

## Bed and Breakfast Homes: A Life of Leisure or a Stressful Encounter?

Angela K. Miles  
Darla J. Domke-Damonte

*Entrepreneurs are faced with competing demands on their time and resources, along with the knowledge that most small businesses fail. Entrepreneurs and professionals in some occupations experience high stress. This qualitative study examines stressors and coping mechanisms in bed and breakfast (B&B) homes. Findings revealed that B&B owners encounter stressors concentrated on regulation, financial responsibility, work volume, and satisfaction. Owners adopted problem- and emotion-focused coping techniques to counter demands. Work volume doubled as a coping mechanism to achieve life satisfaction.*

**M**any individuals pursue self-employment as a means of independence from heavily bureaucratic organizations (Chay, 1993). Along with the excitement and adventure of running their own business, however, these individuals deal with complex and competing demands on their time, and on their physical, social, and financial resources, as well as the knowledge that most small businesses fail (Jamal, 1997). These challenges can create potentially debilitating stress that impedes the normal functioning of small business owners.

Stress occurs when people perceive that demands tax or exceed their capabilities. These demands are noted as stressors, while the psychological, physiological, and behavioral outcomes are considered strains. Due to the debilitating aspects of stress, it is important to understand the different stressors and the methods used to reduce and/or cope with stress. Although stress is an individual perception (Lazarus, 1994), there may be common or uncommon stressors experienced by persons that perform similar work. In addition, there may be common or uncommon mechanisms used by individuals to reduce or cope with stress. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the stressors and coping mechanisms used by these individuals that may be industry- and occupation-specific.

Research has indicated that some occupations have a higher degree of stress than others do. For instance, the health care profession has been associated with burnout—a specific type of stress characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. The hospitality industry has also been noted to have higher levels of stress than other industries (Sarabakhsh, Carson, and Lindgren, 1989). Therefore, research is necessary to explore the specific sources of

stressors and coping mechanisms used by workers in such industries.

This issue has been given some recent attention in the small business literature. Jamal (1997) found that self-employed individuals experienced higher stress than those employed by other organizations, while Rahim (1996) found that entrepreneurs were more capable of managing stress than contracted managers given that entrepreneurs had higher locus of control. To further extend this research, this qualitative study addresses the question: "How do small business owners perceive, cope, and attribute workplace stress?"

Because small businesses rely heavily on the productivity of their owner/managers, this study qualitatively investigates the types of stressors that B&B owners experience, and the types of mechanisms they use to cope with stress. By identifying these stressors, small business owners can implement stress reduction efforts, lower costs associated with stress, and thereby improve performance. This article provides an overview of the research on stress and challenges within the B&B industry. The qualitative data-gathering procedure is described, and the themes that evolve from the data analysis are presented, along with the use of either emotion- or problem-focused coping strategies for each stressor type. The article concludes with a discussion on implications and future research directions.

### The Relevance of Stress

Stress has been viewed as dysfunctional for individuals, and it has been determined that the environment can operate as a stressor, as evidenced by the emotional stress and physical debilitation resulting from exposure to uncontrollable environmental demands such as noise, economic change, or conflict. The costs of stress to individuals are apparent in the outcomes of physical debilitation and illness (Kahn and Byosiore, 1993). To control stress costs, its components require understanding. Accordingly, research on stress can be classified into studies on stressors, coping strategies (Lazarus, 1994), strains, and stress management. Studies on stressors have most often encompassed work overload, role ambiguity and conflict, and lack of control (Perrewé and Ganster, 1989). Studies on strains have concentrated on the psychological responses of job dissatisfaction, depression, anxiety and tension; the behavioral responses of performance and attendance (Dwyer and

Ganster, 1991); and physiological responses of heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol level (Eden, 1982). Stress management techniques most often target the individual for intervention (Kahn and Byosiore, 1993). This study examines specific environmental stressors and coping techniques utilized for stress reduction.

Stokols (1992) suggests that the environment can also act to alleviate stress and promote physical and emotional well-being when one is exposed to natural and aesthetic conditions. Moreover, Rahim (1996) found that entrepreneurs enjoyed lower levels of social support than did professionals working for other organizations, suggesting that entrepreneurs may have different mechanisms for managing stress.

