

Influence of Socio – Demographic Factors on Job Burnout of Standard and Industry Employees

Baqer Kord

University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran.

The present research aims to study the impact of socio – demographic variables on job burnout. The sample consists of 182 employees from Standard and Industry Organization of Sistan and Baluchestan (136 males and 46 females) that they were selected at random. Maslach Job Burnout Inventory was used to collect the data. Results of One Way ANOVA showed that there was significant difference in emotional exhaustion scores with regard to age groups i.e. 31 to 40 years old showed higher mean scores in comparison to 21 to 30 years old, but there was no significant difference between three age groups on depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Results of t-test demonstrated that female employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to their male counterparts but males obtained higher mean scores on personal accomplishment than females. But there was no significant difference between two groups in scores of depersonalization. Married employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to unmarried employees. But there was no significant difference in scores of depersonalization and personal accomplishment for married and unmarried employees. Results revealed that job tenure had not impact on job burnout components. Employees who had Diploma and lower education level showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in comparison to upper diploma and bachelor. But there was no significant difference in scores of personal accomplishment with regard to education level.

Keywords: Job Burnout, Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), Personal Accomplishment (PA)

In this age, employees in the organizations and industries are under prolonged stress and pressure for obtaining better goals. Solutions are expected to be quicker, smarter and cheaper regardless of the cost (Anand & Arora, 2009). Burnout is one of the psychological factors that derive from prolonged and continuance stress especially this issue is more obvious in the workplace. There are some definitions and ideas about burnout, for example Freudenberger (1974) defines burnout as: “failure, frazzle, loss of energy and power or a matter of exhaustion which is the result of the unfulfilled desires of

human internal resources”. Mac Neil (1981) states that burnout has some bearing on the field of job satisfaction in organizational theory and is linked to extensive literature of occupational stress. Some researchers paid specific attention to job burnout and they defined the burnout as a “syndrome of reduced personal accomplishment, increased emotional exhaustion, and increased depersonalization experienced by individuals that work closely with people” (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). These three dimensions of job burnout are defined as follow:

■ Emotional exhaustion refers to energy depletion or the draining of emotional resources.

■ Depersonalization refers to the development of negative, cynical attitudes towards the recipients of one's service or care.

■ Lack of personal accomplishment that it is often considered only as an afterthought (Demerouti et al., 2000).

Shirom (1989) believes that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are generally considered as the core symptoms of burnout and they have the most robust relationships with work-related stressors (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). As reminded by Schaufeli & Buunk (1996) lack of personal accomplishment refers to the "tendency to evaluate ones' own work with recipients negatively, and is accompanied by feelings of insufficiency". Socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, marriage status, job tenure and education levels have a strong effect on job burnout. In continue this research attempts to investigate the review literature of some related studies.

Studies have shown that there is a relationship between age and burnout. For example, Maslach and Jackson (1981) revealed that younger people scored higher than old people on Depersonalization and Emotional Exhaustion but older people scored higher on Personal Accomplishment than younger ones. Some studies have shown that burnout decrease with age (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). In a Meta – analysis Brewer and Shapard (2004) indicated that there was a small negative correlation between employee age and emotional exhaustion. The results of a study showed that chronological age is negatively correlated with the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization subscales of burnout (Kelvin, 2007). Croom (2003) concluded that the age of the agriculture teacher was related

to depersonalization scores, but not to emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

Gender differences has a great impact on burnout, for example, Lau, Yuen, and Chan (2005) found out that gender differences in all three burnout syndromes. Carlson, Anson, and Thomas (2003) found out that women correctional officers demonstrated a greater sense of job-related personal achievement and accomplishment than their men counterparts. But there were no significant difference on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Lackritz (2004) illustrated that female faculty members showed higher mean scores than their male counterparts on the emotional exhaustion. Some other studies have depicted that female workers exhibited higher emotional exhaustion and depersonalization but males showed higher personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 1996; Kumar et al., 2007; Hogan & McKnight, 2007). But some studies showed that male employees suffer from higher emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than their female counterparts and moreover, female employees have higher personal accomplishment than males (Unterbrink et al., 2007; Cushway, Tyler, & Nolan, 1996). Some researchers noted that gender has not impact of burnout (Rice, 1998; Zhao & Bi, 2003; Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2009; Zhongying, 2008).

