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A CONFIGURAL ANALYSIS OF BURNOUT IN CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORKERS IN THIRTEEN CULTURES

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ABSTRACT: A configural analysis of burnout in relation to demographic, personal, and work environment factors was conducted across 13 different cultures. High Burnout configuration was comprised of higher Emotional Exhaustion, higher Depersonalization and lower Personal Accomplishment. Low Burnout was the reverse configuration; while the Mixed group included those not meeting criteria for either High or Low groups. The High Burnout group showed lower social support, higher work pressure, more chaotic work settings, lower environmental support for autonomy and innovation; in addition, it showed higher escape coping and lower control coping. Recommendations for burnout remediation and prevention were suggested.

How can we develop an overall picture of burnout as it is experienced by child and youth care workers across cultures? Burnout has garnered much attention in child and youth care work, and in human service professions generally, since the phenomenon was first described in print (Freudenberger, 1974). It has been linked to a wide variety of symptoms including physical, emotional, behavioral, interpersonal, attitudinal (Kahill, 1988). In general, child and youth care workers suffering from burnout can be expected to experience a general loss of well-being, decreased job performance, and potential withdrawal from their field of practice (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). Different cultures may respond to burnout provoking conditions in different ways. Thus, a study of burnout across cultures may provide clues for burnout prevention that emerge from differing cultural points of view.

Burnout in child and youth care workers

Literature on burnout in child and youth care workers in North America has come in the form of both opinion pieces and empirical research. Opinion and theory articles focused on the unique nature of child and youth care work, the impact of burnout on workers and agencies, linkages of individual history and personality to susceptibility to burnout, theoretical explanations for burnout, and recommendations for prevention and further research (Curbow, 1990; Freudenberger, 1977; Mattingly, 1977; Raider, 1989).

Several empirical studies focused on the relationship of burnout to personal characteristics of the child and youth care workers. Fuqua and Couture (1986) found internal locus of control positively related to Personal Accomplishment. McMullen and Krantz (1988) found that higher learned helplessness and lower self-esteem were related to higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization. Environmentally oriented research articles found that burnout in child and youth care workers was related to staff relations, job ambiguity, role conflict, inefficient work organization, lack of social support, work pressure, and work overload (Boyd & Pasley, 1989; Kingsley & Cook-Hatala, 1988; Savicki, 1993).In a more qualitative study, child and youth care worker turnover was linked to workload, lack of clear performance feedback, and lack of supervisor support (Fleischer, 1985).

In general, many of the findings that applied to the helping professions generally (Lee & Ashforth, 1996) seem to apply to child and youth care workers. Clearly, burnout has been, and continues to be, an important area of concern for the child and youth care work field.

Multi- vs unidimensional definitions of burnout

Burnout has been most often defined as a syndrome in which a worker feels emotionally exhausted or fatigued, withdraws emotionally from their clients, and perceives a diminution of their achievements or accomplishments at work. The de facto standard of measurement for burnout is the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which contains three sub-scales purported to measure the three factors identified in the above definition. Clearly, there is much information to be gained by looking at the three classic burnout sub-scales individually. Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment each play an important role in understanding the quality of the burnout experience. Additionally, there is preliminary evidence that cultural factors are related differently to the separate burnout sub-scales (Savicki, 1999a; 1999c).

However, there is no single score that inevitably indicates the overall burnout condition. Rather it is the configuration of burnout sub-scales that, in theory, characterizes someone suffering from burnout. The highest levels of burnout are experienced by someone with high Emotional Exhaustion, high Depersonalization, and low Personal Accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996; Savicki & Cooley, 1983). Conversely, someone experiencing low burnout would show low Emotional Exhaustion, low Depersonalization, and high Personal Accomplishment. Those individuals who show moderate scores, or a mixture of high and low scores on the three sub-scales might be moderately burned-out, or they may have one or two high sub-scale scores offset by other low sub-scale scores.

Previous research has sought to derive a single indicator of burnout and its intensity. Savicki and Cooley (1987) developed a simple arithmetic formula which added Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization

scores, and subtracted Personal Accomplishment scores. The resulting single number was supposed to represent an overall burnout score. Subsequently, those authors abandoned the formula because it obscured information about burnout that could be garnered through examination of the separate burnout sub-scales. Likewise, the latest manual for the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996) suggests maintaining separate scoring for the sub-scales. Golembiewski and Munzenrider (1988) developed a phase model of burnout which was supposed to indicate individual's movement from lower to higher burnout by virtue of the configuration of low and high scores on the three burnout sub-scales. Although there was some agreement on the end-points of the phase progression, the middle points were less clear. Thus very high and very low burnout were easier to conceptualize than was moderate burnout.

