

# Determination of Job Burnout among Employees of Health Administration and Assessment of Medical Documents Office of Golestan Province Branch of Social Security Organization of Islamic Republic of Iran

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## ABSTRACT

Job burnout has been found to cause several side effects in different occupational settings. It is a kind of interactive anxiety in workplace which may lead to lower levels of performance in work setting and even in personal factors of employees. The present study was formulated in order to investigate into job burnout among employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan – Iran in 2014 and its relationship with personnel's age, gender, education, and job history. The sample volume was decided using Kukran Formula. The data was collected via Maslach Job Burnout Inventory (MBI). Validity and reliability of the tool were confirmed via experts' viewpoints and Cronbach's Alpha, respectively. Statistical analyses were performed through descriptive statistics, independent t-test, and one-way ANOVA in SPSS (ver. 20). The results obtained from the present study showed that majority of male and female employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan experienced low levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and high level of reduced personal accomplishment. Also, there was no significant relationship between job burnout and personal factors such as gender, age, education, and job history ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**KEYWORDS:** Job burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, Gorgan, Social Security Organization.

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## 1- INTRODUCTION

Job burnout is a process in which behaviors and attitudes of employees become negative in response to occupational stressors. It is also defined as a long-term reaction toward repetitive stressors (Meyer et al. 2014). Job burnout may lead to anxiety, depression, lower self-esteem, inclination toward use of drugs, lower job performance, and more health problems in employees. It has also been shown to have adverse effect on individuals' personal lives (Alarcon, 2011).

In other words, job burnout is among vocational risk factors attracting a lot of attention in recent years. As mentioned above, there is a close correlation between occupational stressors and job burnout. Stress occurs when a considerable imbalance status exist between environmental demands and ability of personal response toward them. As environmental demands increase, stress may bring about more stress leading to job burnout. Job burnout is actually caused due to consistent stresses and it is inevitable in service-providing occupations (Khaghanizade et al. 2008).

Job burnout may lead to a severe fall in job fulfillment and administrative faith. Besides, job burnout brings about lower levels of well-being. Employees might abandon their personal duties and thus, their family relations may experience some confusion (Borza et al. 2012).

Social insurances commenced their activities in Iran by formation of Iranian Railway Employees Provident Fund in 1931. Inclusion of insurance supports resulted in passing "Employees' Insurances" as a law in 1943 and then, passing "Employees' Social Insurances" as a law in 1953 and onset of Employees' Social Insurances Organization. In 1963, its name turned in to "Social Insurances Organization" and finally in 1975, it got the name by which it is known today, i.e. "Social Security Organization". After Islamic Revolution of Iran, necessity of inclusion of all people to be able to use advantages of social security was considered and since then, prosperity in giving suitable services to all people of Iran has come within reach (Head Office of General Affairs of Iranian Social Security Organization, 2014).

With regard to the fact that prosperity of an organization is closely attributed to well-being of its employees, it seems necessary to devote research on various aspects of employees in order to achieve the best performance. As job burnout has recently been a major problem in majority of organizations, especially service-providing ones, the

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present paper was formulated in order to determine this phenomenon among employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan-Iran.

## 2- METHODOLOGY

Job burnout and demographic variables of the employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan - Iran were determined. The research community consisted of all employees working in Social Security Organization of Golestan Province.

The samples were chosen according to not having physical and mental chronic ailments, drug use history, and severe disasters, e.g. loss of favorite individuals, separation, possessions loss, and so on during past 6 months on the basis of their own declaration. The sample volume was decided using Kukran formula. The data was collected via Maslach Job Burnout Inventory (MBI). The questionnaire is the most common tool for determining job burnout and comprises of 22 different parts covering three sub-indices (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, Reduced personal accomplishment feeling) (Towshani&Sookhtehsarayee, 2014).

Furthermore, individual features (i.e. age, gender, education level, job account) were studied. Job burnout questionnaire, as a standard tool, is normally accepted in Iran and other countries and its validity and reliability have been established. The participants were assured about confidentiality of the information and written agreements were obtained from them. In order to provide uniform condition, the questionnaires were given in rest time.

The data were analyzed by SPSS Software version 20 and descriptive statistics, independent t-test and variance analysis were performed. Also, graphs were drawn in Excel (Microsoft Office, 2010).

## 3- RESULTS

Demographic information of the samples is summarized in Table 1. The statistical community was composed of 70 persons (38 females and 32 males). Majority of the respondents (80%) were >36 years old and only 11.42% and 8.57% of them were 31-35 and <30 years old, respectively. Over 60% of the respondents had bachelor's degree and 22.85% of them had master's degree while only 5.71% and 7.14% of the respondents had high school diploma and PhD degree, respectively. Most of the respondents have been working in Social Security Organization of Gorgan for over 10 years while only 22.85% and 14.28% of the respondents have been working 5-9 and 1-4 years, respectively.

