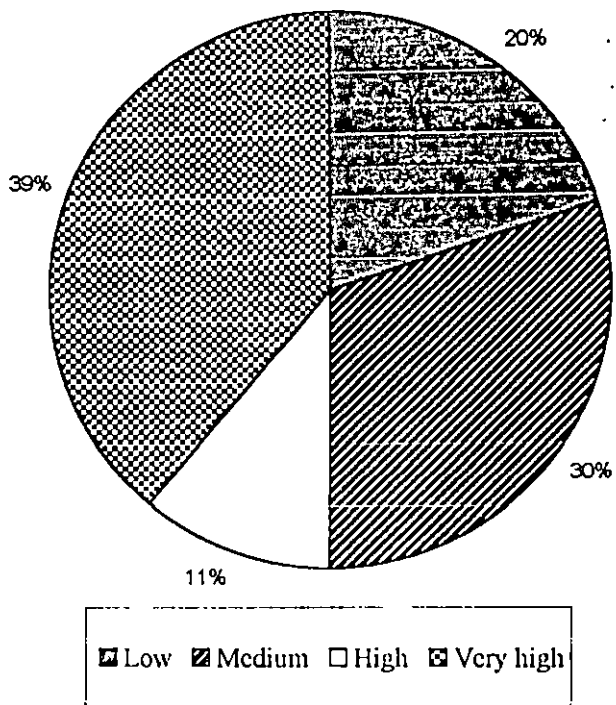


Fig.5. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their perception of low personal accomplishments

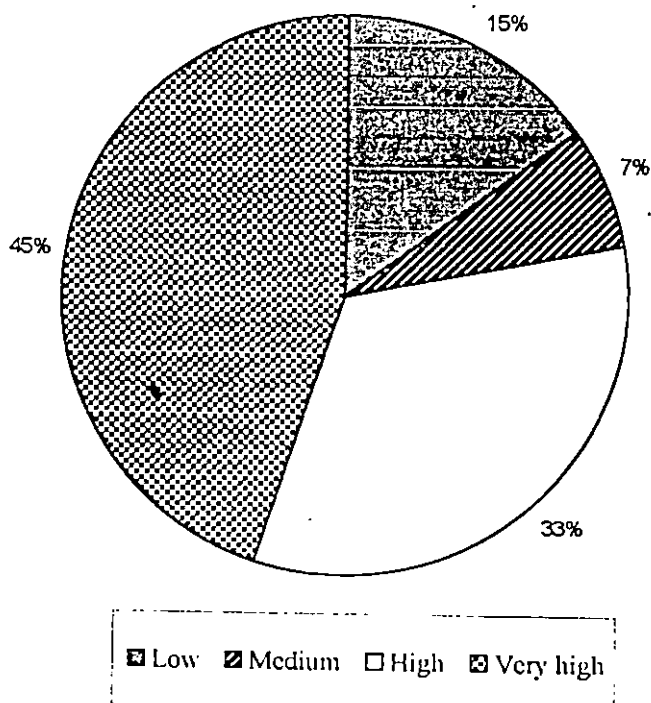


Fig.6. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their level of burnout

4.4 Categorization of respondents based on their level of burnout

Table 4. Classification of Agricultural Officers based on their burnout index

Sl.No.	Category	Range	Frequency
1	Low	<50	15
2	Medium	50-75	7
3	High	75-90	33
4	Very high	>90	45

Burnout index was calculated for 100 respondents. It ranged from 43-98. Based on the range of indices, the respondents were grouped in to four categories.

It could be observed from the Table 4 that 45 per cent of the Agricultural Officers came under 'very high' category, 33 per cent in high, 7 per cent in medium and 15 per cent low categories.

4.5 Relationship between emotional exhaustion and the selected factors

Table 5. Relationship between emotional exhaustion and the selected personal and situational factors

n = 100

No.	Factors	Correlation coefficient
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.666**
X ₂	Team work	-0.534**
X ₃	Technical competency	-0.097 ^{NS}
X ₄	Managing problems	-0.749**
X ₅	Clarity of task	-0.854**
X ₆	Job satisfaction	-0.846**
X ₇	Self confidence	-0.851**
X ₈	Job commitment	0.108 ^{NS}
X ₉	Attitude towards job	-0.024 ^{NS}
X ₁₀	Rationality in decision making	-0.015 ^{NS}
X ₁₁	Organizational climate	0.083 ^{NS}

** - Significant at 1% level

NS - Non significant

Table 5 presents the relationship between the emotional exhaustion and the personal and situational factors. Out of 11 factors, only one factor namely, Extent of external influence established a positive and significant relationship with emotional exhaustion. Five other factors namely Team work, Managing problems, Clarity of task, Job satisfaction and Self confidence established a significant but negative relationship with emotional exhaustion. Attitude towards job and rationality in decision making, even though non-significant revealed a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion. The other factors viz., Technical competency, Job commitment and Organizational climate did not exhibit significant relationship with emotional exhaustion.

4.6 Relationship between low personal accomplishment and the selected factors

Table 6. Relationship between low personal accomplishment and the selected personal and situational factors

n = 100

No.	Factors	Correlation coefficient
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.465**
X ₂	Team work	-0.388**
X ₃	Technical competency	-0.028 ^{NS}
X ₄	Managing problems.	-0.509**
X ₅	Clarity of task	-0.619**
X ₆	Job satisfaction	-0.629**
X ₇	Self confidence	-0.638**
X ₈	Job commitment	-0.211*
X ₉	Attitude towards job	-0.023 ^{NS}
X ₁₀	Rationality in decision making	-0.100 ^{NS}
X ₁₁	Organizational climate	0.160 ^{NS}

** - Significant at 1% level

* - Significant at 5% level

NS - Non significant

Table 6 presents the relationship between low personal accomplishment and the personal and situational factors. Out of 11 components, Extent of external influence is found to have positive significant relation with low personal accomplishment. Team work, Managing problems, Clarity of task, Job satisfaction and Self confidence were found to have negative, but significant relationship with low personal accomplishment.

Job commitment was found to be significant at 5 per cent level and gives a negative relationship with low personal accomplishment.

The remaining four variables, Technical competency, Attitude towards job, Rationality in decision making and Organizational climate were found to have no significant relationship with low personal accomplishment.

4.7 Relationship between depersonalization and the selected factors

Table 7. Relationship between depersonalization and the selected personal and situational factors

n = 100

No.	Factors	Correlation coefficient
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.678**
X ₂	Team work	-0.558**
X ₃	Technical competency	-0.157 ^{NS}
X ₄	Managing problems	-0.766**
X ₅	Clarity of task	-0.863**
X ₆	Job satisfaction	-0.879**
X ₇	Self confidence	-0.875**
X ₈	Job commitment	0.072 ^{NS}
X ₉	Attitude towards job	-0.001 ^{NS}
X ₁₀	Rationality in decision making	-0.011 ^{NS}
X ₁₁	Organizational climate	0.049 ^{NS}

** - Significant at 1% level

NS - Non significant



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Table 7 presents the relationship between depersonalization and the personal and situational factors. Out of 11 components, Extent of external influence established a positive significant relationship with depersonalization and five other variables, namely, Team work, Managing problems, Clarity of task, Job satisfaction and Self confidence, established significant negative relationship.

Technical competency, attitude towards job and rationality in decision making derived a non-significant and negative relationship with depersonalization.

Job commitment and Organizational climate, were found to have no significant relationship with depersonalization.

