



# The Role of Burnout on Reducing Employees' Performance

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** In this research, we are looking for an appropriate answer to the question of whether job burnout can be considered as a factor in reducing job performance for employees. The purpose of this study was to measure burnout components and to investigate its relationship with employees' performance components in the postal area 13 of Tehran. **Methodology:** This research is a descriptive-survey method. Using a suitable sampling method, a sample of 200 individuals was selected. The collected data were analyzed using correlation test. **Results:** The results show that in general, job burnout has a significant effect on reducing employees' performance. Performance factors that affect burnout are: ability level, level of perception, motivation, evaluation, performance, perceived environmental fitness; also, various components of burnout, including emotional exhaustion, isolation and individual failure, also affect the performance of employees. Of course, the effect of burnout on perceived organizational components and credibility was not confirmed. **Conclusion:** Finally, employee perceptions of environmental conditions are improved through the implementation of programs to reduce burnout.

## 1. Introduction

Today, human resources, as the most valuable organizational capital, face many problems that will reduce individual performance in an organization and reduce its effectiveness. Some of these issues are burnout factors. The study of burnout factors and their relationship with employee performance components of the research problem are in this study.

- Aziznejad and Hosseini, (2004) studied burnout and its causes in clinical nurses working in hospitals affiliated to Babol University of Medical Sciences. From their point of view, burnout is one of the problems that can be observed among nurses and can have a significant impact on patient care, physical and mental health of the nurse, and staffing and therapeutic costs, and ultimately reduces the performance and function of individuals.

- Mazlumi et al., (2013) studied the components of burnout in a research entitled "The effect of burnout on social support and self-esteem of health care personnel in Yazd". The researchers believe that today, one of the main factors in reducing the efficiency and loss of human resources is the burnout of the employees.

- In this study, Chavoshifar et al., (2010), investigated the extent and prediction of the factors affecting the burnout of the employees of the operational areas of the Continental Oil Company. The purpose of this study was to investigate the burnout rate of employees of operating areas of the Continental Oil Company in four dimensions of burnout, and in two dimensions of frequency and severity, and to determine the share of each of these dimensions in burnout. The results show that there is a correlation between demographic and burnout characteristics.

- Another research was conducted in 2011 entitled "Examining the status of burnout among the bank employees and presenting solutions for improving its status" by Amirir et al., (2011). The results of the study indicate that the variable was considered as a reflective one. Also, the results of the study indicate that the variables of gender, marital status, number of children, educational status, province of service, and work experience also affect the burnout of employees.

- Safa'i Movahed and Beygard Javanroodi, (2015) study on the burnout of married women in Mariavan city using phenomenological research method concluded that burnout occurs in five stages among female teachers: the first stage: the realization of the dream; the second stage: the conflict; the third

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stage: fatigue; the fourth stage: the crisis; the fifth stage: the impasse.

- A survey on the role of perception of professional development on occupational attachment, occupational content plateau and burnout in primary school teachers in Kashan, was conducted by Akhundi and Safaee Movahed, (2015) using a questionnaire for collecting information and research hypotheses were examined by Amos-20 software and it was shown that perception of professional development is effective on occupational attachment, occupational content plateau and job burnout of teachers. The results also showed that occupational attachment and occupational content plateau have a mediating role in the relationship between perceptions of professional development and the burnout of teachers.

Occupational burnout is a relatively new term used to describe human responses to the workplace against experienced stresses and includes the psychological responses that individuals face when faced with job stress (Lackritz, 2004). Investigating the behavior of people with personality type A, which has characteristics such as continuous interest in recognition and progress and continuous involvement in multiple acts with deadlines and negligence from all aspects of life, excluding occupations, etc., have shown positive correlation with burnout among nurses. (Lavanco, 1997). Investigations have shown that burnout, mental stress, and personality traits are correlated (Depew et al., 1999), and more tolerance is associated with less emotional exacerbation (Costantini et al., 1997). Job burnout is affected by various factors such as job type, conflict and role confusion, excessive workload, type of management, lack of social support, organizational changes and hours of work (Fletcher, 2001). Gilmour and Danson argue that external factors such as low income can provide the basis for burnout (Barbon and Greenery, 1990). Occupations such as nursing, police, employees of government agencies, etc. are more exposed to burnout than others. Other scholars (Raiger, 2005; Law, 2010) also emphasize this and emphasize that the level of relationships with other people is very effective in burnout. Job burnout is the response to stress and high workload at work that will lead to emotional exhaustion, isolation and mitigation (Raiger, 2005).

