

# A STUDY OF JOB BURNOUT AMONG TEACHERS IN PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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**Abstract:** *The present study addresses the globally acknowledged problems of burnout among teachers, especially as this affects private professional institutions. The study included two phases. The first phase of study uses MBI i.e. Maslach Burnout Inventory to observe the levels of burnout. In second phase of the study an attempt has been made to observe the differences in 3 factors of job burnout i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment on the basis of 4 Demographic variables i.e. age, education, gender, and marital status. Results from the present study confirmed that teachers working in private professional institutions report high level of burnout. Their observed level of emotional exhaustion was more than the standard level. Besides this their depersonalisation level was more and personal accomplishment was low. But no noticeable differences were found in the dimensions of job burnout on the basis of age, gender, marital status, and education, but overall job burnout was higher than the standard level. It is recommended that teacher burnout should not be seen only as individual problem, but also an organisational problem and effective strategies on administrative part must be put in place in order to keep healthy, low burnout environment.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation, Personal Accomplishment, Demographic Variable*

## INTRODUCTION

Burnout is a universal fact that can have a harmful impact on all levels of employees in organizations which can lead to substantial human and economic cost (Leiter & Maslach, 2001). Burnout has turned into a significant subject for all organisations that have purpose to produce quality products and services to stay inventive in an increasingly cutthroat environment.

For a long time, burnout was considered as a particular individual's problem, related to some individual deficiency in personality, motive and/or conduct (Angerer, 2003). But succeeding researches, however, have suggested that it originates in the individual's work environment (Burke & Green glass, 2001; Houkes, De Jonge & Bakker, 2003).

Freudenberger (1974) earlier used the word burnout to elucidate a person's position of exhaustion brought on by the committed staff for working too strongly and without regard to one's personal needs. Later, Maslach and Jackson (1982) stated that emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment are the three psychological syndrome of burnout that can occur among persons who work with other persons. It was clear that Freudenberger & Maslach and Jackson emphasized the psychological impact (emotional exhaustion) of job burnout and stated the term to a work-related issue. However, the former's explanation

focused on the psychology of the human being, while the later and succeeding scholars examined burnout from a social psychological viewpoint, which centered on the connection between environmental and individual factors.

Since then, a lot of studies pertaining to the burnout have been conducted, mainly based on the operational definition of the three-constituent model which was produced by Maslach and Jackson (1982). Firstly, they stated that "emotional exhaustion" refers to the feelings of being emotionally overextended and depleted of one's emotional resources, a sense of being emotionally spent and mentally and physically drained and of feeling overextended or overstrained. Secondly, depersonalisation refers to a negative, heartless, or excessively disconnected response to other people. It incorporates an aloof, detached and often negative, indifferent and callous attitude (or response) towards various aspects of the work situation, which also manifests in a lack of enthusiasm and disengagement from work. Finally, burnout includes a perceived or experienced lack of accomplishment and diminished productivity accompanied by feelings of incompetence. Reduced personal accomplishment is a decline in one's feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Therefore, emotional exhaustion is taken as the reduction of the individual's mental resources, whereas depersonalisation is considered as a mental estrangement

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from the individual's work and personal accomplishment as the individual's beliefs concerning his/her efficiency and achievement at work.

Teaching within the organisational context with varied personalities and different degrees of professional skills needs frequent interaction and cooperation. The environment of teaching institution is always demanding and requires employees to be emotionally occupied with students as well as being mentally and physically challenged.

Further employee burnout is a rising concern owing to the changing demographics of individuals. Burnout is considered as a psychological state that might arise when people tend to have a stressed working environment, with a lot of job demands and minimum resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Even though most scholars agree that burned-out individuals are typified by great levels of exhaustion and pessimistic attitudes regarding their work, there are dissimilar views on how this syndrome should be operationalized. The present investigation studies the burnout of teachers on the basis of demographic factors. Demographic factors play a vital contribution in explaining burnout.

Maslach *et al.* (1996) studied the association between various demographic variables of the teachers and their burnout levels, using MBI-ES, revealed there is little but an important amount of variance was found in the dimensions of job burnout. Age had been predicted as the significant factor for emotional exhaustion. Smit (2007) states that of all the variables of demographic, age relates the most constantly to job burnout. In this regard Tonders and Williams (2009) found that demographic variables of age, gender, job tenure, and marital status influenced job burnout. It was also found that younger employees undergo more burnout in comparison to the older ones.