4.8 Relationship between burnout and the selected factors

Table 8. Relationship between burnout and the selected personal and situational factors

n = 100

No.	Factors	Correlation coefficient
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.691**
X ₂	Team work	-0.564**
X ₃	Technical competency	-0.145 ^{NS}
X ₄	Managing problems	-0.776**
X ₅	Clarity of task	-0.876**
X ₆	Job satisfaction	-0.880**
X ₇	Self confidence	-0.884**
X ₈	Job commitment	0.083 ^{NS}
X ₉	Attitude towards job	-0.016 ^{NS}
X ₁₀	Rationality in decision making	-0.005 ^{NS}
X ₁₁	Organizational climate	0.045 ^{NS}

** - Significant at 1% level

NS - Non significant

Table 8 present the relationship between burnout and the 11 independent variables (factors affecting burnout). A positive and significant relationship was

observed between extent of external influence and burnout. The variables Team work, Managing problems, Clarity of task, Job satisfaction and Self confidence showed a negative and significant relationship with burnout.

Technical competency, Attitude towards job and Rationality in decision making were found to have a negative relationship with burnout, even though the relation is non-significant.

4.9 Contribution of the factors in explaining variations in burnout: Result of multiple linear regression

Table 9. Contribution of the factors in explaining variations in burnout: Result of multiple linear regression

Sl.No.	Factors	Partial regression coefficient	Standard error of 'b'	't' value
1	Extent of external influence	0.425	1.666	3.515**
2	Team work	0.402	1.254	3.214**
3	Technical competency	0.623	0.273	1.411 ^{NS}
4	Managing problems	0.548	0.845	5.337**
5	Clarity of task	0.637	0.859	11.560**
6	Job satisfaction	0.464	1.068	13.152**
7	Self confidence	0.681	3.045	7.447**
8	Job commitment	0.594	0.711	1.245 ^{NS}
9	Attitude towards job	0.371	1.012	1.148 ^{NS}
10	Rationality in decision making	1.772	1.183	1.128 ^{NS}
11	Organizational climate	0.606	1.552	1.319

R = 74.68; Intercept constant = 129.99

** - Significant at 1% level

NS - Non significant

The correlation coefficients established the independent effect of each of the factor on burnout syndrome of Agricultural Officers. However, a closer look reveals that burnout syndrome is not influenced by any of these factors in isolation, but rather by all of them as a part of the interactive relationship.

Multiple regression analysis in this study was employed to analyse extent of total variation in burnout that could be explained jointly by all the factors and also to detail their relative importance in contributing to this variation.

The data furnished in Table 9 clearly indicated that all the factors affecting burnout taken together accounted for 74.68 per cent variation in burnout syndrome of Agricultural Officers in Kerala.

4.10 Relative importance of selected factors in explaining variation in burnout: Result of step down regression

Table 10. Relative importance of selected factors in explaining variation in burnout: Result of step down regression

Sl.No.	Factors	Partial regression coefficient	Standard error of 'b'	't' value
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.304	2.315	1.793**
X ₂	Clarity of task	0.466	2.238	6.167**
X ₃	Self confidence	0.583	4.184	5.435**

R = 74.56; Intercept constant = 160.58

** - Significant at 1% level

NS - Non significant

The step down regression analysis was employed to identify the best set of factors from the total factors affecting burnout syndrome.

All the factors were used for this analysis and those selected are presented in Table 10.

From the table, it could be observed that 74.56 per cent variation in burnout was contributed by three factors viz. Extent of external influence, Clarity of task and Self confidence.

Thus these three factors could be considered as best predictors of burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State.

4.11 Direct and indirect effects of the factors affecting burnout: Result of path analysis

Table 11. Direct and indirect effects of the factors affecting burnout: Result of path analysis

Sl. No.	Factors	Direct effect		Total indirect effect		Maximum indirect effect	
		Effect	Rank	Effect	Rank	Effect	Variable
X ₁	Extent of external influence	0.1398	III	0.5040	IV	0.2831	X ₆
X ₂	Team work	0.0991	VI	-0.6268	I	-0.2642	X ₆
X ₃	Technical competency	0.0052	X	-0.1022	VII	-0.0677	X ₆
X ₄	Managing problems	-0.1141	IV	-0.6057	II	-0.3341	X ₆
X ₅	Clarity of task	-0.3028	II	-0.5301	III	-0.4076	X ₆
X ₆	Job satisfaction	-0.4313	I	-0.4087	V	-0.2862	X ₅
X ₈	Job commitment	-0.0345	VIII	0.1135	VI	0.0442	X ₆
X ₉	Attitude towards job	-0.0668	VII	0.0683	VIII	0.0234	X ₆
X ₁₀	Rationality in decision making	0.0315	X	0.0090	X	-0.0109	X ₁₁
X ₁₁	Organizational climate	0.1006	V	0.0102	IX	0.0105	X ₅

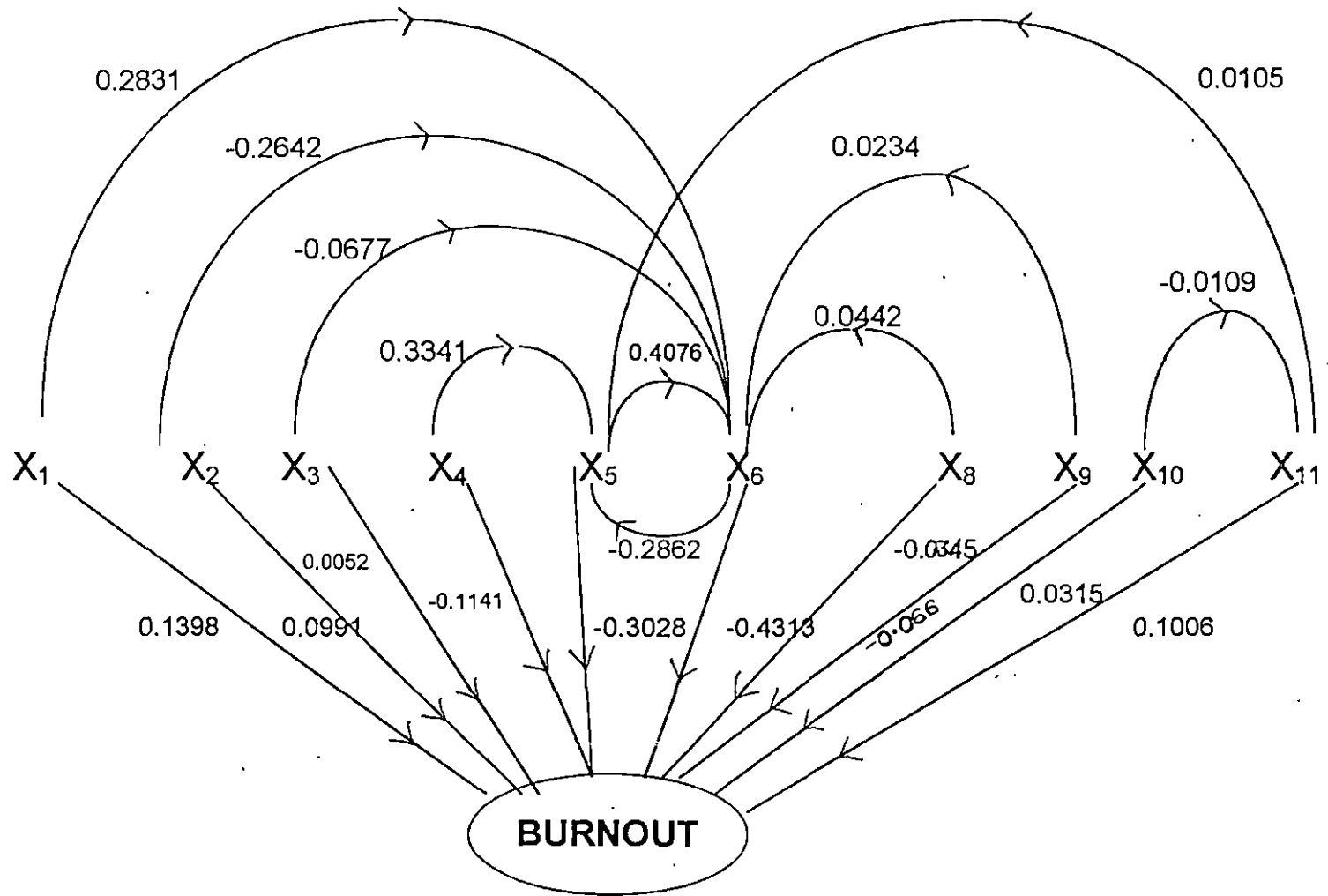


Fig.7 Path diagram showing the direct and indirect effects of the selected personal and situational factors on burnout

The correlation coefficient establishes the nature and degree of influence of each factor on burnout, while multiple regression analysis indicated the joint influence of all factors together.

