

## EXAMINING THE CONCEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL BURNOUT AND THE LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL BURNOUT IN TERMS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES (\*)

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose-** The aim of the study is to examine how the level of occupational burnout is affected by demographic variables.

**Methodology-** Occupational burnout level was examined in terms of demographic variables. Demographic variables; gender, marital status, age, education level of the person, monthly income level, working time in the current institution (seniority period) and total seniority in business life. The Maslach Burnout scale was used to measure the dimensions of professional burnout, and the three dimensions of the scale, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and the feeling of decrease in personal achievement, and demographic variables were examined. Questionnaire method was used.

**Findings-** According to the results of the research, demographic variables have an impact on burnout in general. A high level of relationship was found between income level, gender, age, seniority of the person and professional burnout. A moderate relationship was found between marital and educational status and professional burnout.

Among the dimensions of occupational burnout, the dimension most affected by demographic variables is the dimension of emotional exhaustion. The highest effect is between income level and gender demographic variables and emotional exhaustion dimension.

**Conclusion-** As a result, due to the fact that demographic variables have an effect on occupational burnout, the result of the study emerges that businesses should consider the demographic variables while considering the occupational burnout status of the employees. The high effect of income level and gender variables on occupational burnout is important. Considering these differences and considering the demographic variables in general, reducing the level of professional burnout, which has a high impact on the performance of the employees, has a high importance in terms of improving the performance of the enterprises and studies should be carried out in this direction.

**Keywords:** Occupational burnout, demographic variables, feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased personal achievement.

**JEL Codes:** O15, M11, M12

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Occupational burnout is a very common situation in business life and can affect employees' commitment to their jobs and also their job satisfaction. Occupational burnout occurs as a result of people being exposed to intense stress and fatigue related to their work and ultimately negatively affects their work performance and personal life. While people expect different things from working life, individual differences also create different expectations. For example, school area, student achievement and attitudes, administrative support or relationships with colleagues, adequacy of materials and pay affect employee performance and, accordingly, burnout levels. On the subject, Hatinen (2004) stated that work conditions may have control over burnout.

This study aims to examine occupational burnout levels in terms of demographic variables by examining the concept of occupational burnout and its effects. In addition, the aim of this study is to contribute to obtaining more detailed information on this subject by emphasizing the importance of professional burnout in working life.

As a result, it is aimed that this study will help to raise awareness about occupational burnout and to understand the relationship between occupational burnout levels and demographic factors. The results of this study may also be useful in determining the measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of occupational burnout in the workplace.

*\*This study is presented on the basis of the thesis study conducted at Istanbul Nişantaşı University and under the supervision of Dr. Mehmet Anil Sayiner.*

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Similar studies were carried out on the subject of our research in these parts; Studies that include people from different or same occupational groups, demographic data of the subjects or similar details have been put forward.

As a result of a 12-year study conducted by Cherniss, it was concluded that exposure to burnout at a young age does not reduce its long-term effects, and that burnout becomes more severe when it occurs in older ages, with greater consequences. (Örmen, U., 1993:5-6).

Chesnutt (1997) found that the sub-components of burnout were related to the width of the support network, satisfaction with the support provided, and the level of support. However, it has been determined that age and gender affect burnout and there is a negative relationship between social assistance and burnout (Akt: Özel, 2016: 20-21 ).

Wright and Bonett (1997) investigated the relationship between the three sub-dimensions of Maslach's burnout concept and job performance in a study titled "The Effect of Burnout on Job Performance". The study was applied to the experimental group twice. The results showed that there was a negative relationship between job performance and emotional burnout, and no relationship between job performance and the depersonalization sub-dimension or low personal accomplishment. However, he argued that the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension is the most important component of the concept of burnout (Özel, S., 2016:20-21).

In Otacıoğlu's (2008) study in which 40 music teachers formed the subject group; We see that the burnout scores of the subjects differ significantly when we look at the variables of "working time in the profession and perceiving the economic situation" (Otacıoğlu, S. G., 2008: 112).

As a result of the analysis made for the significance between the personal achievement levels of the employees and their ages, we conclude that the difference between the ages of the teachers and the depersonalization is significant when we look at the result of the analysis made for the significance between the age of the subjects and the personal achievement, and also the depersonalization levels and the ages of the individuals. According to the results of this study, we can state that the age of the subjects is a determinant of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Cemaloğlu, N., & Şahin, D. E., 2007:473).

## 3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire method was used in the research. In the first part of the questionnaire, there are questions asked to determine demographic variables. These questions consist of gender, marital status, age, education level of the person, monthly income level, working time in the current institution (seniority period) and total seniority in business life.

Therefore, demographic data of the participants were collected in the first part.

The Maslach Burnout Scale was used in the second part of the questionnaire. There are 22 questions in the scale.

The scale has three sub-dimensions, and there are 9 questions in total in the Emotional Exhaustion sub-dimension.

There are 5 questions in the desensitization sub-dimension.

There are 8 questions in the sub-dimension of feeling of decrease in personal achievement.

The questions of the scale measuring emotional exhaustion and depersonalization include negative attitude statements such as I feel emotionally tired because of my job, I feel spiritually exhausted after a day at work, I have become more insensitive towards people since I started this job, and I am afraid that my job will harden me emotionally.

It is determined that as the level of participation in these statements increases, the level of professional burnout increases.

On the other hand, the items measuring the feeling of decrease in personal achievement include positive attitude statements such as "I feel that I have a positive effect on other people through my job", "I feel full of energy", and the scores given to these statements were reversed and included in the statistical analysis.

429 participants participated in the survey and the data of 12 participants were excluded from the scope of the research, and the data of 417 participants were analyzed within the scope of the study.