Some of the researches revealed that marital status was significantly related to Emotional Exhaustion, but not to the other burnout subscales. People who were single or divorced scored higher than those who were married (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Studies have shown that married workers exhibited lower level of burnout than the unmarried workers. These results revealed that in the married group, childless workers are more susceptible to burnout, and within

the unmarried group, single employees are more prone to burnout than the divorced workers (Maslach & Jackson, 1985; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Studies demonstrated that job tenure has association with burnout. In a study Yiu, Au and So-kum (2001) concluded that lack of personal accomplishment predicted expected duration of service for six to twelve months, whereas emotional exhaustion and depersonalization influenced volunteers' expectation to continue in the service for five to ten years. Croom (2003) revealed that years of teaching experience of the agriculture teacher had association with depersonalization scores, but emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment scores were not associated with Years of teaching experience. Brewer and Shapard (2004) showed that a small negative correlation between years of experience in a field and emotional exhaustion.

Earlier studies demonstrated that education level has relationship with burnout, for example, in a study Maslach and Jackson (1981) showed that more education was associated with higher scores on Emotional Exhaustion, such that people who had completed college or done postgraduate work scored higher than those who had not completed college. However, the reverse pattern was found for Depersonalization, where scores declined as a function of greater education. A somewhat different pattern emerged for Personal Accomplishment, with postgraduates scoring highest, followed by people who had not completed college and then by those who had. Results of some studies are not in consistent with the results which previously described, Goddard and O'Brien (2004) found out that there were no significant differences in burnout scores between those respondents holding an additional university degree and those who only held the Bachelor. Further, most of the current researches have

been carried out among western countries and there is expanding interest in the influence of socio-demographic factors on burnout. Because of lack of literature review on this topic in Standard and Industry Organization in Iran is obvious and it is necessary to conduct a research about this problem.

Objectives

i) To find out the impact of age on job burnout components.

ii) To find out the differences of job burnout components scores between male and female employees.

iii) To find out the differences of job burnout components scores between married and unmarried employees.

iv) To find out the impact of job tenure on job burnout components.

v) To find out the impact of education level on job burnout components.

Method

Sample:

The sample consists of 182 employees from Standard and Industry Organization of Sistan and Baluchestan (136 male and 46 female) selected at random. The participants' age range was between 21 to 50 years old.

Tool Used:

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI): It was used in order to measure the burnout among employees in the present study (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The MBI consist of 22 items that are divided into three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). According to Maslach and Jackson, person with higher scores on the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization subscales and with low scores on Personal Accomplishment subscale would perceive themselves as burnout. Thus, a person is not classified as "burnout" or "not

burnout”, but rather placed on a continuum from “more burnout” to “less burnout”. Burnout scores have been found to increase in stressful job setting and to predict job turnover and absenteeism. Maslach and Jackson (1979) in their research on helping professions reported that correlation between the frequency and intensity dimension across subscales ranged from 0.35 to 0.73, with a mean of 0.56. The correlation between these dimensions for teachers varied from, 0.75 to 0.94; with a mean of 0.87. The score on all the three subscales were summed separately. Abu-Hilal & Salameh (1991) in their research reported that the reliability of burnout inventory was ranged from .71 to .84.

Procedure:

The study was conducted in the Standard and Industry Organization of Sistan and Baluchestan. After selection the adequate sample, scales and questionnaires were given to employees and before responding to questions the instructions for each part of the scales and questionnaires were adequately

explained. The participants were also assured that their participation in the study was voluntary and their responses would remain confidential and used for research purpose only.

Results

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of age on job burnout dimensions, as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Employees were divided into three groups according to their age (Group 1: 21 to 30; Group 2: 31 to 40; and Group 3: 41 to 50). There was statistically difference in emotional exhaustion scores for the three age groups [F(2, 179)=4.416, p=.013]. The results of multiple comparisons LSD Post Hoc test demonstrated that Group 2: 31 to 40 showed higher mean scores in comparison to Group 1: 21 to 30, but there was no significant difference between three groups on depersonalization [F(2, 179)=.787, p=.457] and personal accomplishment [F(2, 179)=.202, p=.817].