It could be of interest to split the amount of relationship that a particular factor had with burnout as,

- a. Its direct influence on burnout, and
- b. Possible indirect effect on burnout through influence of other factors

In order to obtain the desired information, the data were subjected to multivariate path analysis.

It was evident from the result of path analysis (Table 11) that Job satisfaction had the highest direct effect on burnout. The next two variables that predicted high direct effect on burnout were clarity of task and extent of external influence. These two variables are also included in the best subset obtained through step down regression analysis (Table 10) in predicting the variation in burnout.

In addition to the direct effect, the factors like extent of external influence, Team work, Technical competency, Managing problems, Clarity of task, Job commitment and Attitude towards job exerted maximum indirect effect through job satisfaction on burnout.

The direct and indirect effects of the selected personal and situational factors on burnout is presented in the Path diagram as shown in (Fig. 7).

4.12 Suggestions as perceived by the Agricultural Officers to reduce burnout syndrome

The suggestions to reduce the burnout syndrome as perceived by the Agricultural Officers were identified through the questionnaire. The suggestions were ranked based on their importance with which they are felt. The suggestions

Table 12. Suggestions as perceived by the Agricultural Officers to reduce burnout
n = 100

Sl.No.	Suggestions	Score	Rank
1	Research findings should be communicated in time to the Agricultural Officers	455	IV
2	The work load of the Agricultural Officers in the Krishi Bhavan should be reduced	460	III
3	There should be adequate supporting staff in the Krishi Bhavan, for the effective functioning of the Agricultural Officers	470	I
4	Timely training should be imparted for the Agricultural Officers to improve the technical know how	454	V
5	Targets may be fixed giving due consideration to the infrastructure of the Krishibhavan	444	VII
6	The parity in pay structure for the Agricultural Officers may be maintained with other professional graduates	455	IV
7	The area of operation should be reduced so that the Agricultural Officers can improve their performance	428	IX
8	Conveyance facilities may be made available to the Agricultural Officer to conduct more frequent field visits	461	II
9	Adequate time may be provided to the Agricultural Officers to achieve the target fixed	449	VI
10	Concerned authority may make it sure that file works in the Krishi Bhavan are running smoothly and the farmers are deriving real benefits from the Krishi Bhavan	442	VIII

ranked are presented in Table 12. "There should be adequate supporting staff in the Krishi Bhavan, for the effective functioning of the Agricultural Officers" was the most important suggestion identified. The suggestion regarding the need for conveyance facility to conduct more frequent field visits was ranked as second most important by Agricultural Officers. "The workload of the Agricultural Officers in the Krishi Bhavan should be reduced" was the third important suggestion. The least important suggestion as perceived by the Agricultural Officers was "The area of operation should be reduced so that the Agricultural Officers can improve their performance".

4.13 Empirical model of the study

The relationship between the selected personal and situational factors on burnout syndrome of Agricultural Officers is presented diagrammatically in the empirical model (Fig. 8).

The empirical model emphasizes the major contributors of burnout.

The unbroken lines in the model indicate those factors having significant relationship with burnout. They were Extent of External influence, team work, managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction and self confidence.

The thickened unbroken lines indicate those factors that are considered as best predictors of burnout syndrome as revealed by the step down regression analysis.

The remaining factors such as technical competency, job commitment, attitude towards job, rationality in decision making and organizational climate were found to exhibit non significant relationship with burnout. This is represented by broken lines in the model.

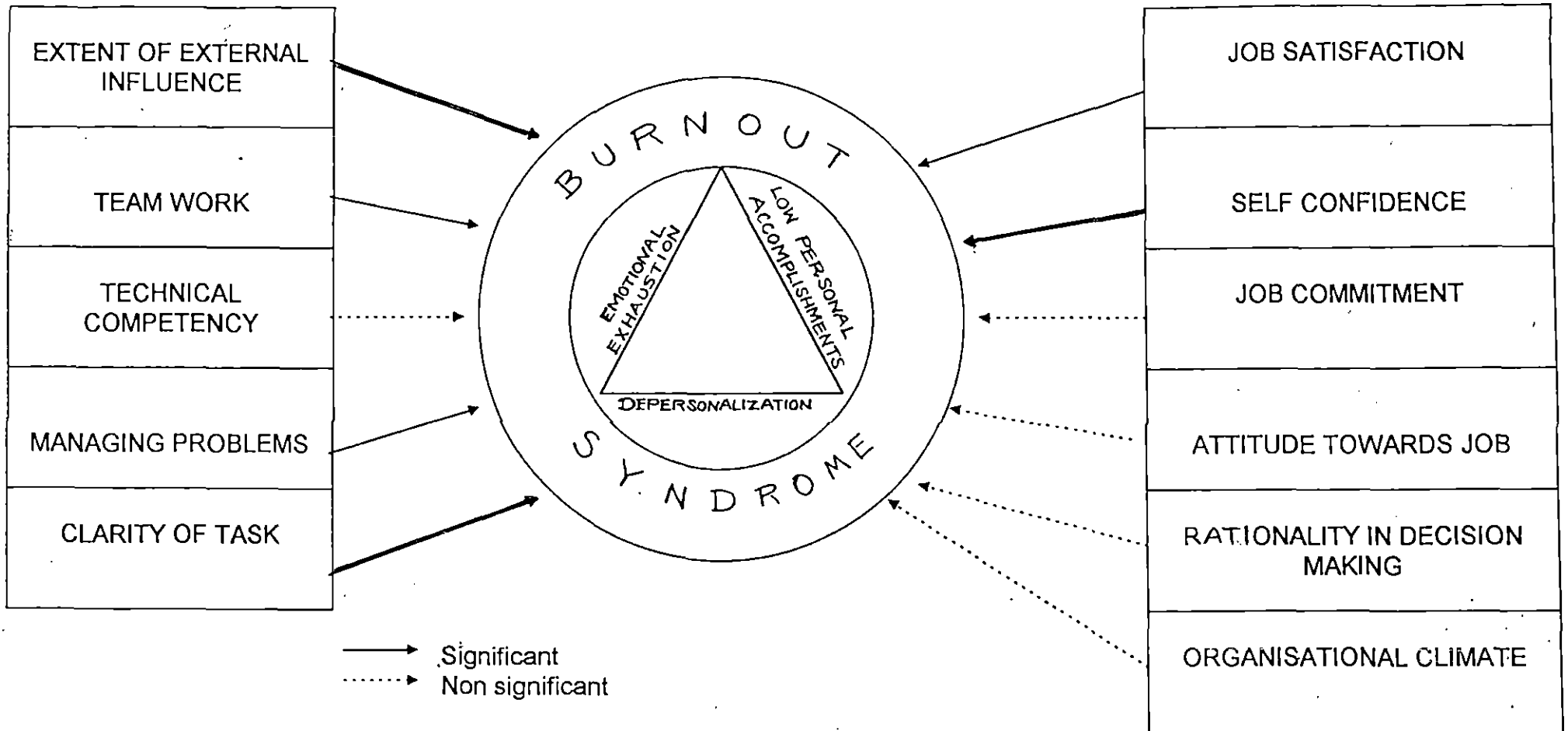


Fig.8 Empirical diagram showing the relationship between selected personal and situational factors and burnout

Discussion

CHAPTER-V DISCUSSION

The salient results of the present study are discussed in this chapter under the following headings.