Luk, Chan, Cheong and Ko (2010) studied the relation between demographic variables and burnout among 138 teachers in Macau. Their findings revealed that age, marital status, and teaching experience considerably affected the levels burnout among teachers. Younger and single teachers had notably higher level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation in comparison to older and married ones. Likewise teachers who had less experience had drastically higher level emotional exhaustion in comparison to the who had experience of more than twenty years. Further according to Antoniou, Polychroni and Walters (2000) and Luk *et al.* (2010), younger ones are the most susceptible to job burnout. Gibbs (2010) also had the same view that young teachers, who are fresh to their jobs, tend to be an idealistic and are frequently very worried to carry out their jobs, but when they are not successful to reach their students, they feel underrated and unsatisfactory in their performance. They feel extra nervousness and insufficiency and become susceptible to job burnout (Tynjäl & Heikkinen, 2011).

There was a significant inverse association between age and depersonalisation ( $p = 0.02$ ). However, no significant relations were found between job burnout dimensions and variables of marital status, number of children, level of education, and residential status (Esfahani, Mirzaee, Boroumandfar & Abedi, 2012).

According to Hock (1988) who assessed professional burnout among school teachers, reported that there were no differences susceptibility to burnout due to demographic variables such as age, grade level, subject taught, and years of experience.

Decker and Borgen (1993) confirmed the significance of gender differences among the dimensions of job burnout. According to Antoniou *et al.* (2006) women teachers experienced more levels of occupational stress in comparison to male employees. There are many other researches which states that women tend to experience high level of emotional exhaustion and men tend to have high level of depersonalization (Purvanova & Muros, 2010).

Gender difference has a great impact on burnout. For example, Lau, Yuen and Chan (2005) found gender differences in all three burnout syndromes. Carlson, Anson and Thomas (2003) found that women officers demonstrated a great sense of job related personal achievement and accomplishment than their men counterparts.

According to Maslach *et al.* (1996) males showed higher depersonalisation than females.

Menon *et al.* (2001) identified organisational, job related and personal factors responsible for burnout wherein male teachers were found more prone to burnout than female teachers.

Arora (2004) studied burnout syndrome in primary school teachers. Results revealed that male and female teachers differed significantly on dimensions of burnout. It was also stated that female teachers with more experience were more personally accomplished. On the other hand male teachers with more experience were less emotionally exhausted.

Sari (2004) states that male employees experienced low level of emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment and were high on depersonalisation in comparison to female employees.

Nayak (2008) stated in his study that level of emotional exhaustion was on higher side for female teachers in comparison to the male employees. But insignificant differences were established in the mean scores of depersonalisation and personal accomplishment dimension of burnout.

According to McDermott (1984) and Maslach and Jackson (1985) unmarried male employees tend to experience high level of job burnout in comparison to married ones. On the

other hand, Sears and Navin (1983) established insignificant association between marital status and burnout.

According to Maslach, (1982) teachers possessing higher levels of education experienced more expectations about what they desire to attain and not meeting these expectations makes them susceptible towards job burnout. In addition, Altunand Yazici (2011) and Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) also confirmed that employees possessing higher levels of education are more prone to job burnout.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Burnout produces numerous negative outcomes not only at the person level, but also affects at the organisational level. With this individual's physical and mental well-being is being affected. Also organisations bear financial losses resultant from high staff turnover and recurrent absenteeism and lethargy of employees. Studies on burnout in the healthcare industry and other sectors are intensive. But little is known about burnout in teaching profession especially private professional institutions. Moreover change in the demographics of employees in teaching profession has created a need to be equipped with proper knowledge regarding how to effectively care for their students, because physically and mentally fit teachers can deal with students an all aspects. So in the present investigation an attempt has been made to analyze the problem of job burnout among teachers working in private professional institutions.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To study the nature and level of Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation and Personal Accomplishment.
2. To study the differences in Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation and Personal Accomplishment dimensions of job burnout on the basis of demographic variables i.e. age, sex, education, and marital status.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample

A sample of 120 respondents has been taken from employees of private educational institution working at different levels

in their respective organisations situated in Haryana (India). The voluntary involvement of employees was considered for the present study. Convenient sampling method was adopted to select the desired sample for the present investigation. Respondents' age ranged between 23-45 years. Graduation was minimum educational qualification for the sample. Questionnaire based survey was used for the collection of the data.

## Tools & Techniques

Job burnout was assessed with the help of Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which was developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986) and Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1996). This is quite reliable and valid as Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged between 0.70 and 0.90 for all 3 subscales i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment (Maslach *et al.*, 1996; Wheeler *et al.*, 2011). Because the MBI was standardised in the United States of America so the researchers decided to establish the reliability of the MBI for the present study and Cronbach alpha for present study & was found to be .96.