According to Lazarus (1994), stress is best viewed as a relationship between an individual and a specific environment and depends on how an individual appraises what is happening. Lazarus emphasizes that stress only occurs when an individual makes an appraisal in which demands exceed his or her resources. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) referred to this condition as a person's being out of "flow," indicating that the individual perceived his or her abilities as inadequate to meet the demands of the setting. The result of such perceptions is anxiety and confusion. This appraisal process results in one of two coping mechanisms: problem-focused strategies and emotion-focused strategies.

Problem-solving coping involves attempts to change problem situations to alleviate stress. Examples of problem-focused coping include: using steps to address the problem, working harder, asking for help, attempting to eliminate the problem, and performing actions to overcome the problem. In contrast, emotion-focused coping involves personal adjustments to a problem situation when the situation itself cannot be changed. Talking to friends and family, using an outside work focus, withdrawing, reducing importance, and engaging in more physical exercise are techniques of emotion-focused coping. Lazarus (1994) contends that if one appraises an encounter within his or her control, then problem-focused coping is more likely to evolve. On the contrary, if a person appraises an encounter as unchangeable, then emotion-focused coping will be exemplified. Furthermore, coping techniques are influenced by environmental factors.

Boyd and Gumpert (1983) note that entrepreneurs are more likely to recognize the excitement and challenge of their undertakings than the stress that accompany these activities. However, given the potentially deleterious effects of stress, it is important to identify conditions within the environment that may promote stress among individual small business owners. In previous research, Akande (1994) identified the following factors that promoted stress among small business owners in Nigeria. These factors included loneliness, excessive time demands, conflicts with partners or employees, and achievement needs.

As previously mentioned, particular industries may experience higher levels of stress than others. Sarabakhsh, Carson, and Lindgren (1989) found that demands placed on managers in the hotel and restaurant industries resulted in higher stress and interference in social life than for control group managers in industries outside the hospitality sector. Therefore, given that self-employed individuals have been noted to have higher stress than professionals employed by other organizations (Jamal, 1997), and that managers in the hospitality industry experience higher stress than those outside the industry (Sarabakhsh, Carson, and Lindgren, 1989), it is useful to identify the stressors and coping techniques that self-employed individuals in the hospitality industry experience. A useful setting to pursue such investigation is the B&B industry.

### **Setting: The B&B Industry**

B&B establishments may be associated with everything from farm stays to lodging in a private room of a Victorian mansion. In many cases, B&B establishments are characterized by historic charm, location, unique decor, large structures (Mitchell, 1996), and gourmet food and beverages (Lanier, 1996). Often the establishments offer unique selling points and rely heavily on owner personality and interpersonal skills for success (Mitchell, 1996). Owners reside on the premises, often operate the B&B, and perform all domestic tasks. The establishments nurture repeat business and occupy a niche in the hospitality industry. A nationwide survey of 385 B&Bs (Emerick and Emerick, 1994) found that the average U.S. B&B business was located in a small town (population under 10,000), with six to seven guest rooms, and five to six baths. Most were built before 1920, provide an additional source of income outside other work, and have been in operation for seven years. For this reason, the present study focuses on the segment of the B&B home sector in which stays in historic homes are emphasized.

Challenges for the B&B industry include stiff regulation and the lack of common definitions for B&Bs in regard to size and amenities, as definitions differ depending on locality (Jung, 1996). B&B owners have been associated with burnout due to time demands and lack of time away from the business (Satter, 1997). Accordingly, the association of B&B owners with burnout supports the focus of this study: to understand the stressors and stress coping mechanisms used by small business owners in the hospitality industry.

### **Methods**

The following sections examine the data collection and data analysis methods used in this research.

#### **Data Collection**

Data collection was performed via telephone interview, personal interview, and observation over a two-week period.

The subjects were 6 sets of B&B owners, their families, and guests located in two states in the southeastern United States. The subjects were identified from drive-bys, the telephone directories, and referrals. Interviews were conducted by one researcher who either tape-recorded or took comprehensive notes of each interview. Consistent with the theoretical sampling procedure advocated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), attempts were made to include a diverse sample of individual B&B owners and guests as evidenced by the forthcoming subject background. Approximately 20 contacts were made among the subjects, with actual interviews encompassing 9 people. Telephone interviews were primarily brief, consisting of formalities and discussion to determine appointments and directions to the homes. Personal interviews were either by appointment or drop by and conducted at the B&B site. The personal interviews covered the history of the B&B, why the owners embarked on the endeavor, restoration, satisfaction with the choice, requirements for success, competition, opportunities, the work and financial requirements of running a B&B, family involvement, and outside help.