- 5.1 Categorization of respondents based on their level of emotional exhaustion
 - 5.2 Categorization of respondents based on their depersonalization
 - 5.3 Categorization of respondents based on their lower personal accomplishment
 - 5.4 Categorization of respondents based on their extent of burnout
 - 5.5 Relationship of the independent variables with burnout
 - 5.6 Direct and indirect effect of the independent variables on burnout
-
- 5.1 Categorization of respondents based on their level of emotional exhaustion**

Table 1 indicates a clear insight into the categorization of Agricultural Officers of the Department of Agriculture based on their level of emotional exhaustion. A perusal of Table 1 revealed that majority of the Agricultural Officers fall under 'very high' emotional exhaustion category.

Agricultural Officers are the administrative heads of the Krishi Bhavan who has to act as the king pin to coordinate various agricultural development activities. The work related to the Krishi Bhavan itself is voluminous. Besides the office work - fed up with paperdams, it also involves field activities such as identification, planning and implementation of agricultural development programmes of the locality. In addition to that, because of the introduction of People's Planning Programmes, people are mobilised through the local bodies -

Panchayat, in all the stages of developmental planning right from the formulation of the programmes to its execution. Because of the over enthusiasm shown by the elected representatives of the Panchayat coupled with unwarranted interferences in the routine administration of the Krishi Bhavan by them may leave an internal feeling on the part of the Agricultural Officers that they are being duly administered by these elected Panchayat members as well as the top echelons of the Department of Agriculture. Moreover, the programmes formulated by the Panchayat and Department of Agriculture has to be implemented by the Agricultural Officers. The numerous limitations prevailed in the system in achieving the targets along with the time constraints, cause a feeling of exhaustion to the Agricultural Officers. They could not perform according to their expectations. This is in corroboration with the findings by Maslach and Jackson (1981b and 1982), Maslach (1982). Conceptualisation of the elected representatives regarding the function of the Krishi Bhavan may differ from that of Agricultural Officers. Because of all these, Agricultural Officers of the Krishi Bhavan might have developed a feeling of emotional exhaustion.

5.2 Categorization of respondents based on their depersonalization

It could be noted from the Table 2 that majority of the Agricultural Officers fall under 'very high' depersonalization category.

While joining the Department of Agriculture, an Agricultural Officer may have high aspirations and strong motivation to perform his duties. But in the Department of Agriculture, certain projects are formulated at higher level without the involvement of the Agricultural Officers. Sometimes, these projects may not be suitable to that particular area of Krishi Bhavan or the required number of beneficiaries may not be available for the implementation of the projects. Moreover, the interferences of local politicians and elected panchayat representatives being selected as beneficiaries of various schemes make the programme unviable. This

make the implementation of the projects difficult for which the Agricultural Officer is assigned for thus leading to deprivation and depersonalization by the higher authorities.

In addition to these interferences, the external agency's treatments and attitude towards Agricultural Officers are also dehumanizing. With all these limitations, the Agricultural Officers are forced to achieve the targets assigned to them. Because of such pressures, the Agricultural Officer may lose their idealism and become pessimistic. They tend to move away from clients and show reluctance in job. They could not interfere appropriately with crisis situations. This lethargy and cold attitude, creates a tendency in the minds of the elected representatives, superiors and farmers to observe them as 'cases' and are treated in a dehumanizing way. This is supported by the findings by Maslach (1973). Lief and Fox (1963) also offers support to this by suggesting that depersonalizing clients may minimize potentially intense emotional arousal that could interfere with functioning in crisis situations.

5.3 Categorization of respondents based on their low personal accomplishment

Table 3 revealed that majority of the Agricultural Officers of the Krishi Bhavan fall in the 'very high' category of low personal accomplishments.

In the field of Agriculture, the personal accomplishment develops only when there is congenial work environment and cooperation from the clients. The pending file work, failure to execute the discretion in the selection of beneficiaries, heavy workload etc. added with unfavourable working conditions may lead to failure to produce positive results. This goes in line with the result obtained by Abramson *et al.* (1978) and Vansell *et al.* (1981). When it repeats, Agricultural Officer develops stress and depression. He may spend more time in his work but accomplish less. This may retard his interest to be a sincere officer and hence may

fall under 'very high' reduced personal accomplishment category. Whenever there is low accomplishment, there develops stress. This is supported by McGrath (1970), who defined stress as a perceived substantial imbalance between demands and response capabilities under conditions where failure to meet demands has important perceived consequences.

5.4 Categorization of respondents based on their extent of burnout

It could be observed from the Table (4) that majority of the respondents fall in the 'very high' category of burnout. Often the Agricultural Officers are engaged in agricultural field development activities with the farmers also performing administrative tasks which require very high mental and physical involvement. Agricultural Officers have to conduct several seminars and attend conferences at different levels. Lack of sufficient time to accomplish the targets may create internal pressure that may ultimately results in work stress for them. If the stress persists for a long time, or is compounded with additional problems, a sense of physical and emotional exhaustion may occur. When this happens, those Agricultural Officers may be facing burnout syndrome. They tend to become rigid about their work, following the rules and procedures compulsively as they are too exhausted to be flexible or to consider alternative approaches. An Agricultural Officer who becomes emotionally exhausted found it very difficult to handle both the clerical as well as file works together both of which are tedious. Absence of sufficient supporting staff in the Krishi Bhavan particularly to handle the clerical works is another factor causing burnout. All these may have an impact on emotional health and efficiency of employees which will eventually lead to deterioration in job performance. These conclusions are supported by the definitions of burnout given by Moss (1981), Voelkl *et al.* (1986), Lee and Ashforth (1996) and Pareek (1997).

5.5 Relationship of the independent variables with burnout of the Agricultural Officers

Simple correlation analysis was carried out to find out the relationship between the selected independent variables and burnout. The results are furnished in Table 8. It is evident from Table 8 that out of 11 variables analysed, 6 variables were found significantly correlated with burnout. Extent of external influence had positive and significant relationship with burnout. Variables like Teamwork, Managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction and self confidence showed negative and significant relationship with burnout. The other variables viz., Technical competency, Job commitment, Attitude towards job, Rationality in decision making and organisational climate had no significant relationship with burnout.

Extent of external influence was found to be positively related to burnout syndrome. The Agricultural Officer has to deal with wide cross section of people during implementation of agricultural programmes and in the routine administration of the Krishi Bhavan. The agricultural development work is not revolving around the Agricultural Officer alone. He requires the sustained and persistent co-operation and involvement of farmers and also the whole-hearted support from the members of the Agricultural developmental committees including the elected representatives of the Panchayat. The Agricultural Officer may not be able to withstand or unable to take a unilateral decision for the execution of the schemes as there is an element of influence in decision making by the above mentioned categories because of the programmes like People's planning. All these factors make the Agricultural Officer ineffective to take a decision by himself in the routine administrative work of the Krishi Bhavan. He cannot turn deaf to these people from whom he must get support for all his ventures to make them successful. Otherwise he may face with unwarranted criticism and comments from the developmental committee, unnecessary evaluation of his performance and even threat of transfer due to the

influence of the privileged external bodies. Redundant interferences will retard the initiative of the Agricultural Offices and may result in depression. When it repeats lead to burnout. This goes on par with the findings of Jhamtani and Singh (1987) and Mandal (1995).

Extent of external influence is also included in the best sub set of factors in predicting the variation in burnout (Table 10) which together with clarity of task and self confidence contributed 74.56 per cent variation out of 74.68 per cent by 11 variables (Table 9) in explaining the variation in burnout.

Teamwork was derived as a factor that exerted a significant negative relationship with burnout. In the Krishi Bhavan, the Agricultural Officer can perform effectively only if there is good teamwork and co-operation from the co-workers. A team can bring to bear a wider experience, a greater variety of opinion and a more thorough probing of facts than a single individual.