## Procedure

For examining the level of all three dimensions of job burnout, Descriptive Statistics was applied in which observed level of burnout was compared with standard level of output and the same phenomena was justified by large sample Z test. Further the levels of job burnout were compared using all demographic variables i.e. age, sex, marital status and education by applying ANOVA.

## RESULTS

In the present investigation the observed mean scores for job burnout's dimensions are these 33.24, 18.05 and 26.41 correspondingly and the respective Standard means scores are 27, 15 and 24. To check the departure of the observed average score from the standard average scores and further Z test has been applied to test the hypothesis of no difference.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics and Z values of Job Burnout's Dimensions**

Sr. No	Variables	Observed Mean	Standard Mean	SD	SE	Z Values $(\text{Iu-uoI/SE})$
1	Emotional Exhaustion	33.24	27	17.65	1.61	3.87
2	Depersonalisation	18.05	15	12.94	1.09	2.79
3	Personal Accomplishment	26.41	24	13.03	1.19	2.02

Note: Z value significant 1.96 at 5% and 2.58 at 1%.

## Emotional Exhaustion

From Table 1 it is evident that the employees working in private institutions have large amount of emotional exhaustion as observed average score of 33.24 was found more than the standard average score of 27. Moreover Z score (3.87,  $p < .01$ ) has been found significant representing hereby that employees have feelings of being emotionally overstretched and exhausted of their emotional resources.

## Depersonalisation

Depersonalisation states to a negative, callous, or extremely detached response to other people, who are generally the receivers of one's service or care. An inspection of Table 1 confirms that the observed average score of 18.05 is higher than the standard average score of 15. Further the same phenomena was tested by large sample Z test which states that the value of Z (2.79,  $p < .01$ ), which simply shows the rejection of hypothesis. So it can be conferred from the above test that employees undertaken in the present investigation have mental estrangement from their respective work.

## Personal Accomplishment

It refers to an individual's observed or experienced deficiency in achievement and reduced productivity escorted by feelings of ineptitude. Table 1 reveals that observed average score of 26.41 is a little higher than the standard average

score of 24 but when it was tested by large sample Z test it was found that null hypothesis is accepted because the score of Z test which was 2.01 was found lower than the p value at 1% level which suggests that employees have a low feeling of accomplishment at work.

Thus on the basis of above discussions it can be concluded that teachers experience great amount of burnout in the form of mental and corporeal fatigue and they detach themselves from their respective work.

To examine the discrepancy in the dimensions of job burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment) on the basis of demographic factors namely age, sex, education, and marital status the multivariate technique Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied.

The results of ANOVA highlight that on the basis of age, none of the dimensions of job burnout was found significant. Thus these results indicate that irrespective of age teachers working in private professional institutions have same levels of burnout in their jobs.

## Impact of Gender on Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation and Personal accomplishment

The above results reveal that there is insignificant difference between male and female teachers on the level of all the dimensions of job burnout ( $p = .08, .93$  and  $.59$ ). Irrespective of gender both males and females experience same level

**Table 2: Summary of ANOVA (on the basis of Age)(N=120, df=1/119)**

Variables	Age	Mean	S.D.	F	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Below 25	33.68	17.98	.026	.994
	25-35	32.93	16.95		
	35-45	34.00	21.36		
	Above 45	35.00	38.18		
Depersonalisation	Below 25	18.89	12.83	.070	.976
	25-35	17.69	12.76		
	35-45	18.60	14.94		
	Above 45	17.00	24.04		
Personal Accomplishment	Below 25	26.48	13.69	.072	.975
	25-35	26.23	12.67		
	35-45	26.80	14.51		
	Above 45	30.50	21.92		
	25-35				
	35-45				
	Above 45				
	35-45				

\* Significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

**Table 3: Summary of ANOVA (on the basis of Gender)(N=120, df=1/119)**

Variables	Sex	Mean	S.D.	F	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	36.86	16.03	2.98	.087
	Female	31.12	18.30		
Depersonalisation	Male	18.18	11.08	.007	.933
	Female	17.97	13.99		
Personal Accomplishment	Male	27.25	13.25	.287	.593
	Female	25.92	12.96		

\* Significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

**Table 4: Summary of ANOVA (on the basis of Education)(N=120, df=1/119)**

Variables	Education	Mean	S.D.	F	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Graduation	36.07	20.51	1.49	.228
	Post Graduation	28.88	15.59		
	Professional	34.77	17.87		
Depersonalisation	Graduation	19.50	12.89	2.49	.087
	Post Graduation	13.91	11.69		
	Professional	19.74	13.25		
Personal Accomplishment	Graduation	29.24	13.93	2.03	.135
	Post Graduation	22.70	11.26		
	Professional	27.64	13.44		

\* Significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

**Table 5: Summary of ANOVA (on the basis of Marital Status)(N=120, df=1/119)**

Variables	Sex	Mean	S.D.	F	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Married	32.66	18.41	.105	.747
	Unmarried	33.72	17.12		
Depersonalisation	Married	18.50	13.10	.118	.731
	Unmarried	17.67	12.90		
Personal Accomplishment	Married	26.94	13.48	.164	.686
	Unmarried	25.96	12.73		

\* Significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment.

### Impact of Education on Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation and Personal accomplishment

On the basis of education none of the dimensions of job burnout was found to be significant, indicating thereby that whether teachers are graduate, post graduate or professional job burnout is same for everyone.

### Impact of Marital status on Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation and Personal accomplishment

The above results affirm that level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment is similar for all teachers whether they are married or not. They feel equal level of burnout in their jobs.

Thus, on the basis of demographic variables i.e. age, gender, marital status, and education all the dimensions of job burnout are non-significant indicating thereby that teachers in private professional institutions tend to experience high

level of burnout regardless of demographic factors as discussed above.

## DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSION

The results of the present investigation expose that employees working in private professional institutions experience large amount of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization but low in personal accomplishment which is an indicator of high level of job burnout. This indicates that employees are emotionally exhausted with their jobs and feel disconnection with their students as well as environment. They have low personal accomplishment which is a sign of high level of burnout. Further on the basis of age, none of the dimensions of job burnout was found to be significant. The present finding get support from Hock (1988) who assessed professional burnout among school teachers and reported that there were no differences susceptibility to burnout due to demographic variables such as age, grade level, subject taught, and years of experience. But it contradicts the findings of Smit (2007) who reported that age had been predicted as the significant factor for emotional exhaustion. Further it also contradicts with Luk *et al.* (2010) & Antoniou *et al.* (2000) who stated that younger teachers had more emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation in comparison to the older ones.

Present findings also highlight that on the basis of gender all the dimensions of job burnout are non-significant. These findings contradict the findings of Antoniou *et al.* (2006) who established that female teachers tend to have more level of occupational stress in comparison to male teachers. Similarly Purvanova & Muros (2010) also reported that females experienced more emotional exhaustion. Lau, Yuen and Chan (2005) found gender differences in all three burnout syndromes. Carlson, Anson and Thomas (2003) found that women officers demonstrated a great sense of job related personal achievement and accomplishment than their men counterparts.

However according to Maslach *et al.* (1996), male teachers are more susceptible to job burnout than female ones.

On the marital status base all the dimensions of job burnout were found non-significant. The present finding supports the findings of Sears and Navin (1983) who established insignificant correlation between marital status and job burnout. It also supports the findings of Esfahani *et al.*, (2012) who stated that no significant relations were found between job burnout dimensions and variables of marital status, number of children, level of education, and residential status.

But it contradicts with McDermott, (1984) and Maslach and Jackson (1985) who reported that those who are not married (specially men) tend to experience more job burnout in comparison to those employees who are married.

On the basis of education, none of the dimensions of job burnout was found significant which contradicts the findings of Maslach (1982), Altun and Yazici (2011), Yazici (2011) and Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) who confirmed that teachers who have high level of qualification have more expectations about what they desire to attain and not meeting these expectations make them more susceptible to job burnout.

As a whole, gender, age, marital status, and education did not yield noteworthy results but overall burnout level especially emotional exhaustion and low personal accomplishment was high among teachers undertaken in the present investigation. So it is confirmed from the above findings that employees working in private professional institutions experience large amount of burnout regardless of their age, gender, marital status, and education level. Hence, employees might require supportive systems and effectual management strategies so that they may feel less occupational stress and consequently low burnout. Thus there is a need of the hour for researchers to incessantly address the problem of job burnout in depth and suggest strategies which can ultimately lead to practical and successful burnout interventions and prevention programmes.

The data were collected with the help of survey based on questionnaire only. As burnout is a psychological phenomena and as a result it does not appear to contain the intricacy of employees' perceptions of their place of work conditions. For that reason, an amalgamation of quantitative as well as qualitative research would have been an improved alternative. In this regard focus group interviews could have assisted to get a more behaviourally related evaluation of the teachers' lives at their work place and a better suggestion of the precise factors that contribute to the burnout.

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