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# Religious Affiliation, Religious and Spiritual Practices, and Burnout among Adolescent Residential Staff Members

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# The Role of Spiritual/Religious Practices in moderating stress among staff in an adolescent residential treatment facility

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## Abstract

Adolescent residential treatment staff members have jobs that are emotionally exhausting, physically taxing and spiritually draining. Good coping skills, including religious/spiritual practices, may reduce burnout. Results from a small rural adolescent residential treatment center indicated a high degree of burnout. Burnout was negatively correlated with existential and religious well-being, stress, income, social support and personal mental health treatment

## Methods

Forty-five residential treatment staff members (80% return rate) from a rural adolescent residential treatment facility completed a demographic questionnaire, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the Spiritual Well-Being Scale, and a scale designed to measure religious/spiritual practices.

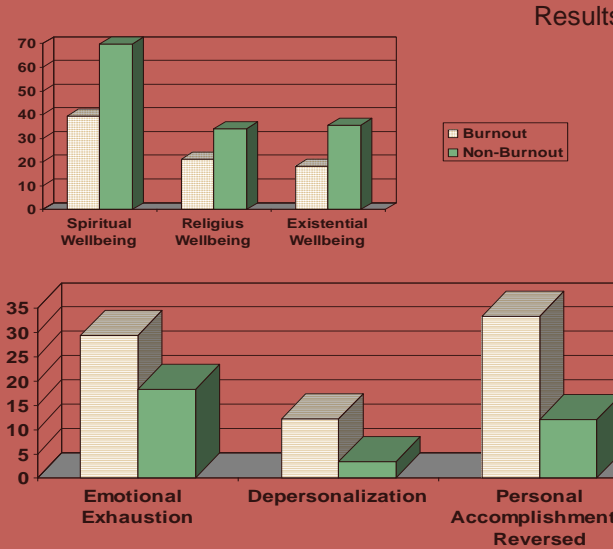
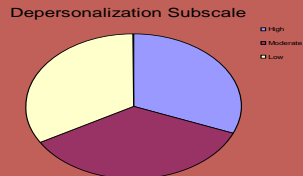
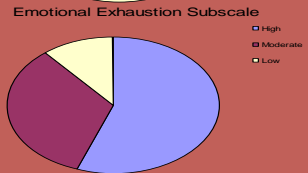
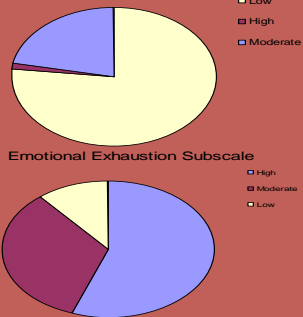
Participants consisted of 23 (51%) males and 22 (49%) females; 34 (76%) were Caucasian, 6 (13%) African American, and 5 (11%) Hispanic. Over half had bachelor's degrees; 29 (64%) were Christian and (12) 26% were Buddhist.

## Results

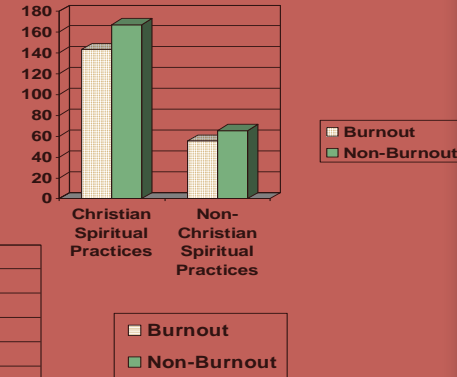
On the Maslach, 99% of the staff members identified with moderate to low Personal Accomplishment, 67% felt moderate to high Depersonalization, and 89% felt moderate to high Emotional Exhaustion. Their scores indicated significantly greater burnout than the Human Services Professionals in Maslach's data and significantly lower Spiritual Well-being than the combined clinical sample reported by Bufford, Paloutzian, and Ellison (1991).

Results indicated that low levels of existential and religious well-being, stress, low income, low personal mental health treatment, and low social support were the strongest predictors of burnout.

Personal Accomplishment Subscale  
\*Scores are reversed



## Results



## Conclusions and Recommendations

Results indicated that existential and religious well-being were inversely related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and positively related to a sense of personal accomplishment on the Maslach, but causal conclusions are not warranted and generality is limited.

Five strategies are suggested that may reduce burnout among adolescent residential treatment staff:

1. Foster existential and religious well-being
2. Decrease stress on residential staff
3. Encourage the use of personal mental health treatment
4. Foster social support for staff members
5. Increasing staff wages

## References

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- Maslach, C., Jackson, S.E., & Leiter, M.P. (1996). Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual 3rd edition. CPP, Inc, Mountain View, CA.

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