Guest interviews focused on why they used B&Bs, general satisfaction, and perception of management. Consistent with the recommendations of Glaser and Strauss (1967), interviews continued until theoretical saturation had been achieved, indicating that participants were revealing no new information beyond that obtained from previous respondents. In other words, the number of subjects is contingent on the saturation of information.

The following offers background on each set of owners.

- *B&B A*: The owners moved from another city to start their B&B. The husband's employer was downsizing and the owners rarely saw one another. Finances are a major concern of the wife. Both owners work outside the B&B. The owners utilize extended family members to help with the business.
- *B&B B*: This owner secured her home through divorce. She turned her home into a B&B due to its size and after initially utilizing it for receptions and meetings. She actively manages the B&B and does not work outside it.
- *B&B C*: In this instance, both owners held full-time jobs outside the home. They entered the B&B business because they preferred a particular home that happened to be a B&B, and the previous owner requested that they honor the fall reservations. The owners actively manage the B&B primarily on the weekends.

- *B&B D*: These owners were not available for an interview. They worked out of town and hired a manager for the business. Restoration and decoration resulted from contracted assistance.
- *B&B E*: The owners actively manage their B&B business. Neither owner works outside the business.
- *B&B F*: These owners desired to own the particular house. One spouse actively manages the business, while the other works out of town. The managing spouse also works outside the home.

### **Data Analysis**

Coding was performed by a second researcher. The intention was to code data primarily focusing on owner perceptions of stressors and owner coping mechanisms. However, evolving themes became apparent to enhance the scope of the analysis. The initial analysis consisted of reading each transcribed interview and coding themes, stressors, and coping strategies. This exercise was performed several times in order to identify missed items, to solidify interpretations and codes, and to facilitate validity. Further reliability checks are discussed later in this section.

Each B&B was coded alphabetically, with its owner coded by number and by gender. In addition, the data collection method was coded. For instance, BB-A-I-male-PI represents bed and breakfast A, owner 1, who is male, and the interaction occurred through personal interview. This descriptive coding scheme is consistent with suggestions by Miles and Huberman (1994). Next, stressor codes were created concordant with the operationalization of environmental demands (Kahn and Byosiore, 1993). These codes were reviewed over several weeks to facilitate reliability. Examples of stressor codes include "HW" for 'hard work' and "ENDS" for "making ends meet." Coping strategies for each stressor and for each individual were classified as either emotion-focused (EF) or problem-focused coping (PF) analogous to Lazarus (1994). The coding themes are presented in Exhibit 1. At data coding completion, a matrix was devised, utilizing the coded data to outline the stressors, coping strategies, and evolving themes for each individual.

The personal interview emerged the most fruitful of the data collection methods. Obviously, this method was "rich" in information, allowing full use of the communication process inclusive of feedback, body language, tone, facial expression, gesture, and the spoken language. The telephone conversations primarily established or confirmed appointments. Due to their brevity and the common mention of "busy" and "have time," a code "Busy" was given for many of these conversations. Since the busy nature was a consequence of running the B&B, the "busy" codes were collapsed into the "volume of work" stressor. Interviewer observations allowed insight into B&B owner actions. In

### Exhibit 1 Primary Coding Theme

| <i>Code</i> | <i>Code Meaning</i>                    | <i>Evidence</i>  |
|-------------|--|--|
| A           | Bed & Breakfast A                      |  |
| B           | Bed & Breakfast B                      |  |
| C           | Bed & Breakfast C                      |  |
| D           | Bed & Breakfast D                      |  |
| E           | Bed & Breakfast E                      |  |
| F           | Bed & Breakfast F                      |  |
| 1           | First B&B Interviewee                  |  |
| 2           | Second B&B Interviewee                 |  |
| Guest       | Guest of B&B                           |  |
| EF          | Emotion Focused Coping                 |  |
| PF          | Problem Focused Coping                 |  |
| Male        | Male                                   |  |
| Female      | Female                                 |  |
| T           | Telephone Interview                    |  |
| PI          | Personal Interview                     |  |
| PI-Stopby   | Stop-By Personal Interview             |  |
| BUSY        | Lots to do                             | "I have about an hour."  |
| PR          | Pride                                  | "A unique house"   |
| DRM         | Dream                                  | Opening B&B had been husband's ball game.  |
| WL          | Work Life Issues                       | She worked during the week, he on the weekend.   |
| DOWN        | Downsizing                             | They never saw one another.<br>Company was downsizing.   |
| REG         | Stressor - Regulatory Pressure         | "Lots of groups in your pocket, from government at all levels to restaurant and hotel industry regulations." |
| ENDS        | Stressor - Making Ends Meet            | "Need over 6 bedrooms, to pay the bills."  |
| HW          | Stressor - Hard Work or Volume of Work | "Truly hard work..."   |
| Others      | Stressor - What Others Think           | "Friends said we were nuts when we told them."   |
| CUST        | Stressor - Customers/Guests            | "Hardest group was people with children..."  |
| SEC         | Stressor - Security/Safety/Crime       | "Don't worry about crazies. Lord has given wisdom..."  |
| COMP        | Stressor - Competition                 | Request for copy of study to see what other B&Bs are doing.  |
| FIX         | Stressor - What to Fix for Breakfast?  | "Hardest .... what to fix for breakfast."  |