Both Cherniss (1995) and Maslach and Leiter (1997) have articulated a clear distinction between high and low burnout. High burnout results in physical and psychological difficulties at work and elsewhere which leads to lower productivity and eventual harm to the individual and to the organization. In contrast, low burnout results in the individual thriving and growing in their work. The challenges of work-related stress invigorate and energize the worker to produce more and to become innovative. Again, the endpoints of high versus low burnout show dramatic differences while it is more difficult to characterize the more confused mid-points of the continuum.

Summing the import of the previous studies, it seems that an analysis that captures the endpoints of the burnout continuum might be helpful. We may be able to answer questions about which environmental and personal factors are associated with high and low burnout. However, rather than computing a single score, we will rely on configurations of the three burnout sub-scales.

METHODS

Participants

The thirteen cultures. The thirteen cultures included in this study are Australia (N= 37), Austria (N= 48), Canada-English (N= 48), Canada-French (N= 68), Denmark (N= 79), England (N= 89), Germany-East (N= 98), Germany-West (N= 47), Israel (N= 36), Poland (N= 42), Scotland (N= 56), The Slovak Republic (N= 80), United States (N= 97). Notice that in three cases, culture is defined in a manner so that one nation contains two different cultures; e.g. Canada contains French-speaking and English-speaking cultures, The United Kingdom contains English and Scottish cultures, and Germany contains the former East and former West sectors. Such a definition of culture is quite consistent with issues concerning culture (Triandis, 1995). In Germany and the UK, the two cultures are separated geographically, but share the same language. In Canada, the cultures share the same geography, but differ in preferred language.

With the exception of Israel and Australia, the cultures are drawn from North America and Northern Europe. While this representation of cultures was more easily obtained, it is not representative of child and youth care globally. Thus, some care should be taken in extending the findings of this study to regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Description of the sample. Across the 13 cultures, an attempt was made to match samples to some degree. The 835 participants in this study were all treatment providers, educators, and managers in day or residential treatment facilities dealing with children or youth who might be classified as emotionally disturbed or developmentally delayed. Such a restrictive sample does control for variation that might be introduced by studying participants from variety of different industries or service sectors. This is not a precisely matched sample. Rather it is convenience sample; that is, it is the people who were willing to participate from the agencies or professional groups known to the primary research contact person in each culture.

Research scales

Four research scales were used in the questionnaire: Burnout, Cultural Work Values, Work Environment, and Coping. These scales were selected first because of the desire to determine if results for burnout found in the US were generalizable to other cultures. Secondly, the Cultural Work Values scale was utilized to aid in interpreting any differences between cultures.

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The factor analyzed sub-scales for this measure include: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996).

Emotional Exhaustion is the extent to which a worker feels worn out and drained by the job.

Depersonalization is the extent to which workers think about and treat children and youth and their families in an unfeeling and impersonal manner.

Personal Accomplishment describes the extent to which workers feel successful in their work. This last scale becomes lower as workers become more burned out.

The MBI is a widely used instrument in human service professions. The scales have been established as reliable and valid in a number of studies (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The internal consistency reliability for the scales reported in the current study are: Emotional Exhaustion, .87, Depersonalization, .69, and Personal Accomplishment, .74. In addition, the MBI has shown good reliability in cross-cultural settings. The theoretical relations and factor structure has shown consistency across cultures (Büssing & Perrar, 1992; Green, Walkey & Taylor, 1991; Schaufeli & Janczur, 1994).

Hofstede's Cultural Work Value Scale (CWV). Hofstede's (1980) landmark study of cultural work values synthesizes information for 40 different countries from over 60,000 individuals. Through factor analysis and other statistical methods he formulated four dimensions of cultural work values. These dimensions describe critical norms and understandings of cultures. By looking at all four dimensions together, it is possible to gain an insight into the character of a culture.

Individualism vs Collectivism: Individualistic cultures emphasize personal action and responsibility. Collectivist cultures emphasize interpersonal relatedness and group action.

Masculinity (Career Success) vs Femininity (Quality of Life): Masculine cultures emphasize autonomy, assertiveness, and the centrality of work. Feminine cultures emphasize social-consciousness, nurturance and the centrality of social connectedness. Because this dimension is an indicator of a cultural value, Adler (1997) prefers to use the terms Career Success vs Quality of Life for this scale because these terms are less likely to be mistaken as indicators of gender. This labeling will be used in the current study.

Power Distance between a boss and a subordinate in a hierarchy is the difference between the extent to which the boss can determine the behavior of the subordinate and the extent to which the subordinate can determine the behavior of the boss. In high Power Distance cultures bosses believe that they can dictate the behavior of the subordinate; and subordinates believe that they have little recourse but to follow; whether the behavior is agreeable or not. On the other hand, in low Power Distance cultures bosses understand that they must consult and collaborate with subordinates to direct their behavior; and subordinates understand that they can question and influence the boss's directives.