The employees of an organization, where teamwork exists were more receptive to change, more willing to take risks, and more creative in their decision making. The result was that their organizations became more successful and diversified (Wiersema and Bantel, 1992).

Samantha (1985) and Vallen (1993) supported the negative relationship between teamwork and burnout by suggesting that lack of teamwork reduces productivity of the organization.

Members of a team not only bring new information to the problem but also generate more alternative solutions. When all the members are involved in a co-ordinated action, there will be regular contact and understanding between the individuals which makes the work easier and improves job satisfaction. Team support decreases depression in employees exposed to work-related stressors (Parkes, 1982).

Moreover, in case of teamwork, which is a multidirectional interaction, there is a better identification of the needs of the situation and ability of each member of the work team can be contribute to that need.

In the Krishi Bhavan, when the level of understanding is high, Agricultural Officers, Assistants and farmers can act efficiently and effectively as a team based on their requirements. This may add to the accomplishments of the individual members as well as the organization.

The factor managing problems also found to have a significant negative correlation with burnout in the simple correlation analysis. One of the most important roles of a manager of any organization is that of problem solver. They have the responsibility of solving problems as well as devising mechanisms for minimizing problems. As the complexity of the role increases, the complexity of the problems also increases. A skilful manager has the ability to systematically analyse the problems, separate the symptoms and is able to control or modify the sources to minimise the problems and thus brings a congenial working environment in the organization.

The way problem is managed rather than suppressed, ignored or avoided, contributes significantly to an organization's effectiveness (Kelly, 1972).

Agricultural Officer being the administrative head of the Krishi Bhavan has to face many problems both at office and field levels. These problems can be viewed as challenges or as unnecessary tribulations. Agricultural Officer has to face various types of pressures from within and outside the Krishi Bhavan at different stages of performance of his duties. All these will lead to micro level problems particularly at the planning and implementation stages thus requires problem managing ability for a smooth functioning of the Krishi Bhavan. An effective manager requires awareness of the alternatives available, the skills to be

comfortable with each method and the analytical ability to make a choice that suits the situation (Davis and Newstorm, 1989). This explains the importance of the factor managing problems and its negative relationship with burnout.

The result of simple correlation analysis revealed a significant negative relationship with clarity of task and burnout. In an organization, conflict, friction and inefficiency results from lack of clarification of individual roles. This is more important in the context of the democratic decentralization. A major reason for conflict in any organization is that people do not understand their assignments. No matter how well conceived an organization structure may be, people must understand to make it work.

Agricultural Officer can attain work effectiveness only if he is clear on what has to be done to achieve the objectives. This finding goes in line with the results by Schuler (1977), Harigopal and Ravikumar (1979), Srilatha (1988). In the field of agriculture, actual development can be achieved only if the Agricultural Officer is clear on what he is expected to do and how to proceed for achieving the goal.

This can be supported by the Principle of functional definition (Koontz *et al.*, 1980) that the more a position has a clear definition of results expected, activities to be undertaken, the more adequately the individuals responsibility can contribute towards accomplishing the objectives.

The importance of this variable was observed both from the result of Multiple linear regression (Table 9) and from the results of step down regression analysis (Table 10). Clarity of task was also included in the best sub set of factors predicting the variation in burnout and the group predicted 74.56 per cent variation (Table 10) out of 74.68 per cent by 11 variables (Table 9).

Another important factor that was found to have a significant negative relationship with burnout was job satisfaction (Table 8). Job satisfaction of the employees is of equal importance to any organization and also to the personnel concerned. It is one of the most important criteria for any employee to keep good relationship with their organizations and to put forth continued efforts towards its betterment. If the employee perceives his job well, then there will be better performance and satisfaction. Job satisfaction stimulates productive behaviour and psychological growth. The failure to satisfy job needs results in frustration, and it negatively affects our ability to perform a job well (Deep, 1978).

In the field of agriculture, an Agricultural Officer who feel positively about their work, will become more committed to the job and work for the clients with less stress or depression. Earlier studies on job satisfaction of the employees have revealed that it has positive effect on their job performance which lead to the ultimate goal of the organisation. An Agricultural Officer who has a natural interest in his job of his satisfaction get motivated for efficient and qualitative performance. This may add to his personal accomplishment and thus reducing chances of burnout. This finding is inconformity with the results obtained by Rizzo *et al.* (1970), Keller (1975), Pavelka (1993) and Vallen (1993) who observed a negative relationship between job satisfaction and job stress.

Self confidence had exerted a significant negative relationship with burnout in the simple coefficient analysis (Table 8). Self confidence in the basis for personal accomplishments and efficient performance of duties by any employee. For the Agricultural Officer also self confidence is important to apply various reinforcement motivation and leadership techniques in the process of maintaining the required amount of output from the Krishi Bhavan.

Muthayya and Gnanakannan (1973) agreed that only those who have high self confidence will take and persistent efforts to excel others.

An Agricultural Officer must possess self confidence in addition to any other qualities like Technical competency or problem managing ability to function efficiently in the field. A manager who lacks self confidence will find it difficult to direct the subordinates and to tolerate the risk involved in delegating responsibilities (Deep, 1978). Self confidence act as a motivator and gives power to face the unfavourable field situations. This explains the negative relationship between self confidence and burnout.

5.6 Direct and indirect effect of the independent variables on burnout

Path coefficient analysis helps to trace the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables in predicting the burnout. The results are presented in Table 11.

A perusal of the table reveals that the job satisfaction had maximum direct effect on burnout and clarity of task had the maximum indirect effect through job satisfaction. In addition to clarity of task, the other factors that derived maximum indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction were managing problems, extent of external influence, Teamwork, Technical competency, job commitment and Attitude towards job in that order.

Job satisfaction is the basis for an individual to feel comfortable and to continue with the work. If the employee perceives his job well, then there will be better performance and satisfaction. This is supported by the findings of Sharma *et al.* (1988), Reddy and Jayaramaiah (1988) and Reddy (1989). An individual will get personal pleasure when he is doing a job of his choice, which ultimately results in mental satisfaction. This will reduce emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and increase personal accomplishment these have a maximum direct effect on burnout. This finding is supported by Blau (1981) who observed a significant relationship between stress and job satisfaction.

Clarity of task has got maximum indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction. The Agricultural Officer can function effectively only when the task accounted to them is very clear. Clarity in the task expected from each member of the organization will avoid possible conflicts and even the task overlaps. When the task assigned is clear and well defined then the officers can perform it better. When there is success, it may lead to more job satisfaction and thus reduces burnout. This result is in conformity with the results obtained by Pavelka (1993) and Zohar (1994).

Managing problems has got second highest indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction. When the Agricultural Officer is well acquainted with the various ways to solve the problems arising in his Krishi Bhavan without involving a third party, he can derive maximum potential output from the Krishi Bhavan thus promoting job satisfaction. This will reduce the emotional exhaustion and avoid chances of getting depersonalized and thus reducing burnout.

When there is a high external interference in the functioning of the Krishi Bhavan, the Agricultural Officer cannot perform according to his way and believes. This is supported by the result obtained by Mandal (1995). When it happens then it may retard his initiatives thus reducing the job satisfaction. Stress and depression gradually develops leading to burnout.

When there is a team spirit in the Krishi Bhavan, the Agricultural Officers, Assistants and the farmers will function together on a co-operative basis for the accomplishment of the organizational goals. When the goal is achieved, it will result in job satisfaction. This is in conformity with result obtained by Davis (1972). Personal accomplishment of each member of the group and the group as a whole increases thus reducing the burnout.