- In 2009, another study was conducted by Lasalvia et al. (2009) in the UK. This research was titled "Effects of different organizational factors on burnout". The results of this research show that how much the mental factors and their attention to the organization can play in the overall performance of the organization.

- In 2013, a research entitled "The causes, consequences and effects of burnout" was conducted by a Taiwan scholar called Lin, (2013). The results show that, firstly, the most important component of burnout is emotional exhaustion. Secondly, increasing workload and the existence of job conflicts are the most important factors in causing burnout. Also, increase of work autonomy, improvement of organizational relations and increase of social support were introduced as the most important methods of reducing burnout.

- In a study conducted by Pakistani researchers Meenai et al., (2015), the impact of job stress on burnout in private educational institutions and universities was discussed. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between job stress and job burnout and employees performance reduction, so that occupational stress and burnout resulted in depression and then decreased motivation and, finally, decreased employees' performance of private educational institutions and universities.

The present research is important for managers and organizational psychologists to improve organizational performance. Identifying the effects and consequences of job burnout in order to attract the attention of managers and decision makers to carry out the necessary actions and provide practical solutions to root out and understand the causes of the abandonment of work and relocation in government agencies, and, on the other hand, the reduction of organizational costs is very important. The main purpose of this study is to investigate and identify the relationship between burnout and job performance; also, sub objectives to investigate and identify the relationship between job burnout and variables of skill level and employees knowledge, level of perception of the role of employees, perceived organizational support of employees, employee motivation level, employee evaluation level, perceived organizational validity, perceived environmental fitness individuality, as well as sub-goals, determine the relationship between emotional burnout and job performance, studying and identifying the relationship between job isolation and job performance, and examining and observing the relationship between feeling of failure and job performance. To achieve these goals:

- First, by studying the library method, previous studies and similar research results, the components and propositions of each of the variables were determined.
- Then, based on the results of the previous stage, a questionnaire was developed.
- In the next step, using the field method, distributing the questionnaire and collecting the required data.
- Data is entered into the software and analyzed.

## 2. Materials and methods

This research can be considered as an applied one, because its results directly apply to the performance of employees and they try to examine and measure various components of burnout. Also, descriptive-correlation method has been used based on how data is obtained in this research. The research community consisted of all employees working in the 13th district of Tehran, with total employees of 400 people. 196 samples were selected using available sampling method, which was increased to 200 cases to cover possible errors. A questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection and the validity and reliability of the questionnaire were examined. Initially, from two perspectives, validity of the questionnaire was confirmed:

- ✓ Use the standard questionnaire
- ✓ Approval of the relevant faculty members and experts (judgment method)

Then, we determined the reliability (reliability) of the questionnaire. The internal consistency of the measurement tool can be measured with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. In the best case, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient should be higher than 0.7. Using the formula (1), the value of the alpha coefficient can be calculated.

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} \left( \frac{\sum S_i^2 - S_1^2}{S_1^2} \right) \quad (1)$$

In this research, at first, 25 questionnaires were distributed and distributed among the statistical population in two stages. Then, the collected data was analyzed using SPSS software. The calculated coefficient of reliability for each of the components is above 0.7 and considering the minimum required reliability coefficient of 0.7 is recommended, it can be concluded that the questionnaire has a good reliability.

**Table 1. The result of calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient**

Total variable	Total Cronbach Alpha	Components	Cronbach's alpha
Job burnout	0.874	Emotional exhaustion	0.863
		Occupational isolation	0.754
		Feeling of individual failure	0.762
Performance	0.895	Employees Ability	0.771
		Understanding and imagining a job	0.756
		Organizational support	0.805
		Motivation	0.889
		Environmental compromise	0.745
		Credit	0.725
		Evaluation and feedback	0.703

To analyze the data, using descriptive methods, data are summarized and classified using descriptive statistics indices. In the next step, Kolmogorov Smirnov test is used to investigate the normal distribution of the data of the research variables. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS software using descriptive and analytical methods.