Table 2. Mean, SD, and t Value of Male and Female Employees on Job Burnout Dimensions

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t value
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	136	23.3685	8.0382	-1.971*
	Female	46	25.4658	5.4979	
Depersonalization	Male	136	10.5138	3.5028	.572
	Female	46	10.1809	3.1282	
Personal Accomplishment	Male	136	28.6561	3.8146	2.021*
	Female	46	27.6067	2.7342	

*p<.05

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the job burnout components scores for males and females. Results of table-2 show that there was significant difference in scores of emotional exhaustion for males (M=23.3685, SD=8.0382), and females [M=25.4658, SD=5.4979; t(180)=-1.971, p<.05]. Also results demonstrated that there was significant difference in scores of personal accomplishment for males (M=28.6561, SD=3.8146), and females [M=27.6067,

SD=2.7342; t(180)=2.021, p<.05]. Female employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to their male counterparts and also males obtained higher mean scores of personal accomplishment in comparison to females. But results did not emerge a significant difference in scores of depersonalization for males (M=10.5138, SD=3.5028), and females [M=10.1809, SD=3.1282; t(180)=.572, p>.05].

Table 3: Mean, SD, and t Value on Job Burnout Dimensions with Marriage Status

Variable	Marriage Status	N	Mean	SD	t value
Emotional Exhaustion	Married	147	24.5507	7.6258	2.228*
	Unmarried	33	21.3513	6.6085	
Depersonalization	Married	147	10.5339	3.1247	.649
	Unmarried	33	9.9915	4.5646	
Personal accomplishment	Married	147	28.5413	3.6759	.965
	Unmarried	33	27.9262	3.2231	

*p<.05

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the job burnout components scores for married and unmarried employees. Results of table-3 show that there was significant difference in scores of emotional exhaustion for married (M=24.55, SD=7.63), and unmarried employees [M=21.35, SD=6.61; t(178)=2.23, p<.05]. Married employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to unmarried employees. But results demonstrated that there was no significant difference in scores of depersonalization for married (M=10.53, SD=3.12), and unmarried employees [M=9.99, SD=4.56; t(178)=.649, p>.05]. Also there was not seen significant difference between two groups on personal

accomplishment scores [married employees (m=28.54, SD=3.68; t(178)= .965, p>.05)].

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of job tenure on job burnout dimensions, as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Employees were divided into three groups according to their years of working (Group 1: 1 to 5 years; Group 2: 6 to 10 years; and Group 3:11 to 25 years). There was no statistically difference in emotional exhaustion scores for the three groups on emotional exhaustion [F(2,179)=.844, p=.432], depersonalization [F(2,179)=1.879, p=.156] and personal accomplishment [F(2,179)=2.240, p=.109].

Table 4. Mean, SD, and t Value on Job Burnout Dimensions with Regard to Education Level

Variable	Education level	N	Mean	S.D.	t value
Emotional exhaustion	Diploma and lower	42	26.1985	6.7354	2.286*
	Upper diploma and Bachelor	140	23.2086	7.6267	
Depersonalization	Diploma and lower	42	11.4902	2.4534	2.328*
	Upper diploma and Bachelor	140	10.1115	3.5909	
Personal accomplishment	Diploma and lower	42	28.5756	3.5688	.379
	Upper diploma and Bachelor	140	28.3354	3.6132	

*p<.05

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the job burnout components scores of employees with regard to education level. Results of table-4 show that there was significant difference in scores of emotional exhaustion for Diploma and lower (M=26.1985, SD=6.7354), and Upper diploma and Bachelor [M=23.2086, SD=7.6267; t(180)= 2.286, p<.05]. Also results demonstrated that there was

significant difference in scores of depersonalization for Diploma and lower (M=11.4902, SD=2.4534), and Upper diploma and Bachelor [M=10.1115, SD=3.5909; t(180)= 2.328, p<.05]. Employees who had Diploma and lower education level showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in comparison to upper diploma and bachelor. But results did not

emerge a significant difference in scores of personal accomplishment for employees who had Diploma and lower education level ($M=28.5756$, $SD=3.5688$), and Upper diploma and Bachelor employees [$M=28.3354$, $SD=3.6132$; $t(180)=.397$, $p>.05$].