addition, B&B decor, witnessed firsthand, together with owner nonverbal information, allowed the interviewer to capture reinforcement data on stressor, coping, and theme issues.

To ascertain the reliability of the coding schemes, the researcher who conducted the interviews compared the coded results with the interview transcripts, which had also been verified by the original subjects interviewed. This procedure has been suggested by Lee (1991) as appropriate

for triangulation and validation of meaning association in such qualitative studies. Another researcher also validated this coding scheme via knowledge of the interviews and reading through the transcripts.

To check for interrater reliability, a sample of 17 statements made by the interviewees and a list of coding categories from Exhibit 1 were given to 3 undergraduate students unfamiliar with the study. The students were asked to classify each statement according to the coding category.

ry to which it corresponded. The results indicated strong evidence for reliability of the coding categories with a correlation of .96, .97, and .95, respectively, between each of the students and the researchers ( $p < .001$ ). Reliability checks were also performed for the assignment of emotion- or problem-focused coping strategies to each of the stressors. Undergraduates were each given a list of statements that B&B owners and guests made about their coping strategies for the respective stressor, and a definition of an emotion- and a problem-focused coping mechanism. The students were asked to assign each of the statements as either an emotion-focused or a problem-focused coping mechanism, or none of the above. The results of the analyses indicated correlations of .73 ( $p = .06$ ) with the researchers' assignments of the emotion- and problem-focused coping strategies to the various stressors.

## Results

The matrix indicated some common themes among B&B owners. First, there were several stressors identified by the B&B owners leading to perceived stress. Exhibit 2 offers a pictorial understanding of these stressors.

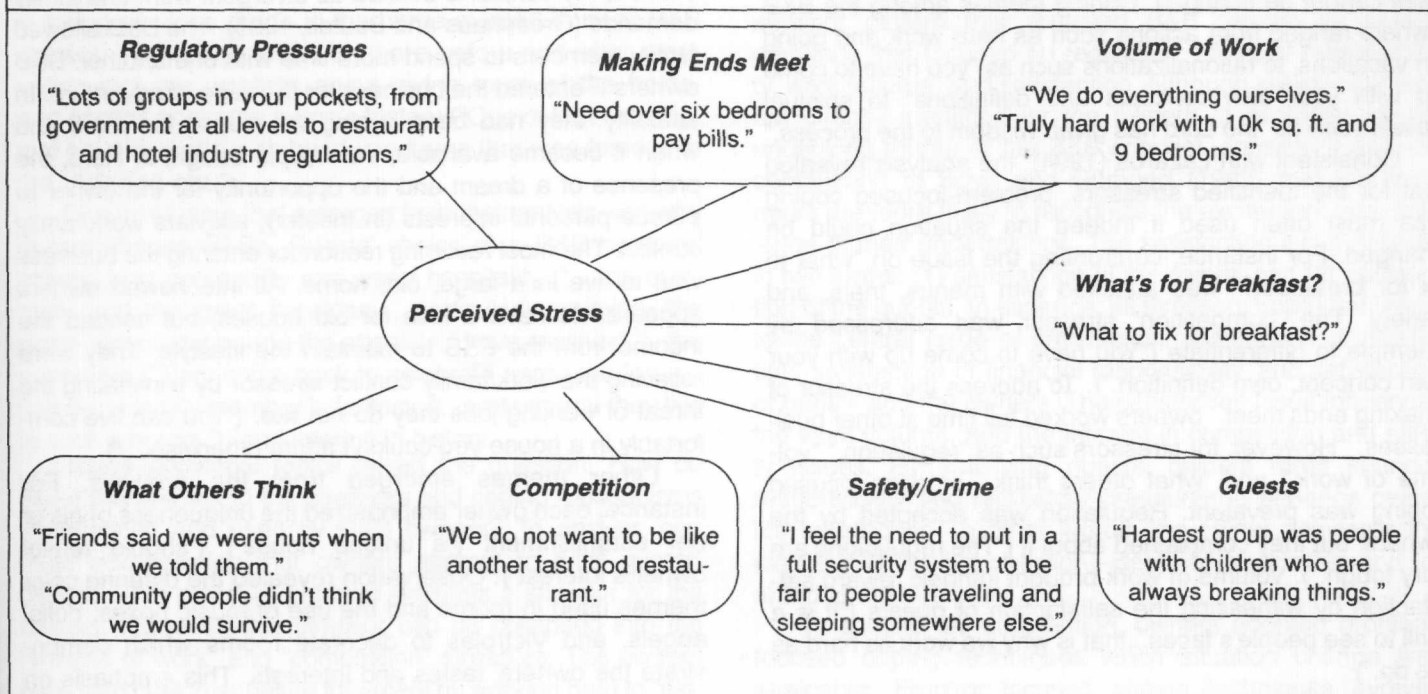
The stressors are summarized below. The italicized quotations provide evidence.