### 3. Discussion and results

#### 3.1 Findings

The results of the descriptive indices of the research variables are presented in the following table:

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Indicators of Variable Performance Components**

	Performance	Level of employees assessment	Perceived organization al credibility	Compromise and perceived environmental fitness	Employee motivation level	Perceived organization al support	Level of perception and role imagination	Employees Ability
Valid number	198	198	198	198	198	198	198	198
Lost data	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	4.2323	4.3239	4.1751	4.3460	4.2003	4.1806	4.2664	4.1283
Middle	4.2381	4.3000	4.3333	4.2500	4.3333	4.2500	4.2500	4.2000
Mode	3.42a	3.80	3.67	4.00	4.67	4.25	4.25	4.20
Standard deviation	0.55329	0.80899	0.92997	0.82490	0.92209	0.86524	0.79699	0.90093
Variance	0.306	0.654	0.865	0.680	0.850	0.749	0.635	0.812
Domain	2.71	4.20	4.67	3.75	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.40

In order to test the hypothesis that we used parametric tests, the first condition was to examine the normal distribution of data. Acceptable error level is 0.05. In other words:

$$\alpha=0.05$$

### 3.1.1 Investigating the Normality of Variables Distribution

Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used to investigate the normal distribution of the data of the research variables.

H0= the distribution of data is normal.

H1= the distribution of data is not normal.

**Table 3. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of performance variables**

	Performance	Level of employees assessment	Perceived organizational credibility	Compromise and perceived environmental fitness	Employee motivation level	Perceived organizational support	Level of perception and role imagination	Employees Ability
Acceptable number	198	198	198	198	198	198	198	198
Average	4.2323	4.3293	4.1751	4.3460	4.2003	4.1806	4.2664	4.1283
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.697	0.931	1.0306	1.311	1.301	1.172	1.093	0.956
Sig	0.717	0.351	0.066	0.068	0.068	0.128	0.184	0.320

The results show that the distribution of data in all cases is normal, because according to the results, the significance level of Sig for all variables is higher than the significance level of 0.05.

**Table 4. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of burnout variables**

	Job burnout	Feeling of failure	Isolated	Emotional exhaustion
Acceptable number	197	198	198	197
Average	4.0518	4.0013	4.0126	4.1604
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.736	1.204	1.038	1.031
Sig	0.650	0.110	0.229	0.238

The results show that the distribution of data in all cases is normal, because according to the results, the significance level of Sig for all variables is higher than the significance level of 0.05. As a result, we test the existence of correlation and the relationship between dependent variables and independent parametric tests (Pearson correlation coefficient).

### 3.1.2 Test of research hypotheses

**First hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and the level of ability, skill and knowledge of the employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and the level of ability, skill and knowledge of the employees.

H1 = There is a significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and the level of ability, skill and knowledge of the employees.

**Table 5. Correlation between job burnout and ability level**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Level of ability	198	-0.205**	0.004

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and "skill level, employee skills and knowledge". Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

**Second hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and the level of perception and understanding of the role of employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and the level of perception and understanding of the role of employees.

H1 = There is a significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and the level of perception and understanding of the role of employees.

**Table 6. Correlation between job burnout and the level of perception and understanding of the role of employees**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	level of perception and understanding of the role of employees	198	-0.219**	0.002

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and the level of perception and understanding of the role of employees.

**Third hypothesis:** There is a significant correlation between job burnout and perceived organizational support.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived organizational support.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived organizational support.

**Table 7. Correlation between job burnout and employee perceived organizational support**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Perceived organizational support	198	-0.124	0.082

The results show that there is a reverse relationship between job burnout and "perceived organizational support of employees".

**Fourth hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and employees motivation level.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employees motivation level.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employees motivation level.

**Table 8. Correlation between job burnout and employees motivation level**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Employees motivation level	198	-0.318**	0.000

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and employees motivation level.

**Fifth hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and employees assessment level.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employees assessment level.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employees assessment level.

**Table 9. Correlation between job burnout and employees assessment level**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Employees assessment level	198	-0.296**	0.000

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and employees assessment level.

**Sixth hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and perceived organizational credibility.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived organizational credibility.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived organizational credibility.

**Table 10. Correlation between job burnout and perceived organizational credibility**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Perceived organizational credibility	198	-0.160	0.055

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and perceived organizational credibility.