Discussion

The aim of present study is to explore the influence of socio – demographic factors on job burnout in a sample of Standard and Industry Organization in Zahedan (Iran), where they are working under strain and stress. So, we will discuss on the obtained results from the current research. Results from first objective of the research showed that there was statistically difference in emotional exhaustion scores for the three age groups, the second group: 31 to 40 years old showed higher mean scores in comparison to first the group: 21 to 30, but there was no significant difference between three groups on depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The results of the current study are in consistent with the research of Maslach and Jackson (1981); Schaufeli & Enzmann (1998); Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter (2001); Croom (2003). Maslach and Jackson (1981) revealed that younger people scored higher than old people on Depersonalization and Emotional Exhaustion but older people scored higher on Personal Accomplishment than younger ones. It seems that burnout decrease with age especially emotional exhaustion decreases and personal accomplishment increases.

The results of independent samples t-test showed that there was significant difference in scores of emotional exhaustion for males and females. Also results demonstrated that there was significant difference in scores of personal accomplishment for males and females. Female employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to their male counterparts and

also males obtained higher mean scores of personal accomplishment in comparison to females. But results did not emerge a significant difference in scores of depersonalization for males and females. The results of the current research are in conformity with the research of Lackritz (2004); Maslach et al. (1996); Kumar et al. (2007); Hogan & McKnight (2007). In a study Lackritz (2004) concluded that female faculty members showed higher mean scores than their male counterparts on the emotional exhaustion. Female employees are more vulnerable against occupational stress and job strain which these lead to burnout and in female sample emotional exhaustion is more obvious than males, so this issue can justify that females and males body and mentally structure is totally different when stress occurs and moreover, stress coping strategies might is different between two groups i.e. female use more from emotional task orientation while males focus on task problem orientation, furthermore males have better personal accomplishment at work than their counterparts.

Married employees showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion in comparison to unmarried employees. But results demonstrated that there was no significant difference in scores of depersonalization and personal accomplishment for married and unmarried employees. The results of the current research are opposite of other studies which conducted previously by scholars. Some of the researches revealed that marital status was significantly related to Emotional Exhaustion, but not to the other burnout subscales. Maslach and Jackson (1981) noted that people who were single or divorced scored higher than those who were married. Others have revealed that in the married group, childless workers are more susceptible to burnout, and within the unmarried group, single employees are more prone to burnout

than the divorced workers (Maslach & Jackson, 1985; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). This disproportion is due to roles which played by married and unmarried employees. Because of married employees should bear all expenditures of life i.e. providing food, house, and children school tuitions and etc. while bachelor or single employees who are living with their parents are not facing with the same problems.

The results of ANOVA did not show any significant differences with regard to job tenure. Our results are not in conformity with the previous researches (Yiu, Au & So-kum, 2001); Croom (2003); Brewer and Shapard (2004). Our knowledge about this issue is incomplete and for further information researchers should caveat why job tenure in some not in all organizations has not impact on burnout.

Results revealed that employees who had Diploma and lower education level showed significantly higher mean scores on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in comparison to upper diploma and bachelor. But results did not emerge a significant difference in scores of personal accomplishment for employees who had Diploma and lower education level and Upper diploma and Bachelor employees. Earlier studies demonstrated that education level has relationship with burnout. Same results were reported by Maslach and Jackson (1981); they noted that more education was associated with higher scores on Emotional Exhaustion, such that people who had completed college or done postgraduate work scored higher than those who had not completed college. However, the reverse pattern was found for Depersonalization, where scores declined as a function of greater education. A somewhat different pattern emerged for Personal Accomplishment, with postgraduates scoring highest, followed by people who had not completed college and then by those who had.