- *Regulatory pressures*: Regulatory pressures were inclusive of federal, state, and local regulation (*"The*

*regulators are very tough...The rules are very strict with the fire marshal and the public health people."*).

- *Making ends meet*: The owners demonstrated concern for financial responsibility (*"You can live comfortably in a house you couldn't afford otherwise—but you do not make a killing."*).
- *Volume of work*: The volume of work was often intrusive as B&B owners primarily performed all requirements for the operation of the B&B. Most physically restored the home (*"I worked for days without getting off the ladder."*), decorated the interior, prepared the meals, cleaned the premises, completed the shopping, and managed the business (*"I do everything on my own, my own yardwork, cooking, room cleaning, etc."*). Several owners indicated that they engaged the help of family members for special occasions such as weddings (*"We worked as a team."*).
- *What others think*: The comments of others were and remain a determination of the behavior of B&B owners (*"Community people didn't believe that they would survive."*).
- *Competition*: Competition from other B&Bs although a concern, did not surface as a serious stressor. To

**Exhibit 2**  
**Stressors Identified by B&B Owners and Supporting Evidence**



compete, it appeared important to differentiate oneself from the other competition through hospitality and B&B themes (*"I am up at 4:00 AM or whenever the guests select to have breakfast. I am the only one in town to do that. The others have rules about when and where you can eat....All guests have keys. Other B&Bs have curfews."*).

- **Safety/Crime:** Safety was not an overwhelming concern, but owners felt it necessary to project an image of safety (*"I felt a need to put in a full security system to be fair to people traveling and sleeping somewhere else."*).
- **What's for Breakfast?:** A big obstacle for the B&B owners was what to prepare for breakfast and decide what time to offer breakfast (*"What to have for breakfast, what time to serve breakfast."*).
- **Guests:** Although most guests were pleasant, some guests presented problems for owners. Guests with curious children and business travelers offered challenges (*"Hardest group was people with children who are always breaking things."* *"Problem with business people who are demanding and want the world with a fence around it."*).

As noted, stress research identified two primary stress coping mechanisms. Problem-focused coping, which involves attempts to change problem situations to alleviate stress, and emotion-focused coping, which involves personal adjustments to a problem situation when the situation itself cannot be changed. Coping themes among the B&B owners ranged from actions such as hard work and going on vacations, to rationalizations such as "you have to come up with your own concepts and definitions" to spiritual beliefs such as "the Lord has given wisdom to the process."