**Seventh hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and perceived environmental fit of employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived environmental fit of employees.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and perceived environmental fit of employees.

**Table 11. Correlation between job burnout and perceived environmental fitness**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Perceived environmental fitness	198	-0.297**	0.000

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and perceived environmental fit of employees.

### 3.2 Examining three hypotheses:

There is a significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and occupational performance of employees.

There is a significant relationship between job isolation and occupational performance of employees.

There is a significant relationship between the lack of success and the job performance of the employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of emotional exhaustion and occupational performance of employees.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of emotional exhaustion and occupational performance of employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job isolation and occupational performance of employees.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job isolation and occupational performance of employees.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of the lack of success and the job performance of the employees.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of the lack of success and the job performance of the employees.

**Table 12. Correlation between job burnout and performance components**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Emotional exhaustion	Performance	198	-0.280**	0.000
	Job isolation		198	-0.159*	0.025
	Lack of success		198	-0.339**	0.000

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between emotional exhaustion, job isolation and feeling of lack of success and "performance".

**Main hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between job burnout and employee performance.

H0 = There is no significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employee performance.

H1 = There is significant correlation between the two variables of job burnout and employee performance.

**Table 13. Correlation between Job Burnout-Performance**

	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Number	Correlation coefficients	Sig
Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Job burnout	Performance	198	-0.358**	0.000

The results show that there is a reverse and significant relationship between job burnout and "performance". Therefore, the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

## 4. Conclusion

### 4.1 Discussion and Conclusion

The research had 10 hypotheses that examined the various components of job burnout on the performance. Among the 10 hypotheses of the research, eight hypotheses were accepted and only the effect of job burnout on the perceived organizational support components and perceived organizational credibility was not confirmed. Generally (in the main hypothesis), job burnout was recognized as a decreasing factor affecting job performance and the main hypothesis was confirmed. In the table below, you can briefly see the status of admitting or not accepting research hypotheses:

**Table 14. The status of acceptance or non-acceptance of research hypotheses**

Hypotheses	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Intensity of relationship	Situation	The final result of the hypothesis
1	Job burnout	Level of Ability, Skill and Knowledge	Weak	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
2	Job burnout	level of perception and understanding of the role of employees	Weak	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
3	Job burnout	Perceived organizational support	Weak	Reject H1	Reject
4	Job burnout	Employee motivation level	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
5	Job burnout	Employees assessment level	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
6	Job burnout	Perceived organizational credibility	Weak	Reject H1	Reject
7	Job burnout	Perceived environmental fitness	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
8	Emotional exhaustion	Performance	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
9	Job isolation	Performance	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm
10	Lack of success	Performance	Moderate	Confirmed H1 and rejected H0	Confirm

#### 4.1 Comparing the results of the research with the findings of the researchers in the past

**Table 15. Comparison of the results of this research with past research**

Previous scholars	Year	Previous research results	The results of this research
Adam Anbar and Malak Aker	2008	There is a significant relationship between increasing burnout and job satisfaction. Particularly, two components of burnout, ie emotional exhaustion and isolation, had a strong and direct relationship with decreased job satisfaction.	If job satisfaction is considered as one of the factors affecting performance, we can say that the results of these two studies are parallel to each other.
Lin	2013	Job burnout will have a significant negative impact on job performance and organizational communication.	In this research, the negative role of job burnout on employees' job performance was emphasized.
Mazlumi et al.	2013	Emphasis on the negative impact of burnout on social support and personnel self-esteem.	The research also emphasized that job burnout has a negative effect on personnel morale.
Najafi et al	2000	There was no significant relationship between job burnout and variables such as age, sex, marriage, field of study, different parts of work and years of service.	In this research, the role of demographic factors was not emphasized and only the role of job burnout was confirmed on the reduction of staff performance.

#### 4.2 Practical suggestions

- ❖ Employee perceptions of environmental conditions are improved through the implementation of programs to reduce burnout. Therefore, the perceived environmental conditions of employees can be improved by implementing low-cost programs such as job placement and employee skills diversification.
- ❖ The attractiveness of individual responsibilities through increased human resources and autonomy of action.
- ❖ Improve employee participation by encouraging them to communicate and participate actively in the organization.
- ❖ More precision about the suitability of each person's morale with job components.

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