Uncertainty Avoidance indicates the degree to which cultures establish rules, procedures, and rituals to buffer uncertainties of individual judgment and freedom. High Uncertainty Avoidance cultures develop rules to cover a broad range of possibilities. Low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures let individuals react more spontaneously and "go with the flow."

Because of the derivation of the CWV scales, internal consistency can only be calculated for Individualism-Collectivism and Career Success-Quality of Life scales. The reliability for these scales in this sample is .74 for both.

Work Environment Scale. Selected sub-scales from the Work Environment Scale (WES) (Moos, 1981) were used to measure 7 different dimensions of an environmental characteristic called social climate. The 63, true-false items included 7 nine-item scales:

Peer Cohesion (PC) — the amount of friendliness and support that is perceived in co-workers.

Supervisor Support (SS) — the support of management and the extent to which management encourages workers to be supportive of each other.

Autonomy (A) — the degree to which workers are encouraged to be self-sufficient and to make their own decisions.

Task Orientation (TO) — the extent to which the work environment emphasizes efficiency and good planning.

Work Pressure (WP) — the extent to which the press of work dominates the job milieu.

Control (Ctl) — the extent to which management uses rules and pressures to keep workers under control.

Innovation (Inn) — the extent to which variety, change, and new approaches are emphasized in the work environment.

Internal consistency for the 7 WES scales in the current sample is as follows: PC = .64, SS = .71, A = .57, TO = .65, WP = .70, Ctl = .57, Inn = .76. Two items were dropped from the Control scale to achieve the above level of reliability.

Coping Scale. This 28 item scale was developed to measure individual coping strategies in the work place (Latack, 1986). It is based on research that found more particular coping strategies could be categorized into these two major coping styles.

Control Coping consists of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that are proactive, take-charge in tone. They address the actual source of stress.

Escape Coping consists of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that suggest an escapist, avoidance mode. They are oriented to decrease the negative feelings of stress.

Internal consistency for the coping scales for the current sample are .84 for Control Coping and .79 for Escape Coping.

Procedures. In the typical procedure, the country contact person approached directors of child and youth care agencies to have all of the treatment and management staff from the agencies respond to the research questionnaire. Both burnout and cross-cultural research have a long history of this type of sample (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993; Van de Vijver, & Leung, 1997). A major consideration for burnout research is that participants be actually functioning in a helping profession. It is not possible to conduct simulation studies of burnout. Such a restriction makes it difficult to find qualified participants. The current sample, while not randomly chosen or precisely matched, meets a standard frequently used in such studies.

Configuration analysis. In order to derive burnout configurations, several procedural steps were taken. First, a median score was computed

for all participants across all thirteen cultures. Thus the cut-point for high versus low burnout on each sub-scale represented the entire sample not each separate culture. The object was to be able to make not only individual but cultural comparisons. Second, the configuration of above median scores for Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization and a below median score for Personal Accomplishment was labeled as High Burnout. Conversely, below median scores for Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization and an above median score Personal Accomplishment was labeled as Low Burnout. All participants whose burnout scores did not meet the previous criteria were labeled as Mixed Burnout; they had some combination of above and below median scores. Cutting the sample at the median point for each sub-scale is a very rough criteria for high or low burnout, but it is at least partially indicative of the intensity of individual reaction. At the same time, having a three scale configuration criterion is somewhat restrictive since only a relatively small proportion of participants would meet the High and Low Burnout configuration standard. In any event, this categorization allows probing differences in overall burnout in a way not possible when considering the three burnout sub-scales separately.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prior to examining the configural analysis that constitutes the major inquiry of this study, it may be useful to note that cultural work values were significantly related to separate sub-scales of the burnout inventory in a pan-cultural analysis. Based on multiple regression analysis, Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization were both related to higher Career Success and higher Uncertainty Avoidance (EE, $p < .001$; DP, $p < .001$). Personal Accomplishment was related to higher Career Success and lower Power Distance ($p < .001$). In other words, child and youth workers living in cultures that emphasize work as a major part of one's life and that emphasize reducing ambiguity through constructing rules and rituals were more likely to experience the negative aspects of burnout. At the same time, workers living in cultures that emphasize work as a major part of one's life and that prefer consultative or flat hierarchical relations with their leaders are more likely to experience a sense of achievement and accomplishment at work. Thus cultural work values did help in explaining burnout when each burnout sub-scale was considered separately. Nevertheless, the major focus of this research now moves to the configural analysis.