Consistent with Lazarus (1994), the analysis revealed that for the identified stressors, problem-focused coping was most often used if indeed the situation could be changed. For instance, confronting the issue on "what to fix for breakfast?" was attacked with menus, trials, and variety. The 'competition' stressor was addressed by attempts to differentiate (*"You have to come up with your own concept, own definition."*). To address the stressor of "making ends meet," owners worked full time at other businesses. However, for stressors such as "regulation," "volume of work," and "what others think," emotion-focused coping was prevalent. Regulation was accepted by the owners, but they complained about it (*"The regulations are very tough."*). Volume of work brought intrinsic reward satisfaction by witnessing the satisfaction of guests (*"It is a thrill to see people's faces...that is why we work as hard as we do."*)

The stressor of 'what others think' was coped with emotion (crying), spousal conversation, and emphasis on status (*"We do a lot more...It's more like a hobby."*). The 'safety' stressor was more of an issue for females than males. Coping strategies for the safety stressor were mixed as both strategies emerged. "Don't worry about crazies....The Lord has given wisdom to the process" is an emotion-focused technique versus the installation of a security system—a problem-focused method. Finally, both coping strategies were used against the "guest" stressor. Problem-focused coping was evident with pricing and when rules included "no children under age 10" and "no smoking." Emotion-focused coping proved useful to question the humanity of certain rules (*"Trouble understanding how people cannot accept children."*). The coping strategy matrix is presented as Exhibit 3.

### Evolved Themes

A prominent theme that evolved from the analysis was the reason why owners entered the B&B business. The primary reasons were:

- due to the stressors of work/family conflict (Spouses did not see each other.) and corporate downsizing (*"His company was downsizing"*),
- desire for adventure, and
- living in a large, old home (*"Wanted an old home"*).

Although the stated reasons for entering the B&B business differ, the motivation for entering it encompasses stressor reduction/elimination. For instance, B&B owner A1 fulfilled a dream to own a business and to eliminate the stressors of a downsizing corporation and work/family conflict. Work/family conflict is defined as divergent work and family demands (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). The B&B allowed family members to spend more time with one another. B&B owners F entered the business for the sake of adventure. In actuality, they had been eyeing the house for years and when it became available, the couple bought it. Here, the presence of a dream and the opportunity for the owner to pursue personal interests (in theater), alleviate work/family conflict. The most recurring reason for entering the business was to live in a large, old, home. All interviewed owners appeared to have a love for old houses, but needed the income from the B&B to maintain the lifestyle. They were relieving the work/family conflict stressor by eliminating the threat of working jobs they do not like. (*"You can live comfortably in a house you couldn't afford otherwise...."*)

Other themes emerged from the analysis. For instance, each owner emphasized the uniqueness of his or her establishment (*"a unique house"*) (*"should reflect owner's interest"*). Observation revealed the differing color themes used in rooms and the use of music boxes, dolls, angels, and Victrolas to decorate rooms which demonstrate the owners' tastes and interests. This emphasis on



## Exhibit 3

| SUBJECT       | REGULATION | MAKE ENDS MEET | VOLUME OF WORK | WHAT OTHERS THINK | COMPETITION | SAFETY | MAKE FOR BREAKFAST | GUESTS |
|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| A1, Male      | EF         | PF             | PF             | -                 | -           | -      | -                  | -      |
| A2, Female    | -          | EF, PF         | EF             | EF                | EF          | EF     | PF                 | EF     |
| B1, Female    | EF         | EF             | EF             | -                 | PF          | EF     | PF                 | PF     |
| C1, Male      | -          | PF             | EF             | EF                | PF          | -      | PF                 | EF, PF |
| E1(M), E2 (F) | -          | PF             | EF             | PF                | PF          | -      | PF                 | PF     |
| F1, Female    | EF         | PF, EF         | EF             | -                 | PF          | PF     | -                  | PF, EF |

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Regulation:</i>         | <i>Primarily emotion focused coping.</i>                                    |
| <i>Make Ends Meet:</i>     | <i>Primarily problem focused coping. Females have tendency to use both.</i> |
| <i>Volume of Work:</i>     | <i>Primarily emotion focused coping.</i>                                    |
| <i>What Others Think:</i>  | <i>Primarily emotion focused coping.</i>                                    |
| <i>Competition:</i>        | <i>Primarily problem focused coping. Females have tendency to use both.</i> |
| <i>Safety:</i>             | <i>Considered a stressor by females. used both coping mechanisms.</i>       |
| <i>Make for Breakfast:</i> | <i>Primarily problem focused coping.</i>                                    |
| <i>Guests:</i>             | <i>Used both coping mechanisms.</i>   |

uniqueness, in essence, is a problem-focused coping mechanism used for the competition stressor, as B&B owners concentrate on competitive advantages.