Technical competency showed a negative indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction. Agricultural Officers are expected to give appropriate advice and support to the farmers to enhance their income and standard of living. To do this, one of the pre-requisite is sound technical competency. Agricultural Officer should inform the farmers about latest production recommendations with resource constraints. This can be achieved only he is competent technically. This is supported by the result obtained by Nehru (1993). According to Reddy (1987), sound technical knowledge with ability and enthusiasm to teach people are the pre-requisites of extension personnel. Technically competent person may derive more job satisfaction adding to the personal accomplishments and thus reducing burnout.

Job commitment expressed indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction. High job commitment of the Agricultural Officer will promote enthusiasm and drive towards work. Hrebiniat and Alutto (1973) reported an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and commitment, whereas lack of relationship between satisfaction and commitment was observed by Grusky (1964). Job commitment in turn promote job satisfaction and reduces the chances of getting burnt out.

Attitude towards job is also found to have indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction. Unless an employee has possessed favourable attitude towards his profession, he cannot do justice to his client system. If he is performing a job of his choice, then he will be more committed to the job leading to more job satisfaction. This is contradicted by the findings of Kalavathy (1989) who reported that there was no direct significant relation between job satisfaction and job attitude of Agricultural graduates.

Summary

CHAPTER-VI

SUMMARY

The State Department of Agriculture in India occupies a strategic position among agricultural development organizations in meeting agricultural development needs of the country. In India, the food production at present may be comfortable. Yet, it is estimated that about 225 million tonnes of food grains per year would be required from 2000 AD, onwards. To achieve the desired results, the important steps are proper agricultural technology generation and technology transfer to the farming community.

Agricultural Officers play a vital role in Agricultural development. To fulfil all the roles assigned to his position, an Agricultural Officer should have correct perception of the duties to be performed by him and require a congenial work environment which is free from any physical or psychological stress.

Taking in to consideration of the above aspects, the present study was undertaken with the main purpose of studying the burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State with the specific objectives as follows:

- 1) To identify the emotional exhaustion of the Agricultural Officers in Kerala in the context of their work environment.
- 2) To analyse the depersonalization effect on the Agricultural Officers.
- 3) To analyse the extent of personal accomplishments of the Agricultural Officers.
- 4) To suggest effective measures for reducing the burnout feeling of Agricultural Officers in the State.

The study was conducted during the months of February-May, 1999. The respondents were selected from the three districts of the State representing the Southern, Central and Northern zones of Kerala. Accordingly 35 Agricultural

Officers from Kottayam, 18 from Kasargode and 47 from Thrissur were selected following the stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation. The dependent variables in this study were the three components of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment. The personal and situational factors affecting burnout were considered as the independent variables and there were 11 factors selected for the study such as, extent of external influence, teamwork, technical competency, managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction, self confidence, job commitment, attitude towards job, rationality in decision making and organizational climate.

The dependent variables were measured by constructing a set of statements for each component. The total score obtained by each statement was calculated and the final statements were selected based on their coefficient of agreement value.

The independent variables were quantified using already developed measurement devices with slight modifications to suit the purpose of the study.

The data were collected by conducting personal interviews with the Agricultural Officers using well structured and pre-tested interview schedule developed for the purpose. The Agricultural Officers were categorized based on their level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, low personal accomplishments and extent of burnout. The statistical tools used for the study were correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, step down regression analysis and path coefficient analysis. The salient findings of study are furnished below:

1. Regarding the categorization of respondents based on their level of emotional exhaustion, majority of the Agricultural Officers (62%) fall under 'Very high' category. Among the rest, 19 per cent comes under 'High', 7 per cent under 'Medium' and 12 per cent under 'Low' categories of emotional exhaustion.

2. With respect to the classification of respondents based on their extent of depersonalization, 68 per cent Agricultural Officers fall under 'Very high' category, 13 per cent comes under 'High', 8 per cent under 'Medium' and 11 per cent under 'Low' categories of depersonalization.
3. Among the 100 respondents, it was found that majority of them (39%) comes under 'Very high' category of low personal accomplishments. Eleven per cent fall under 'High', 30 per cent under 'Medium' and 20 per cent in the 'Low' categories reduced personal accomplishments.
4. A categorization of Agricultural Officers based on their extent of burnout showed that majority of the Agricultural Officers (45%) fall under 'very high' category, 33 per cent under 'High', 7 per cent under 'Medium' and 15 per cent under 'Low' category of burnout.
5. Correlation analysis revealed that out of 11 factors affecting burnout, one factor i.e., extent of external influence expressed a positive and significant correlation with burnout. Other five factors namely teamwork, managing problems, clarity of task, job satisfaction, self confidence established a negative and significant correlation with burnout.
6. The result of multiple linear regression analysis indicated that 74.68 per cent of the variation in burnout could be explained by the 11 factors affecting it.
7. The result of step down regression analysis revealed that while 74.68 per cent of the total variation was explained by all 11 factors together, 74.56 per cent could be explained by 3 factors namely extent of external influence, clarity of task and self confidence.
8. The result of path analysis showed that job satisfaction had the highest direct effect on burnout. The maximum indirect effect on burnout was shown by clarity of task. Clarity of task had highest negative indirect effect through job

satisfaction. In addition to clarity of task, extent of external influence, team work, technical competency, managing problems, job commitment and attitude towards job established indirect effect on burnout through job satisfaction.

While ranking the suggestions as perceived by the Agricultural Officers, it was found that "There should be adequate supporting staff in the Krishbhavan, for the effective functioning of the Agricultural Officers" as ranked first by the respondents. The least important suggestion observed was "The area of operation should be reduced so that the Agricultural Officers can improve their performance".

Implication of the study

It was observed from the findings of the study that job satisfaction was the most important factor affecting burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers. It is commonly proposed that one symptom of work-related stress is job dissatisfaction. The study emphasised that the management and authorities of organizations like Department of Agriculture must try to keep the employees free from various role stress to get greater satisfaction and to outfit them to act as proficient extension administrators in addition to their professionalism.

The variables involved in this study may be studied on different types of organizations, managerial samples and other similar psychometric measurers may be used to confirm the direction of results obtained in the course of the present study.

The study identified few important factors that affect burnout syndrome and also given a clear idea about the type of relation those factors have with burnout. This can be used to form the basis for reducing the burnout by manipulating the factors accordingly.

After the occurrence of burnout feeling of the Agricultural Officer in the Krishi Bhavan, their work effectiveness will get adversely affected. It could be worthwhile to consider this aspect in the initial stages of stress symptoms itself to avoid its effect on the agricultural production of the concerned area.

Many of the projects in the people's planning committees are the duplicates of the departmental schemes and deviate in different directions. This creates a lack of clarity of duties of both the officials at the department and at the Panchayat level. In order to avoid such difficulties both of them are to be provided with clear operation strategies and objectives without any overlapping.

Suggestion for future research of the study

By adhering the suggestions ranked and presented in the study, we can minimise the occurrence of burnout in the organizations.

The present study undertaken only with regard to the Agricultural Officers of the Krishibhavan. It is suggested that similar study may be undertaken for the extneison personal such as Agricultural Assistants, Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors, Joint Directors etc., since they also play a vital role in the field of Agriculture and are suceptable to burnout.

The present study was confined to the selected factors affecting burnout syndrome, to keep the study in size. There may be other motivational or financial factors that may affect the concept. So it will be useful to examine the situation considering those factors also.

It may be suggested from the results obtained from the study that, benefits may achieve from work redesign programmes which facilitate the control of stressful demands.