**Table 1: Demographic information of the participants**

Personal characteristics	Frequency (percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
<b>Gender</b>	Male	38 (54.28)	
	female	32 (45.71)	
<b>Age</b>	≤30	6 (8.57)	4.52
	35-31	8 (11.42)	
	≥36	56 (80)	
<b>Education</b>	High school diploma	4 (5.71)	45.56
	Bachelor's degree	45 (64.28)	
	Master's degree	16 (22.85)	
	PhD	5 (7.14)	
<b>Job history</b>	1-4 years	10 (14.28)	6.72
	5-9 years	16 (22.85)	
	≥10 years	44 (62.85)	

Frequency and intensity of job burnout in three sub-indices, namely emotional exhaustion, personality, and reduced personal accomplishment feeling in male staffs of Social Security Organization of Gorgan were summarized in Table 2. As it is evident from the table, 53.12% and 71.87% of the personnel experienced low frequency and intensity of emotional exhaustion while 31.25% and 18.75% of the staff experienced middle level of emotional exhaustion, respectively. Also, it can be seen that only 15.62% and 9.37% of the male staff experienced high frequency and intensity of emotional exhaustion, respectively. Furthermore, it can be seen that 68.75% and 62.50% of the personnel experienced low frequency and intensity of depersonalization while 25% and 31.25% of the male staff experienced middle level of depersonalization, respectively. Likewise, it can be perceived that only 6.25% and 6.25% of the male staff experienced high frequency and intensity of depersonalization, respectively. As a final point, 46.87% and 15.62% of the male employees experienced low frequency and intensity of reduced personal accomplishment whereas 28.12% and 9.37% of the staff experienced middle level of reduced personal

accomplishment, respectively. Moreover, it can be comprehended that 25% and 75% of the male staff experienced high frequency and intensity of reduced personal accomplishment, respectively.

**Table 2: Frequency and intensity of job burnout in three sub-indices (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment) in male staffs of Social Security Organization of Gorgan, 2014**

Job burnout sub-indices	Dimensions of job burnout	low	mid	High
		Frequency (percent)	Frequency (percent)	Frequency (percent)
Emotional exhaustion	Frequency	17 (53.12)	10(31.25)	5(15.62)
	Intensity	23 (71.87)	6(18.75)	3(9.37)
Depersonalization	Frequency	22 (68.75)	8(25)	2(6.25)
	Intensity	20 (62.50)	10 (31.25)	2(6.25)
Reduced personal accomplishment	Frequency	15(46.87)	9(28.12)	8(25)
	Intensity	5(15.62)	3(9.37)	24(75)

Frequency and intensity of job burnout in three sub-indices, namely emotional exhaustion, personality, and reduced personal accomplishment feeling in female staffs of Social Security Organization of Gorgan were shown in Table 3. As it is evident from the table, 63.50% and 78.94% of the personnel experienced low frequency and intensity of emotional exhaustion while 28.94% and 18.42% of the female staff experienced middle level of emotional exhaustion, respectively. Also, it can be seen that only 7.89% and 2.63% of the female staff experienced high frequency and intensity of emotional exhaustion, respectively. Additionally, it can be perceived that 63.15% and 73.68% of the female personnel experienced low frequency and intensity of depersonalization while 28.94% and 21.05% of the female staff experienced middle level of depersonalization, respectively. Similarly, it can be observed that only 7.89% and 5.26% of the female staff experienced high frequency and intensity of depersonalization, respectively. As a final point, 23.68% and 7.89% of the female employees experienced low frequency and intensity of reduced personal accomplishment whereas 23.68% and 15.78% of the female staff experienced middle level of reduced personal accomplishment, respectively. Moreover, it can be comprehended that 52.63% and 76.31% of the female staff experienced high frequency and intensity of reduced personal accomplishment, respectively.

**Table 3: Frequency and intensity of job burnout in three sub-indices (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment) in female staffs of Social Security Organization of Gorgan, 2014**

Job burnout sub-indices	Dimensions of job burnout	low	mid	High
		Frequency (percent)	Frequency (percent)	Frequency (percent)
Emotional exhaustion	Frequency	24 (63.5)	11(28.94)	3(7.89)
	Intensity	30 (78.94)	7(18.42)	1(2.63)
Depersonalization	Frequency	24 (63.15)	11(28.94)	3(7.89)
	Intensity	28 (73.68)	8 (21.05)	2(5.26)
Reduced personal accomplishment	Frequency	9(23.68)	9(23.68)	20(52.63)
	Intensity	3(7.89)	6(15.78)	29(76.31)

The correlation between frequency and intensity levels of job burnout in the sub-indices emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and Reduced personal accomplishment in terms of personal variables, namely gender, age, education, and job history were summarized in Table 4. Frequency and intensity of the considered sub-indices had no significant difference between male and female staffs ( $p>0.05$ ). Likewise, no significant difference was noticed in frequency and intensity levels of various sub-indices of job burnout between different age groups and different education levels ( $p>0.05$ ). Similarly, there was no significant difference in frequency of depersonalization between the samples with different job histories ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Table 4: Correlation between frequency and intensity levels of job burnout in the sub-indices emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment in terms of personal variables, i.e. gender, age, education, and job history**