References

- Anand, M., & Arora, D. (2009). Burnout, Life Satisfaction and Quality of Life among Executives of Multi National Companies. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 35*, 159-164.
- Brewer, E. W., & Shapard, L. (2004). Employee Burnout: A Meta-Analysis of the Relationship Between Age or Years of Experience. *Human Resource Development Review, 3*, 102-123.
- Carlson, J. R., Anson, R. H., & Thomas, J. (2003). Correctional Officer Burnout and Stress: Does Gender Matter? *The Prison Journal, 83*, 277-288.
- Croom, D. B. (2003). Teacher Burnout in Agricultural Education. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 44*, 1 – 13.
- Cushway, D., Tyler, P., Nolan, P. (1996). Development of a stress scale for mental health professionals. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 35*, 279-295.
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2000). A model of burnout and life satisfaction amongst nurses. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 32*, 454-464.
- Freudenberger, N. J. (1974). Staff Burnout. *Journal of Social Issues, 30*, 159-165.
- Goddard, R., & O'Brien, P. (2004). Are Beginning Teachers with a Second Degree at a Higher Risk of Early Career Burnout? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 29*, 1 – 10.
- Hogan, R. L., & McKnight, M. A. (2007). Exploring burnout among university online instructors: An initial investigation. *Internet and Higher Education, 10*, 117–124.
- Kelvin, R. (2007). Examining the relationship between burnout and age among Anglican clergy in England and Wales. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 10*, 39-46(8)
- Kim, M. Y., Lee, J. Y., & Kim, J. (2009). Relationships among burnout, social support, and negative mood regulation expectancies of elementary school teachers in Korea. *Asian Pacific Education Review, 10*, 475–482.
- Kumar, S., Fischer, J., Robinson, E., Hatcher, S., & Bhagat, R. N. (2007). Burnout and job satisfaction in New Zealand psychiatrists: A national study. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 53*, 306-316.

- Lackritz, J. R. (2004). Exploring burnout among university faculty: Incidence, performance and demographic issues. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 20*, 713-729.
- Lau, P. S. Y., Yuen, M. T., & Chan, R. M. C. (2005). Do demographic characteristics make a difference to burnout among Hong Kong secondary school teachers? *Social Indicators Research, 71*, 491-516.
- Mac Neil, D. (1981). The Relationship of Occupational Stress to Burnout. In J. W. Jones (Eds.). *The Burnout Syndrome* (pp.68-88). Park Ridge, I.L. London House Management Press.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1985). The role of sex and family variables in burnout. *Sex Roles, 12*, 837-851.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior, 2*, 99 – 113.
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., & Leiter, M. P. (1996). *Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual* (3rd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). *Job Burnout. Annu Rev Psychol, 52*, 397-422.
- Rice, J. A. (1998). *A Study of Job Burnout in Technical Writers and Technical Illustrators/Designers at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Livermore, CA, Department of Energy, University of California.
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Buunk, B. P. (1996). Professional burnout. In *Handbook of Work and Health Psychology* (Schabracq M.J., Winnubst J.A.M., & Cooper C.L. eds.), John Wiley, Chichester, pp. 311-346.
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Enzmann, D. (1998). *The Burnout Companion to Research and Practice: A Critical Analysis*. Taylor & Francis, London.
- Shirom, A. (1989). Burnout in work organizations. In *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Cooper C.L., & Robertson I. eds.), John Wiley and Sons, Chichester, pp. 25-48.
- Unterbrink, T., Hack, A., Pfeifer, R., Buhl-Griesshaber, V., Muller, U., Wesche, H., Frommhold, M., Scheuch, K., Seibt, R., Wirsching, M., & Bauer, J. (2007). Burnout and effort-reward-imbalance in a sample of 949 German teachers. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health, 80*, 433-441.
- Yiu, C., Au, W. T., & So-kum, C. (2001). Burnout and duration of service among Chinese voluntary workers. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 4*, 103-111.
- Zhao, Y., & Bi, C. (2003). Job burnout and the factors related to it among middle school teachers. *Psychological Development and Education, 1*, 80-84.
- Zhongying, S. (2008). Current situation of job burnout of junior high school teachers in Shangqiu urban areas and its relationship with social support. *Frontiers of Education in China, 3*, 295-309.

Received: June 12, 2011

Revised: September 18, 2011

Accepted: December 05, 2011

Baqer Kord, PhD, Department of Management, University of Sistan and Baluchetsan, Iran. Baqerkord@yahoo.co.uk