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* Originals not seen

Appendices

APPENDIX-I

Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State

List of independent variables prepared for the study

Sl. No.	Variables	Coefficient of agreement score
1	Empathy	78.6
2	Span of control	68.0
3	Team work	94.6*
4	Extent of external influence	90.6*
5	Rationality in decision making	92.6*
6	Technical competency	98.6*
7	Managing problems	92.0*
8	Clarity of task	98.6*
9	Job satisfaction	90.6*
10	Perceived work load	77.3
11	Organizational climate	97.3*
12	Age	68.0
13	Exposure to training	76.0
14	Job experience	66.6
15	Attitude towards job	89.3*
16	Job preference	68.6
17	Rural-urban background	54.0
18	Level of aspirations	78.0
19	Achievement motivation	71.3
20	Perceived social status	60.0
21	Communication ability	78.0
22	Self confidence	96.6*
23	Self concept	67.3
24	Job commitment	94.6*
25	Gender	52.0
26	Social participation	42.6
27	Guidance and supervision	69.3
28	Personal efficacy	74.0
29	Leadership ability	72.6

*Variable selected for the study

APPENDIX-II A

Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State

LIST OF STATEMENTS PREPARED ABOUT THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES

STATEMENT FORMED ABOUT EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
1	Since the work is highly involving, I feel emotionally drained	65
2	The work load in the Krishi Bhavan causes emotional stress to the Agricultural Officers	83*
3	As the number of farmers are very large, Agricultural Officers are unable to meet their needs	90*
4	Time is a major constraint in achieving the targets in a Krishi Bhavan	84*
5	Due to unmet organizational expectations about the job, I feel exhausted	61
6	The uneffective job conditions prevailing in the Krishi Bhavan directly increases the emotional energy needed to do the job	70
7	Managing file work and field work at a time seems to be cumbersome	86*
8	Dual administrative control by the Department of Agriculture and local administrative set up is confusing and result in emotional exhaustion	88*
9	Since I would not achieve the target, I feel emotionally drained	91*
10	The continued attempts to meet the incompatible demands of the farmers are frustrating and emotionally distressful	73

Contd

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
11	The Agricultural Officers become rigid about their work when they are too exhausted to be flexible or to consider alternative approaches	69
12	I can respond to the clients equally good even when I am overloaded with office work	90*
13	I feel the work in the office as monotonous and boring	91*
14	I feel the field work as tedious since it requires excess physical strain resulting in physical and emotional demands	95*
15	My attitude and behaviour towards farmers will not change even when there is work stress	77

APPENDIX-II B

Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State

LIST OF STATEMENTS FORMED ABOUT THE DEPERSONALISATION

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
1	Case load and role conflict exist in the Krishi Bhavan make the work involuntary	75
2	Higher Officials are treating Agricultural Officers as mere objects and not as subjects	86*
3	It is difficult for me to take appropriate decisions and to function effectively under crisis situations	91*
4	My job used to result in the development of a mechanical and hostile approach towards people	94*
5	The targets have been assigned from higher ups without analysing the feasibility and adaptability of each programme with Agricultural Officers	83*
6	Overload work of the employee may affect his interest to perform as expected	66
7	The environment in which I work is impersonal and dehumanising	81*
8	I take active involvement in decision making process	87*
9	Unnecessary control and punishment from higher authority make me frustrated	96*
10	Lack of consideration lead to withdrawal of the employee from his duties	71
11	Depersonalised employee develop lowered self-esteem	68
12	The higher authorities may retard the initiative of the Agricultural officers	70

Contd.

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
13	The unaccomplished targets may become a cause for depersonalization	73
14	Agricultural Officers develop negative attitude towards work since the working conditions in their Krishi Bbhavan are beyond their control	83*
15	Lack of cordial approach from the farmers and higher-ups affect the temp of the Agricultural Officers	91*

APPENDIX-II C

Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State

LIST OF STATEMENTS PREPARED ABOUT THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE - LOW PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
1	My confidence about my technical competency has reduced since I took charge as Agricultural Officer	92*
2	I am self-sufficient in solving the problem arising in the Krishi Bhavan	93*
3	My efforts in the Krishi Bhavan to improve the conditions repeatedly resulted without producing any positive impact	82*
4	The achievements of an Agricultural Officer to a great extent depends on the co-operation and team work of the Assistants and local farmers	63
5	The experiences gained from the job help the Agricultural Officers to function effectively	71
6	I develop symptoms of stress and depression when my efforts continuously fail to produce desired results	86*
7	I am confident that my efforts can bring some changes in the conditions prevailing in the Krishi Bhavan	91*
8	Before joining the Department of Agriculture, I thought, I could perform better than what I am doing now	89*
9	I lose my desire to function sincerely when my efforts become ineffective and unappreciated	80*

Contd.

Sl.No	Statements	Coefficient of agreement value
10	Constraints, the Agricultural Officers may face while implementing the programmes may lead to sense of reduced personal accomplishment	73
11	Lack of support from co-workers and superiors make it difficult to produce fruitful results in the activities of Krishi Bhavan	87*
12	Involvement of political bosses and other external organisations lead to poor personal accomplishments	92*
13	Reduced personal accomplishments may develop an inferiority feeling among Agricultural Officers	70
14	Eventhough the work was initially found to be difficult, gradually I have discovered my own ways and means to achieve the objectives	96*
15	I will try my level best to achieve my target so that there will be more sense of personal accomplishments	63

APPENDIX-III

Burnout syndrome among Agricultural Officers in Kerala State

Interview Schedule

PART-I

I. Background Information

- a) Name :
- b) Gender : Male/Female
- c) Age :
- d) Official address :
- e) Permanent address :
- f) Present stay :
 1. In the same area where I work
 2. Within 50 Km
 3. > 50 Km
- g) Educational status :
 1. Diploma/Certificate
 2. Bachelors' degree
 3. Masters' degree
 4. Doctoral degree
- h) Job experience :
 1. years in the Krishi Bhavan
 2. years in the Dept. of Agriculture

PART-II

Please give your opinion on the following statements by marking (√) in the appropriate column

Sl.No.	Emotional exhaustion	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	The workload in the Krishi Bhavan causes emotional stress to the Agricultural Officers					
2	As the number of farmers are very large, Agri. Officers are unable to meet their needs					
3	Time is a major constraint in achieving the targets in a Krishi Bhavan					
4	Managing the filework and field work at a time seem to be cubersome					
5	Dual administrative control by the Dept. of Agriculture and local administrative set up is confusing and results emotional exhaustion					
6	Since I could not achieve the targets, I feel emotionally drained					
7	I can respond to the clients equally good even when I am overloaded with office work					
8	I feel the work in the office as monotonous and boring					
9	I feel field work as tedious since it requires excess physical strain resulting in physical and emotional demands					

Depersonalisation

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Higher officials are treating Agricultural Officers as mere objects and not as subjects					
2	It is difficult for me to take appropriate decisions and to function effectively under crisis situations					
3	My job used to result in the development of a mechanical and hostile approach towards people					
4	The targets have been assigned from higher ups without analysing the feasibility and adaptability of each programme with Agricultural Officers					
5	The environment in which I work is impersonal and dehumanising					
6	I take active involvement in decision making process					
7	Unnecessary control and punishment from higher authority make me frustrated					
8	Agricultural Officers develop negative attitude towards work since the working conditions in their Krishi Bhavan are beyond their control					
9	Lack of cordial approach from the farmers and higher ups affect the tempo of the Agricultural Officers to work effectively					

Low personal accomplishment

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	My confidence about my technical competency has reduced since I took charge as Agricultural Officer					
2	I am self-sufficient in solving the problems arising in the Krishi Bhavan					
3	My efforts in the Krishi Bhavan to improve the conditions repeatedly resulted without producing any positive impact					
4	I develop symptoms of stress and depression when my efforts continuously fail to produce desired results					
5	I am confident that my efforts can bring some changes in the conditions prevailing in the Krishi Bhavan					
6	Before joining the Dept. of Agriculture I thought, I could perform better than what I am doing now					
7	I lose my desire to function sincerely when my efforts become ineffective and unappreciated					
8	Lack of support from co-workers and superiors make it difficult to produce fruitful results in the activities of Krishi Bhavan					
9	Involvement of political bosses and other external organisations lead to poor personal accomplishments					
10	Eventhough the work was initially found to be difficult, gradually I have discovered my own ways and means to achieve the objectives					