Expansion also filtrates the analysis as many owners intended to grow the business by adding tennis courts, enhancing the kitchen, offering tearooms, and expanding catering services. Pride in the home exuded from all B&B owners. They were eager to share before and after renovation pictures, ecstatic about giving tours of the home, and excited about the home's history ("One of first two original houses made with heartwood pine that was famous in the Victorian era.").

One last theme that emerged from the analysis was why guests choose B&Bs. Guests' choice of a B&B centered around host personality and warm hospitality ("... the company and the great breakfast... particularly enjoyed...the warm atmosphere...and the attention I have received."), the memories ("They come back to celebrate anniversaries . . . feel like a family member"), fantasy ("...pretend that they live in such a house."), and interest in history.

These additional topics raised the question: How do these themes link to the stressors and coping mechanisms experienced and used by B&B owners? To answer, one must acknowledge that owners attempt to fulfill guests' desires. This pleasure principle presents a stressor for the owners. However, this stressor can be collapsed into the "volume of work" and "competition" stressors. The owners cope with customer desire fulfillment by working hard to "sat-

isfy" the visitor. Working hard becomes a coping technique to alleviate the demands of the business in order for owners to relieve the ultimate stressor of work/family conflict.

## Discussion

The themes that evolved during this analysis resulted in a stressor pattern that revealed B&B owners as having demands that focused on regulation, financial responsibility, work volume, and satisfaction. Although satisfaction was not directly identified by the owners, it emerged as the underlying theme of the B&B concept, consistent with the contentions of Boyd and Gumpert (1983) that entrepreneurs are more likely to recognize the excitement and challenge of their undertakings. The satisfaction issue evolved in two forms: (1) satisfaction of the owner, and (2) satisfaction of the guests. In essence, all stressors appeared linked to the central issue of satisfaction: satisfaction of regulation, satisfaction of financial responsibility, and satisfaction of guests and the owners. The satisfaction issue influences the work volume, and the interest in competition and safety issues. By satisfying guests, owners meet financial responsibility and regulatory pressures to enhance owner life satisfaction. In other words, the owner alleviates the work/family conflict stressor—identified as the demand for entering the business.

To acquire life satisfaction, owners adopted problem-focused coping techniques when situation change was attainable. Emotion-focused coping techniques evolved

when situations were less controllable and particularly when intrinsic rewards were valued. Women had a tendency to use both coping methods for the same stressor. Although there was no direct evidence of attributions, it is inferred from owner enthusiasm and commitment that owners internally attribute the success of the B&B. This result is consistent with the findings of Rahim (1996) who found that entrepreneurs have a high locus of control.

These findings contribute to the literature by identifying the stressors and coping techniques utilized in the B&B industry. Stressors such as regulatory pressures, making ends meet, and work volume, however, are not unlike stressors encountered by other entrepreneurs. In addition, coping technique modification may offer applicability in other settings. The identified stressors are business produced, but their existence is a requirement for owner satisfaction and alleviation of work/family conflict. This finding supports prior research as achievement needs emerged as a stressor for entrepreneurs (Akande, 1994). Likewise, work volume emerging as a coping technique supports prior research that entrepreneurs better manage stress (Boyd and Gumpert, 1983).

Limitations of this study include its regional and industry-specific focus. Accordingly, further research will need to verify the sources and effects of such coping mechanisms for reducing stress in other entrepreneurial settings. Furthermore, additional research will need to investigate the relationship between attributions of success in the small business environment and particular patterns of stress or coping strategy relationships. Future research will also need to evaluate whether these stressors and coping strategies are the same across the diverse assortment of experiences

that are labeled B&Bs in the United States, including farm stays, Victorian homes, newly built homes, etc.

Regarding burnout, results suggest that the environmental demands described by the B&B owners mirror previous research and therefore can promote burnout. However, more research is required to determine if a saturation point triggers burnout, or if burnout occurs when the owner no longer finds the activities satisfying. Lastly, research may benefit from quantitative follow-up and cross-cultural extension. Given the exploratory nature of this study, formal statistical nonparametric and parametric procedures were not considered appropriate for this data. Further larger sample analyses should build on the evolving themes identified in this study by measuring the extent to which these coping strategies hold across these industry-specific stressors in the B&B sector, and other mechanisms that influence productivity and success in this industry.