Proportions of high, mixed, and low burnout configuration classification

Before looking at how the thirteen cultures fared in burnout configurations, let us examine the results of the categorization process itself. Twenty-one percent of all participants were classified in the High Burnout

category. Only seventeen percent fell into the Low Burnout category. The overwhelming majority (62%) were classified in the Mixed Burnout category. Thus we might expect that roughly one in five people working in the child and youth care field might be experiencing the deleterious effects of burnout. This is not a trivial proportion of workers. As we will see, we cannot expect that these High Burnout workers are randomly distributed across all organizations. However, it is possible that in a moderate sized agency of 15 treatment workers, teachers, and managers, 3 workers might be suffering from High Burnout. From what we understand about the impact of high burnout, we know that there may be serious consequences for individual workers and for the organization if this potential incidence of burnout is left unattended.

On the other hand, almost one in five workers show Low Burnout. Thus, individuals who have mastered working conditions and demands may be available as models and advisors to those who may need help in preventing, staving off, or recovering from burnout. The following analysis will also shed some light on the process of protection, treatment, and restoration.

Finally, the 62% of participants in the Mixed Burnout category could be quite a mixed group. There may be those whose scores on all three burnout sub-scales hover quite close to the median. There may be others who have extreme scores that offset each other. This is the critical problem with attempting to devise a single measure of burnout from the three burnout sub-scales. There may be unique configurations of burnout scores that are related to specific environmental conditions and personal factors. What we gain in ability to examine the extremes of burnout, we lose in understanding the mixed and middle range.

Burnout configuration results by culture

Cultures vary widely in the proportions of High, Mixed, and Low burnout configuration individuals. Some cultures have fewer extremes of High and Low, and a larger proportion of Mixed burnout configuration workers. For example the US, Slovakia, Poland, and Canada-English show more individuals with mixed burnout patterns than do Austria, Scotland, and Canada-French. On the other hand, some cultures had substantial differences between High and Low Burnout configurations. For example Germany-West, and Austria have larger proportions of High versus Low Burnout configuration workers. In contrast, Canada-French and Denmark have larger proportions of Low versus High Burnout configuration workers. In general, when Mixed burnout is not considered, the cultures with proportionally lower burnout are Canada-French, Denmark, Israel, Canada-English, and Scotland. The cultures with proportionally higher burnout are Germany-West, Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Australia, US, England, and Germany-East (see table 1 for a summary).

Beyond the examination of proportions of High, Mixed, and Low Burnout configurations, it is useful to consider what environmental and personal aspects may contribute to these patterns.

Contributors to high and low burnout configurations

Before discussing the environmental and personal factors that are related to High and Low Burnout configurations, it may be enlightening to identify those factors that are not related. That is, sometimes finding out that certain variables do not relate to levels of burnout gives us a more focused picture of the relative importance of specific types of differences that do seem to have an impact. The following results (significant and non-significant) are based on a multiple analysis of variance procedure in which the three groups were found to be significantly different from one another ($F=3.65$, $p< .001$). Separate variables are reported based on their univariate significance levels. See Table 2 for the relevant statistical results.

Non–significant results

Several demographic variables do not relate to High or Low Burnout configurations. These variables include salary, hours per week worked, education level, length of time in one's job current position, and length of time in the child and youth care field generally. Additionally, no cultural work value relates to burnout configurations. Even though cultural work values related to individual burnout sub-scales, when taken together as a configuration of sub-scales, no single cultural value emerged as significant.

With regard to salary, logically, the more a worker is paid, the more that worker might feel rewarded and find sources of satisfaction in work. However, historically, burnout and job satisfaction do not relate to salary level (Daley, 1979). Lower paid workers may find fulfillment and satisfaction in their work in spite of pitiful pay; while higher paid workers may encounter working conditions that introduce unacceptable levels of stress. Salary and emotional reactions to work have been found to be unrelated as long as the salary meets a minimal level to support the needs of the worker.

With regard to hours per week worked, previous research indicates that increasing hours are related to higher burnout if the worker perceives those hours as representing increased work load or pressure to perform. Later, we will see that this relationship between perceived work pressure and burnout exists for child and youth care providers in the current study as well. However, two factors may explain the lack of relationship between hours per week worked and burnout configurations. First, the key to the experience of work pressure is the perception that the work tasks may exceed the personal resources of the worker to accomplish them. Under these conditions, according to Lazarus (1999), the worker feels threatened, and all of the negative stress- related physiological reactions spring forth. However, if the worker believes that his or her personal resources may be able to cope with the pressures of work in a way that will allow him or her to accomplish meaningful goals, then the worker feels challenged, which invigorates the individual. Such invigoration may actually reduce burnout (Riolli-Saltzman & Savicki, 2000). Thus, as Lazarus repeatedly asserts, the

key to understanding reactions to objective environmental stressors such as hours per week worked depends on the combination of the stressors themselves and the individual worker's perceptions of them; not on the objective stressors themselves. A second reason for lack of relationship between hours per week worked and burnout is that there is very little variation in hours per week worked. With a few exceptions, most child and youth care providers work between 31 and 40 hours per week. Thus variations in hours worked is generally not large enough to produce significant statistical relations to variations in burnout.