Extent of external influence

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	The content of the influence by the outside agencies in the Krishi Bhavan is high					
2	Due to the influence of the political system, it became difficult for the Agricultural Officer to execute even the routine duties impartially					
3	External influence come into the way of impartial selection of beneficiaries					
4	Initiative of the Agricultural Officer will be affect by the external influence					
5	The interference of the higher ups will reduce the interest of the Agricultural Officer to work effectively					
6	Implementation of schemes/ programmes are done according to the interest of the political system					
7	A judgemental approach by superiors towards Agricultural Officers forces them to work effectively					

Team work

Sl.No.	Emotional exhaustion	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I feel relaxed and strain will be reduced if the task is shared by all members of the Krishi Bhavan					
2	Agricultural Officers can achieve their goals easily by promoting team spirit					

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
3	Team work results in minimising the overload of work because of smooth functioning of matters					
4	Team work will hamper chances to the officials to implement their own ideas					
5	Because of the good team work exists in the Krishi Bhavan, there is cheerful and pleasant atmosphere					
6	Work situation is improved if there is definite distribution of responsibilities					
7	Job satisfaction is achieved only if the task is done individually					

Technical competency

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I am competent enough to advice farmers in the following areas					
	a) Selection of sites for cultivation					
	b) Seeds, seed rate and sowing					
	c) Timely plant protection methods					
	d) Fertilizer requirement calculation					
	e) Water requirement, management and irrigation					
	f) Harvesting and processing of products					
	g) Marketing of products					

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
2	I am skillful in solving all other field related problems					
3	I am confident about my ability in dealing with my farmers and superior officers					
4	I am always in doubt of my abilities to achieve the goals					
5	I can effectively solve the problems related to official matters					

Managing problems

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I take problems as challenges and trying to solve in a better way					
2	I will always refer the problem to the higher ups and seek their advice					
3	I will discuss the matters with other Agricultural Officers and try to find solutions					
4	I will manage the problems myself without involving subordinates					
5	The problems arising are left as such for its own to be managed without any initiation from my part					
6	Always I would like to stick on to my point of view in managing problems arising in the Krishi Bhavan					
7	I work on problems arising in the Krishi Bhavan without fearing the status, hierarchy or what higher management would think					

Clarity of task

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I am clear on what my superiors and clients expect from me on the job					
2	Because of the voluminous nature of work, I am always confused as which should be given priority					
3	On my job, what ever be the situation, there are clear rules and procedures to handle					
4	Since many tasks are performed at a stretch, none is done by me with full satisfaction					
5	Quality of work is greatly affected in the Krishi Bhvan due to non-clarity of tasks					
6	Inadequate clarity of tasks leads to greater misunderstanding in the work situation					
7	There is definite rules and responsibilities with provision for flexibility under special circumstances					

Job satisfaction

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Are you satisfied with your, a) Present salary b) Promotional opportunities c) Physical facilities					

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
	d) Locality of Krishi Bhavan					
	e) Freedom and flexibility at work					
	f) Status and prestige					
	g) Praise and recognition for good work by others					
	h) Freedom to pursue new ideas					
	i) Present work environment					

Self confidence

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I feel no obstacles can stop me from achieving my final goals					
2	I am bothered about the feeling that I cannot compete with others					
3	I am not interested to do things at my own initiative but want some push					
4	I get discouraged easily over simple matters					
5	I am always under strain during the working hours					
6	I lack the drive to start any new action because I fear I cannot complete it					

Job commitment

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I feel a sense of responsibility in carrying out my duties					
2	I devote all my available time for performing my duties					
3	I am careful in gathering up-to-date information for disseminating to farmers					
4	If given a change, I will opt for jobs other than the Agricultural Officers					
5	If time permits, I try to meet farmers personally and try to solve their problems					

Attitude towards job

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I dislike my job because it requires extensive field work					
2	I don't prefer the job of Agricultural Officer as it offers little opportunity to get acquainted with people other than farmers					
3	I am interested in my profession as it provides sufficient opportunity for development of leadership ability					
4	An Agricultural Officer can contribute a lot for the agricultural development of an area					
5	I always think that I made a wrong selection of my profession					
6	I feel that I have ample opportunity to display the initiatives and smartness which other professions lack					

Rationality in Decision making
(Choose any one of the alternatives)

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	<p>When I discuss agricultural aspects with other officers</p> <p>a) I speak only about the necessary and needed information</p> <p>b) Sometimes certain unnecessary matters also may come to the topic</p> <p>c) Most of the time, I used to get deviated from the main topic</p>					
2	<p>When I realise that other Agricultural Officers do not have much time to spare</p> <p>a) I use to describe the matter briefly</p> <p>b) Since that time is not suited, I will postpone the discussion to a latter occasion</p> <p>c) Without bothering about his shortage of time, I will explain everything in in that occasion itself</p>					
3	<p>When the relevance of an agricultural topic is seemed to be lost</p> <p>a) I will just mention about the topic and stop it since it is irrelevant</p> <p>b) If the information is untimely or irrelevant, I won't utter even a single word about it</p> <p>c) I use to speak about the topic though it is not relevant at that time</p>					

Organizational climate

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Since the prevailing organisational climate is highly favourable, I perceive my work as more effective					
2	I am fully satisfied with the present organisational set up					
3	I am absolutely absorbed in my work as I derive much satisfaction from the organisation					
4	Since external influence has an impact on organisational climate, work performance of the extension personnel gets adversely affected					
5	Timely and adequate resources are not available for the demands of the farmers in the Krishi Bhavan					
6	Agricultural Officers and Assistants will work in a highly planned and systematic way in the Krishi Bhavan					
7	Achieving the goals or targets set seems to be the main concern of Agricultural Officers					

Suggestions to reduce the burnout feeling of Agricultural Officers

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Research findings should be communicated in time to the Agricultural Officers					
2	The work load of the Agricultural Officers in the Krishi Bhavan should be reduced					

Sl.No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD
3	There should be adequate supporting staff in the Krishi Bhavan, for the effective functioning of the Agricultural Officers					
4	Timely training should be imparted for the Agricultural Officers to improve their technical know how					
5	Targets may be fixed giving due consideration to the infrastructure of the Krishi Bhavan					
6	The parity in pay structure for the Agricultural Officers may be maintained with other professional graduates					
7	The area of operation should be reduced so that the Agricultural Officers can improve their performance					
8	Conveyance facilities may be made available to the Agricultural Officer to conduct more frequent field visit					
9	Adequate time may be provided to the Agricultural Officers to achieve the target fixed					
10	Concerned authority may make it sure that file works in the Krishi Bhavan are running smoothly and the farmers are deriving real benefits from the Krishi Bhavan					

BURNOUT SYNDROME AMONG AGRICULTURAL OFFICERS IN KERALA STATE

**By
ANJU ANNIE CYRIAC**

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken with the objective of analysing the extent of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishments of the Agricultural Officers of Kerala, in the context of their work environment and to suggest effective measures for reducing their burnout feeling. The respondents for the study included 100 Agricultural Officers selected from three districts representing the Southern, Central and Northern zones of Kerala.

Eleven personal and situational factors affecting burnout were included for the study and their relative influence on burnout were analysed.

Majority of the Agricultural Officers perceived that they belong to 'very high' category of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments.

All the 11 independent variables selected, together accounted for 74.68 per cent variation in burnout syndrome of Agricultural Officers.

Among the selected personal and situational factors affecting burnout, extent of external influence, clarity of task and self confidence were found to exhibit relatively higher influence in predicting the variation in burnout feeling of Agricultural Officers.

The highest direct and indirect effect on burnout was due to job satisfaction and team work respectively.

Suggestions to reduce the burnout syndrome as perceived by the Agricultural Officers were identified through the questionnaire. The most important suggestion identified was the need for adequate supporting staff in the Krishi Bhavan, for the effective functioning of the Agricultural Officers.