**Table 1: Factor Loading Values of Items Measuring Emotional Exhaustion**

N. Of Q.	Question Text	Value
1	I feel emotionally tired because of my job.	0,823
2	At the end of a day at work, I feel spiritually exhausted.	0,752
3	When I wake up in the morning and start the day, when I think of a new work day that lies ahead of me, fatigue comes over me.	0,735
6	Working with people all day puts stress on me.	0,834
8	I feel drained because of my job.	0,768
13	I feel frustrated because of my job.	0,890
14	I get the feeling that I'm working much harder at my job than I should be.	0,733
16	Being in direct contact with people at work puts a lot of stress on me.	0,812
20	I feel at the end of the road, not knowing what to do.	0,789

Table 2: Factor Loading Values of Items Measuring Depersonalization

N.Of Q.	Question Text	Value
5	I feel that I am treating my clients/co-workers in an emotionless way, as if they were an object and not a person.	0,744
10	Since I started this job, I have become more insensitive towards people.	0,719
11	I'm afraid my job will harden me emotionally.	0,804
15	I don't care what happens to most of the people in my life because of my job.	0,795
22	I get the feeling that my colleagues blame me for some of the problems they have had.	0,775

Table 3: Factor Loading Values of Items Measuring the Sense of Decreased Personal Achievement

N.Of Q.	Question Text	Value
4	I can easily understand the activities of my colleagues/managers.	0,753
7	I am good at dealing with other people's problems.	0,869
9	I feel that I am positively influencing other people through my work.	0,852
12	I feel full of energy.	0,793
17	It is easy for me to create a comfortable atmosphere in the work environment.	0,774
18	I feel encouraged when working closely with my colleagues.	0,788
19	In my job, I have accomplished a number of rewarded goals.	0,791
21	I can easily cope with the emotional problems I face in the work environment.	0,834

Cronbach Alpha analysis was performed for the reliability of the scale and the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was determined as 0.846. According to the validity-reliability analysis, the research scale is valid and has a high level of reliability.

#### 4. FINDINGS

Within the scope of the research, occupational burnout levels were examined in terms of demographic variables. The effect between general occupational burnout and its sub-dimensions of different demographic variables is within the scope of our research.

Table 4: Demographic Variables-Frequency Analysis

Gender			Marital Status		
Female	205	49,2%	Married	241	%58
Male	212	50,8%	Single	125	%30
Total	417	100%	Divorced	51	%12
			Total	417	100%
Income Level			Educational Status		
9.000 TL and less	74	17,7%	Primary-Secondary Education	22	5,3%
9.001 TL – 12.000 TL	103	24,7%	Associate Degree-2 year college	45	10,8%
12.001 TL – 15.000 TL	114	27,3%	Degree	241	57,8%
15.001 TL – 18.000 TL	55	13,2%	Graduate	101	24,2%
18.001 TL – 21.000 TL	45	10,8%	Doctorate	8	1,9%
21.001 TL and over	26	6,2%	Total	417	100%
Total	417	100%			
Age			Seniority		
18-25	28	6,7%	less than 1 year	23	5,5%
26-30	103	24,7%	1 year - less than 6 years	80	19,2%
31-35	90	21,6%	6 years – less than 10 years	107	25,7%
36-40	56	13,4%	10 years or less than 15 years	73	17,5%
41-45	69	16,5%	15 years - less than 20 years	75	18,0%
46-50	55	13,2%	20 years and above	59	14,1%
51-55	8	1,9%	Total	417	100%
56-60	6	1,4%			
61 and over	2	0,5%			
Total	417	100%			
Working Time in the Current Business					
less than 1 year	84	20,1%			
1 year - less than 6 years	126	30,2%			
6 years – less than 10 years	102	24,5%			
10 years or less than 15 years	69	16,5%			
15 years - less than 20 years	19	4,6%			
20 years and above	17	4,1%			
Total	417	100%			

### Hypothesis Tests and Result

The research hypotheses were tested with the Independent Sample T-Test and One-way Analysis of Variance (Anova) due to the normal distribution of the data. The relationship between Gender and Marital Status variables and Occupational Burnout level was determined by Independent Sample T Test. Age, Educational Status, Salary, Educational Status Seniority in the Employed Enterprise and the relationship of Total seniority with the level of Occupational Burnout was measured with the One-Way Analysis of Variance (Anova) test. It has been accepted that there is a correlation between the level of general occupational burnout, which is the main hypothesis of our research, and demographic variables.

The sub-hypothesis of the existence of a correlation between the sub-dimensions of the level of occupational burnout, the feeling of decrease in personal achievement and depersonalization and education level was rejected. Apart from this, the existence of all sub-hypotheses between the feeling of decrease in personal achievement, depersonalization and emotional exhaustion sub-dimensions and demographic data were accepted.

### 5. CONCLUSION

According to the results of the research, demographic variables generally have an effect on burnout. A high level of correlation was found between income level, gender, age and seniority of the person and professional burnout. A moderate relationship was found between marital and educational status and professional burnout.

Among the dimensions of occupational burnout, the dimension most affected by demographic variables is the dimension of emotional exhaustion. The highest effect is between income level and gender demographic variables and emotional exhaustion dimension.

As a result, due to the fact that demographic variables have an effect on occupational burnout, the result of the study emerges that businesses should consider the demographic variables while considering the occupational burnout status of the employees. The high effect of income level and gender variables on occupational burnout is important. Considering these differences and considering the demographic variables in general, reducing the level of professional burnout, which has a high impact on the performance of the employees, has a high importance in terms of improving the performance of the enterprises and studies should be carried out in this direction.

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