Education level does not relate to overall burnout because people with differing educational backgrounds are exposed to similar levels, if not similar types, of stress. Educational level is significantly related the primary role performed in the child and youth care organization. Teachers, specialists and managers have higher educational levels than do child and youth care workers. But, each role has individuals with both high and low burnout configurations. Thus, all education level seems to do, with regard to burnout, is put people in contact with slightly different job stressors. It does not buffer against burnout.

Finally, burnout configurations were not related to length of time in one's current position or to length of time worked in the child and youth care field generally. As we will see later, age is related to burnout. You might expect, then, that the two length of time variables would also be related to burnout. However, a study by Shirom and Mazeh (1988) indicates that levels of burnout vary across one's career. These researchers found that job satisfaction cycled from high to low to high over approximately 5 year periods. Thus, increasing lengths of time in one's current position or in the field generally are not related to burnout. Rather, one's place in the cycling period is more relevant.

Finally, a few other demographic and work related variables are not related to high or low burnout. These factors will be merely mentioned since there is no reason to suppose that they should relate. They are marital status, number of children in one's own family, primary job role, agency size, age of children served, and gender of children served.

Significant contributors to High and Low Burnout configurations

Now that we have ruled out several variables, we can focus more cleanly and intensely on those environmental and personal factors that do relate significantly to High and Low Burnout configurations. First, we will examine two demographic variables: age and gender. Second, we will describe significant work environment conditions. Finally, we will look at personal variables in the form of coping styles.

Demographic variables. Both age and gender relate to burnout configurations, but in substantially different ways. Figure 1 shows that men seem to show greater intensity of burnout response; both High and Low than do women. A larger proportion of women appear in the Mixed

configuration. It is difficult to conceptualize this result. It could be that women are better able to control conditions related to one or more of the burnout sub-scales. Indeed, women did show significantly less Depersonalization than did men. Women's ability to reduce this aspect of burnout may have prevented them from showing beyond-the-median scores for all three sub-scales, thus making it more likely that they would fall in the Mixed configuration category. One hypothesis concerning women's lower depersonalization focuses on the general finding that women respond more effectively to the socio-emotional aspects of interpersonal interaction. Thus they stay more emotionally connected to clients and co-workers than do men (Savicki, Kelley & Oesterreich, 1998). Clearly more research needs to be done to understand this result.

Fortunately, the relationship between burnout and age is much clearer. People in the Low Burnout configuration group were significantly older than both the High and Mixed Burnout configuration groups. Clearly, age gives and advantage in dealing with burnout related situations. This relation of older workers to lower burnout is a quite consistent research finding (Savicki & Cooley, 1987). Several possible explanations exist for this relationship. First it might be that only people inherently prone to lower burnout remain in the field after a few years. Those prone to higher burnout leave to find more congenial jobs. There may be some truth to this idea. Cherniss (1995) found that some of his longitudinally studied research subjects had, indeed, left the field under the pressure of high stress in their early years in a helping profession career. Another idea is that older workers move to jobs with lower levels of stress. That is, early, entry level jobs may be inherently more stressful because of the large percentage of client contact. However, any occupational role in the child and youth care field carries its own stressors (Savicki, 1993; Savicki, 1999b). Thus, being promoted out of one position may only change the sources of stress, not eliminate them. Finally, a more probable explanation for the higher age-lower burnout finding is that workers learn how to reduce the effect of stressors and increase the energizing, growth-oriented aspects of work. Cherniss (1995) gives many examples of this process. Initial disillusionment and anxiety change to commitment and feelings of competence as workers learn from their mistakes. They focus not only on personal skills and qualities that help them reduce stress, but also take control of their work environment to construct a more engaging, supportive, and challenging job.

Environmental variables. Work environment variables show the strongest relationships to burnout configurations (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993). In order to orchestrate the kind of metamorphosis mentioned in the previous paragraph, workers need to focus on the aspects of work that really make a difference. This section will examine environmental aspects of social support (Peer Cohesion and Supervisor Support), work structure (Work Pressure and Task Orientation), and job enhancement (Autonomy and Innovation).

Social support.

Two aspects of social relationships in the workplace show an association to burnout configurations: Peer Cohesion and Supervisor Support. In both cases each of the three burnout configurations are significantly different from all others. High Burnout shows the least Peer Cohesion and Supervisor Support, and Low Burnout shows the most; with the Mixed configuration in the middle. This finding is consistent with much of the research on burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996) which has found that support from others in the work place buffers the effects of stress. Clearly one's co-workers and those who oversee one's work are very important interpersonal contacts for child and youth care service providers.