There is one final question: Is owning a B&B a life of leisure or a stressful encounter? Operating the B&B itself is a stressor reducer for work/family conflict. It allows the family to work together in the area of dream fulfillment such that the work becomes a labor of love as opposed to work. In this essence, the B&B offers a life of leisure if a life of leisure can be defined as engaging in the things one loves. Regarding a stressful encounter, B&B ownership and its active management produce the stressors identified within this study. Future research needs to focus on how other small businesses balance owner perceptions of the workplace as a stressful experience versus a labor of love in their respective settings so that burnout and other strains do not threaten the organization's ability to compete. This research presents an initial step in that direction.

## References

- Akande, A. (1994), Coping with entrepreneurial stress: Evidence from Nigeria, *Journal of Small Business Management*, 32, 1 (January): 83–87.
- Boyd, D. P., and Gumpert, D. E. (1983), Coping with entrepreneurial stress, *Harvard Business Review*, (March/April): 58–63.
- Chay, Y. W. (1993), Social support, individual differences, and well-being: A study of small business entrepreneurs and employees, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 66: 285–302.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., and Rochberg-Halton, E. (1981), *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dwyer, D. J., and Ganster, D. C. (1991), The effects of job demands and control on employee attendance and satisfaction, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 12: 595–608.
- Eden, D. (1994), Critical job events, acute stress, and strain: A multiple interrupted time series, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 30: 312–329.
- Emerick, R. E., and Emerick, C. A. (1994), Profiling American bed and breakfast accommodations, *Journal of Travel Research*, 32, 4: 20–25.



- Glaser, B. G., and Strauss, A. L. (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.
- Greenhaus, J. H., and Beutell, N. J. (1985), Sources of conflict between work and family roles, *Academy of Management Review*, 10, 1: 76–88.
- Jamal, M. (1997), Job stress, satisfaction, and mental health: An empirical examination of self-employed and non-self-employed Canadians, *Journal of Small Business Management*, 35,4 (October): 48–57.
- Jung, H. (1996), Alaska inspectors shut down hillside bed and breakfast, *Puget Sound Business Journal Knight-Rider/Tribune Business News*, April: 5.
- Kahn, R. L., and Byosiore, P. (1993), Stress in organizations, in Dunnette, M. and Hough, L. (eds.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 3rd ed., Consulting Psychology Press, Inc., 571–650.
- Lanier, P. (1996), The importance of F&B in small inns, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 37, 4: 43.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1994), Psychological stress in the workplace, in Rick Crandall and Pamela L. Perrewé (eds.) *Occupational Stress: A Handbook*, Taylor and Francis Publishing, New York.
- Lee, A. S. (1991), Integrating positivist and interpretive approaches to organizational research, *Organizational Science*, 4, 4: 342–364.
- Miles, M. B., and Huberman, A. M. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.
- Mitchell, M. (1996), Bed and breakfasts: Glimpses into Amelia Island's history, *Amelia-Travel Weekly*, 55, 84: 68.
- Perrewé, P. L., and Ganster, D. C. (1989), The effects of demands and behavioral control on experienced job stress, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 10: 213–229.
- Rahim, A. (1996), Stress, strain, and their moderators: An empirical comparison of entrepreneurs and managers, *Journal of Small Business Management*, 34, 1: 46–58.
- Sarabakhsh, M., Carson, D., and Lindgren, E. (1989), The personal cost of hospitality management, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 30, 1 (May): 72–76.
- Satter, J. (1997), Burnout and turnover are par for course: Seattle occupancy numbers are better than elsewhere, *Puget Sound Business Journal*, 17, 38: 2.
- Stokols (1992), Establishing and maintaining healthy environments: Toward a social ecology of health promotion, *American Psychologist*, 47, 1: 6–22.

### Acknowledgments

A previous version of this article was presented at the Southern Management Association Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, in November 1998.





**Angela K. Miles** is a doctoral candidate in organizational behavior in the College of Business at Florida State University. She earned an MBA in finance with extensive study in risk management and insurance from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a B.A. in economics/psychology from the University of Virginia. Ms. Miles also holds an associate in risk management designation. Her research interests include stress, ergonomics, quality-of-life issues, organizational culture, and privilege.



**Darla J. Domke-Damonte** is an assistant professor in the E. Craig Wall Sr. School of Business Administration at Coastal Carolina University. She completed her Ph.D. in strategic management at Florida State University, her masters in international business at the University of South Carolina, and her dual B.A. in Russian/USSR area studies and foreign language (German)/public relations at The American University. Dr. Domke-Damonte's research interests include management strategies in the hospitality industry, internationalization strategies in the service sector, and the interrelationship between cooperative and competitive strategies.