Personal variables	Frequency and intensity	p-value of emotional exhaustion	p-value of depersonalization	p-value of Reduced personal accomplishment	Test
Gender	Frequency	P=0.417	P=0.444	P=0.075	Independent t-test
	Intensity	P=0.445	P=0.684	P=0.732	
Age	Frequency	P=0.086	P=0.148	P=0.137	One-way ANOVA
	Intensity	P=0.236	P=0.190	P=0.296	

<b>Education</b>	Frequency Intensity	P=0.702	P=0.195	P=0.533	One-way ANOVA
		P=0.969	P=0.249	P=0.859	
<b>Job history</b>	Frequency Intensity	P=0.772	P=0.234	P=0.288	One-way ANOVA
		P=0.622	P=0.400	P=0.485	

#### 4- DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate into job burnout among employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan – Iran in 2014 in terms of personnel's age, gender, education, and job history. Job burnout and its adverse consequences have been widely studied and it has been found that it causes several side effects in different occupational settings (Meyer et al. 2014; Towshani&Sookhtehsarayee, 2014; Khezerlou, 2013; Pala, 2012; Borza et al. 2012; Caliskan& Ergun, 2012; De Caroli&Sagone, 2012; Zamini et al. 2011; Salehi&Gholtash, 2011; Sas et al. 2011; Zamani Rad & Nasir, 2010;Khaghanizade et al. 2008). De Caroli&Sagone (2012) stated that burnout has been defined as a kind of interactive anxiety creating the departure by users and a response to a state of strain and discontent which is developed when people consider that the stress they are experiencing cannot be decreased with a positive solution. Maslach and Jackson (1981, as cited in Khezerlou, 2013) presented the most popular definition of burnout and interpreted it as a psychological syndrome with three dimensions: emotional exhaustion which refers to feelings of being emotionally weary by strong contact with other people, depersonalization referring to negative attitudes or uncaring responses toward people, and reduced personal accomplishment which refers to decrease in a person's sense of competence and of successful achievement in working with other people. Pala (2012) points to burnout as “*failure, inside out burn, becoming worn out by the over-expenditure of energy,force or resources*” and by taking a psychological perspective, contends that burnout syndrome is similarly defined as a consequence of extreme labor that is disregardful of the requirements of the person, leading not only to physical but also emotional fatigue and burnout.

The results obtained from the present study indicated that majority of male and female employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan experienced low level of emotional exhaustion. Rafiee et al. (2012) stated that emotional exhaustion is the most important sing of job burnout. The one with mid or high level of emotional exhaustion feels that he/she is under pressure and his/her emotional sources are exhausted. Mid or high levels of emotional exhaustion can cause conflict, role confusion, intra- and interpersonal conflicts, lack of independence, and rewarding leading to reduced levels of mental capabilities. It can be concluded that there aren't a lot of stressors in the workplace of the staff and the staff were able to cope with stressors in their workplace. Furthermore, no significant relationship was found between emotional exhaustion and personal factors such as gender, age, education, and job history ( $p>0.05$ ).

Also, it was found that majority of male and female employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan experienced low level of depersonalization and there was no significant relationship between depersonalization and personal factors such as gender, age, education, and job history ( $p>0.05$ ). Towshani and Sookhtehsarayee(2014) indicated that depersonalization arises when staffs respond adversely to clients and render an indifferent behavior. In other words, “*Depersonalization shows negative attitude of service-provider toward service-receiver*”. Low level of depersonalization in staffs outlines intra-organization human relationships and positive attitude of staffs toward clients. The lower level of frequency and intensity of depersonalization in the employees of Social Security Organization of Gorgan can be due to a balanced correlation of rewarding system by the organization and a proper working hour range for the staff.

Surprisingly, majority of the staffs working in Social Security Organization of Gorgan were experiencing high level of reduced personal accomplishment. This finding is consistent with the results acquired by Rafiee et al. (2012) among those who are working as nurse. Also, there was no significant relationship between reduced personal accomplishment and personal factors such as gender, age, education, and job history ( $p>0.05$ ). personal accomplishment forms in an employee when he/she feels that he/she is effective in the trend of organization and can present his/her abilities to increase productivity of the workplace.

The results obtained from the present study can be considered an eye-opener for the decision-making authorities about the consequences of job burnout among employees which leads to lower occupational performance and efficiency and therefore, lower chance of success for the organization. With regard to the results of the present study, it is recommended to the authorities of Social Security Organization to outline plans in order to engage their employees' viewpoints and knowledge into the decisions made by the organization and hold meeting where employees can take part and discuss their ideas. Also, it is recommended to begin a committee to trace whether the viewpoints and ideas of employees are adopted in the decisions of organization or not. Furthermore, it is recommended to the top management of the organization to continue and even, improve the current rewarding

system and working hours in the organization to keep and even boost satisfaction level of the employees in the organization.

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