With peers, social support may take the form of a sympathetic shoulder to cry on and an understanding ear to talk to. In addition, roughly 70% of child and youth care providers indicated that they spent some part of their service delivery day in a milieu context. That is, they often did their work in an environment in which they functioned as a team member working together with others within the living environment of the children or youth they served. During this teaming process, group cohesion is very important because team members rely upon each other for successful job performance. Thus Peer Cohesion affects not only how one feels about the stressors at work, but also how successful one feels in job performance. Social support in this context is doubly important.

Work structure.

Work can be structured to increase or decrease the level of stress to which workers are exposed. Two important work structure features reviewed here are Work Pressure and Task Orientation. High Work Pressure or workload has been found to contribute to burnout in much of the previous burnout research (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). This study is no exception. Child and youth care providers in the High and Mixed Burnout configuration groups reported significantly more work pressure than did those in the Low Burnout configuration group. Work overload does present a significant threat to many workers. Too much work to do and not enough time or resources to do it successfully can overwhelm even the best intentioned and talented practitioners. Clearly, those workers who gained some control over their work load were able to modulate the effects of work so that they could fall within the Low Burnout configuration.

Task Orientation reflects the degree to which work is organized efficiently. In other studies, variables such as role ambiguity, role clarity and role conflict tap some of what is represented by Task Orientation. For this variable all burnout configuration groups were significantly different from each other. The High Burnout configuration showed the lowest levels of task orientation; the Low Burnout group the highest, with the Mixed configuration falling between. Knowing what to do, when to do it, and how to do it are important factors in performing efficiently at work.

Efficient performance increases predictability and decreases anxiety and worry caused by ambiguity. Milieu environments are especially prone to some level of disorganization and chaos, since much of the care flows in and around daily events. Effective care presupposes that responding to critical incidents within the milieu takes precedence over a rigid schedule. However, too little structure can also be damaging. A balance must be struck. Lack of planning or deterioration into chaos sets the stage for burnout.

Job enhancement.

Beyond merely doing one's job, workers may find support or restrictions to making their jobs more fulfilling. Two aspects of job enhancement will be addressed: Autonomy and Innovation. Some theorists have speculated that autonomy is an indispensable condition for satisfaction in one's job (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The ability to control important aspects of one's work assignment helps to increase involvement in the job. Some job aspects that may aid in a sense of autonomy include scheduling activities, assigning cases, arranging breaks and days off, choosing modes of care, requesting support and consultation. In the current sample, the High Burnout configuration group is significantly lower in Autonomy than are the other two groups. In Hackman and Oldham's model of job re-design, it is impossible to have job satisfaction without autonomy. Cherniss (1995) emphasizes that low burnout workers acquire a sense of efficacy or mastery in their jobs. Autonomy seems to be a prerequisite for the development of the self-attribution of efficacy. Such a model may reflect a individualistic cultural bias. Even though the cultural groups in the current sample show a range of scores on the Individualism-Collectivism continuum, the sample is quite restricted on this dimension. Asian and Latin American cultures, in general, show dramatically higher Collectivism (Triandis, 1995). It would be interesting to see if lack of Autonomy was related to higher burnout in more classic collectivistic cultures. Nevertheless, lower autonomy does relate to burnout in the current, predominately North American and Northern European sample.

The final significant work environment factor related to burnout configurations is Innovation. On this scale all configuration groups are significantly different from all others, with the High Burnout group scoring lowest in Innovation; the Low Burnout group scoring highest, and the Mixed group falling between. The Innovation scale taps the work environment's receptiveness to, and encouragement of, new and different ways of operating. Low innovation environments would rely on fixed, standard operating procedures which could not easily be challenged or loosened. High innovation environments, in contrast, would allow experimentation and variation in the approach to one's work. It seems clear that higher innovation would support job enrichment and a sense of efficacy. Classic theories of management tout job enrichment as imperative for high work motivation (Herzberg, 1966). In addition, rigid bureaucracies seem to

stifle job creativity and satisfaction (Cherniss, 1995). Again, the Individualism-Collectivism dimension may alter the interpretation of these results for innovation.

Personal variables. According to the cognitive-mediational theory of stress (Lazarus, 1999), reactions to stress, such as burnout, derive from the combination of objective environmental events (stressors) and personal variables within each individual, such as coping styles. Both coping styles measured in this study, Control Coping and Escape Coping, showed significant differences between the burnout configuration groups. Coping styles may be related to burnout both through the success or failure of the individual worker to reduce stressful events or reactions, and also through the process of appraisal. That is, individuals who have had past successful stress reducing experiences may evaluate current and future environmental stressors as less demanding than those who have had unsuccessful experiences. This evaluation is part of the appraisal process that mediates between the actual stressor and the individual's reaction to it.

Control coping.

Control Coping focuses the individual's attention on the source of stress. The worker using a control coping strategy is more likely to deal with stress actively, and attempt to reduce the stressful situation itself, not just the reactions to it. On this scale all configuration groups are significantly different from all others, with the High Burnout group scoring lowest on Control Coping; the Low Burnout group scoring highest, and the Mixed group falling between. Previous studies have also shown this pattern (Leiter, 1991). Obviously a strategy of active stress reduction seems to pay off in lower burnout. As yet to be examined is the type of stressors toward which control coping is aimed. It may well be that some stressors are more amenable to direct action than others. Control coping may function better with day-to-day hassles (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981) than with larger, structural issues. Nevertheless, successful control coping reduces the overall level of stress. This strategy has much to recommend it.

Escape coping.

Escape Coping focuses the individual's attention on the unpleasant effects of stress. That is, the worker using escape coping attempts to deal with his or her emotional reactions to the stressful situation rather than the situation itself. In the current sample, the High Burnout configuration group is significantly higher on Escape Coping than are the other two groups. One would expect that individuals experiencing a high level of burnout would attempt to decrease the disagreeable feelings associated with it. Much of the literature focused on treatment of burnout suggests strategies such as meditation and exercise. These activities do not change the stressful situation, but rather relieve the build-up of noxious physiological and emotional reactions. However, following the notion

that coping strategies may be active in the appraisal process, individuals who emphasize escape coping may overlook avenues to actually reduce or remove stressors. Thus, the escape coping strategy, injudiciously applied, may actually perpetuate the stress it is supposed to alleviate. Further research needs to be focused on this potential paradox.

A multivariate view

Although we have examined work environment and coping variables separately for the sake of clarity, individual workers cannot be cavalierly sliced into logic-tight compartments. They react as organismic wholes. Following the "person-environment relationship" conceptualization (Lazarus, 1999), it is important to discover how environmental and personal variables function in concert. A multivariate approach was able to discriminate which of the variables separate the High, Mixed, and Low Burnout groups in a significant manner. A single discriminant function separated the groups accounting for 86% of the variance (Wilks lambda(16)= .877, $p < .0001$. The major distinction was between the High and Low Burnout configuration groups. Table 3 summarizes the impact of the personal and environmental factors when taken together in this multivariate statistic. Weighting of separate contributing scores showed that the environmental and personal variables have relatively even weight when considered together. Work Pressure and Autonomy related slightly less to the discriminant function, but this difference is not meaningful. In other words, all of the variables examined must be considered relatively equally when describing the differences between High and Low Burnout configuration groups.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Several themes emerge from the configural analysis of burnout across the thirteen cultures. Each theme will be discussed briefly followed by suggestions for front line child and youth care workers.

Teamwork training and support

Social support aspects of work hold substantial meaning for child and youth care workers since their practice depends on social interaction. Successful practice often occurs within a team context. Unfortunately, workers are not systematically trained in teamwork or group process within a work team. Such training would be very helpful in establishing and maintaining solid co-worker support both at the emotional and t echnical performance level. Just being a sensitive and compassionate worker with children and youth does not necessarily translate into being a good team member.

Supportive supervision

Effective interpersonal nourishment from supervisors is also a source of social support. Those individuals in the organizational hierarchy who

have responsibility for the work lives of child and youth care workers must balance their focus on the task at hand with the needs of the individual worker. Often, concern for performance and compliance overshadow a more personal awareness of the worker. Supervisors should be trained to be responsive to both task and socio-emotional aspects of their workers. Classic studies in the business and organizational psychology literature (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fleischman, 1957) have identified the need for such balance.

Planned workplace and manageable pace

Work overload is the classic contributor to burnout. Clearly work needs to get done. However, the arrangement of work may have a large impact on how taxing it seems to individual workers. If work tasks can be paced to challenge and not overwhelm workers, they may experience more engagement with their work and find work invigorating in spite of a fast pace (Riolli-Saltzman & Savicki, 2000). Likewise, clear, unambiguous work structures allow workers to predict their work activities more clearly; thus reducing the fear of unanticipated demands which may descend in some random fashion.

Flexible, enriching work

On the other hand, too many rules and structures can stifle individual initiative and creativity. Part of what engages people with their work is the ability to put something of themselves into it (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Work structures that allow workers some control over their immediate work environments help the workers perceive their activities as more meaningful and significant. Likewise, support for new ideas communicates the belief that workers may, indeed, be creative people whose contributions can advance the purposes of the organization as a whole.

Coping strategy training

Finally, individuals learn coping strategies in a haphazard manner as they grow to adulthood. Thus, some have a broader range of more effective coping resources than others. This haphazardness of preparation for coping should be addressed. Given the stresses that we know exist in child and youth care work, we can expect that workers will need a variety of effective coping strategies. Typical burnout workshops have tended to focus on activities such as physical exercise, meditation, guided fantasy which fall into the escape coping category (Potter, 1987). While such methods may yield short-term relief, control coping strategies such as systematic problem solving may prove to be more productive in the long run. Systematic training in control coping strategies at both the personal and the organizational level will help workers become more effective at changing both their responses to stress and the environmental context in which the stress occurs (Cherniss, 1995).

Implications for the front line worker

The themes mentioned above address burnout for child and youth care workers on a variety of levels. In the broadest context, awareness of one's culture, and especially its value toward work in relation to other aspects of life, can help workers gain some perspective on the meaning they attach to their jobs. Recognizing that some cultures emphasize Quality of Life may allow workers some relief from the intensity and seeming inevitability of work pressure. At the level of personal coping styles, workers may be able to persist longer in control coping strategies with the knowledge that those approaches to stress reduction seem to make the strongest, long-term, positive impact. Finally, although front line workers may view themselves as detached from control or influence on their work organizations, such work environment factors exert substantial impact on the development of burnout. Rather than tuning these factors out, it may be important for workers to enhance control over their personal work situation and, at the same time, attempt to effect change at the organizational level. With the knowledge that changes in specific work environment conditions can have powerful effects, such change efforts should produce meaningful reductions in burnout.

In conclusion, there is some evidence that across cultures specific demographic, personal, and environmental variables relate to an overall, configural definition of burnout. The results of this study, while meaningful, must be interpreted with caution because of a) the loss of fineness of interpretation due to combining burnout sub-scales, and b) the pan-cultural analysis which did not separate out unique cultures. Future research might focus on more specific cultural comparisons.

Table 1
Cultures with higher or lower proportions of Low, Mixed, and High burnout configurations

More Low than High	Approximately equal	More High than Low
Canada-French	Scotland	Germany-West
Denmark	Germany-East	Austria
Israel	England	The SLovak Republic
Canada-English	US	Poland
		Australia

Table 2
Work Environment and Coping Means for High, Mixed, and Low Burnout Configurations

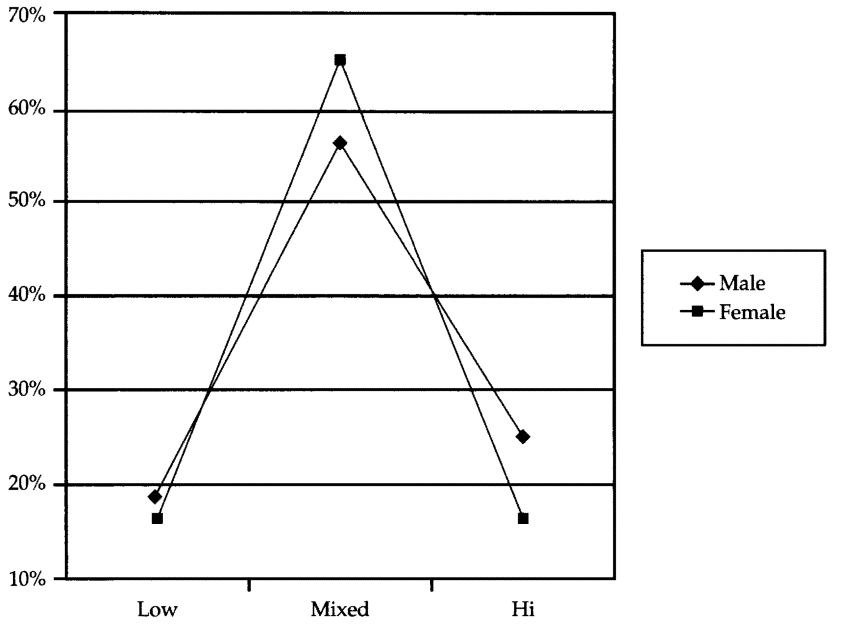
	Low	Mixed	High	F
Peer Cohesion	6.47	5.92	5.46	8.92***
Supervisor Support	6.15	5.57	4.97	9.43***
Task Orientation	6.58	5.91	5.54	9.75***
Work Pressure	4.31	5.07	5.30	6.96***
Autonomy	6.23	5.93	5.44	4.77 **
Innovation	5.89	4.99	4.52	11.86***
Control Coping	52.13	48.20	45.76	9.28***
Escape Coping	21.00	21.62	25.18	14.85***

** p< .01, *** p< .001

Table 3
Summary of contributors to High and Low burnout configurations

High Burnout		Low Burnout	
Lower		**Higher**	
1	Peer Cohesion	7	Peer Cohesion
1	Supervisor Support	8	Supervisor Support
2	Task Orientation	9	Task Orientation
3	Autonomy	10	Autonomy
4	Innovation	11	Innovation
5	Control Coping	12	Control Coping
Higher		**Lower**	
6	Work Pressure	13	Work Pressure
•	Escape Coping		Escape Coping

Figure 1
Burnout Configurations by Gender



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