



## Academics' Burnout Levels

### Akademisyenlerin Tükenmişlik Düzeyleri<sup>i</sup>

Fatma Kayan Fadlelmula<sup>ii</sup>

*Bu çalışmanın amacı, akademisyenlerin duygusal tükenmişlik, duyarsızlaşma ve kişisel başarı kaybı açısından tükenmişlik düzeylerini araştırmak ve çeşitli kişisel değişkenlerin tükenmişlik düzeyleri üzerindeki etkisini incelemektir. Bu değişkenler başlıca akademisyenlerin cinsiyeti, medeni durumu, çocuk sayısı, yaşı, üniversitedeki toplam hizmet yılı ve ekonomik durumları hakkındaki görüşlerinden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak Maslach ve Jackson tarafından geliştirilmiş ve alan yazınında sıklıkla kullanılmakta olan Maslach Tükenmişlik Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Ölçek, Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesinde çalışmakta olan 48 öğretim üyesine uygulanmıştır. Veriler, 2012-2013 akademik yılı güz döneminde toplanmıştır. Bulgular genel olarak akademisyenlerin düşük tükenmişlik seviyesine sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Hem duygusal tükenmişlik hem de kişisel başarı kaybı alt boyutlarında düşük tükenmişlik düzeyi tespit edilmiştir. Özellikle duyarsızlaşma alt boyutunda ise oldukça düşük tükenmişlik düzeyi elde edilmiştir. Ayrıca, kişisel değişkenlerin hiçbiri duygusal tükenmişlik, duyarsızlaşma ve kişisel başarı kaybı üzerinde anlamlı bir farklılık yaratmamıştır. Sadece kişisel başarı kaybı alt boyutunda akademisyenlerin toplam hizmet yılı göz önünde bulundurulduğunda anlamlı farklılık olduğu belirlenmiştir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tükenmişlik, Duygusal Tükenmişlik, Duyarsızlaşma, Kişisel Başarı, Akademisyenler

#### Introduction

Burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in work related situations that are excessively demanding (Harrison, 1999). In general, burnout can be recognized by a *decrease in level of personal functioning*, such as lack of concern, indifference in interpersonal relations, feeling of dissatisfaction, and helplessness (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). It consists of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and loss of personal accomplishment (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). These dimensions represent the level of burnout an individual may encounter in his work life.

Emotional exhaustion is known as the central dimension of burnout syndrome. Individuals with emotional exhaustion believe that their physical and emotional resources are used up, so they feel tired and worn out even after they just wake up (Wright and Bonett, 1997). The second dimension of burnout,

<sup>i</sup> Bu çalışma 1<sup>st</sup> International Instructional Technologies & Teacher Education Symposium'da poster bildirisi olarak 2013 yılında sunulmuştur.

<sup>ii</sup> Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İlköğretim Matematik Öğretmenliği Programı, fatmakayan@mehmetakif.edu.tr

depersonalization, is related with interpersonal aspects of exhaustion. It consists of negative, insensitive and detached attitudes toward clients, colleagues and organization (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). Lastly, the third dimension of burnout, personal accomplishment, is associated with individuals' self-evaluation of work performance. Loss of personal accomplishment is characterized by a feeling of inefficiency and inadequacy while dealing with job requirements (Togia, 2005).

Burnout has negative impact on work life by affecting working efficacy, productivity and participation (Dick and Wagner, 2001). It is generally encountered by individuals that have a high degree of interaction with many people (Evers, Tomic, and Browsers, 2005). Specially, teachers are known to be suffering from this syndrome due to their relationships with large numbers of students, families, teachers and administrators (Blandford, 2000; Van Horn, Schaufeli, Greenglass, and Burke, 1997). It affects teaching performance by decreasing the quality of teaching (Koustelios and Tsigilis, 2005), drawing the teacher away from personal development, decreasing interest and attention toward students, which in turn affect students' academic performance (Van Horn et al., 1997).

To date, many studies have been conducted in the literature regarding burnout syndrome. Most of these studies focused on the reasons that may affect individuals' burnout levels, including demographic variables (gender, age, experience, marital status, etc.), environmental variables (number of students, socio economic level, etc.), and organizational variables (working conditions, social climate, etc.). In most of these studies, Maslach Burnout Inventory was used as the main data collection instrument. In Turkey, burnout has recently acquired research attention, and very few studies have been conducted on teachers, especially on university academicians. Yet, similar to teachers, academicians are possible candidates for burnout syndrome regarding their relations with large numbers of students, university staff and administrators (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell, and Blix, 1994).

Among the studies conducted on university academicians in Turkey, Toker (2011) examined academicians' burnout levels, stressing on their marital status, age and gender. Data were collected from 648 academicians, and the results indicated that academicians hold average burnout level. Particularly, marital status and age had significant effect on their burnout levels, whereas gender did not have any significant effect. A similar study performed by Sağlam (2011) with 174 academicians revealed that academic title and economic satisfaction level did not have any significant effect on academicians' burnout levels. On the other hand, there were significant differences between academicians' emotional exhaustion and depersonalization levels regarding their year of teaching experience.

In another study, Küçüksüleymanoğlu (2007) investigated academicians' burn out levels regarding their gender, marital status, age, field of study, experience, and academic title. Data were collected from 106 academicians and the results showed that academicians' burnout levels significantly differed considering the demographic variables examined. Similarly, a study conducted by Şahin (2005) with 130 lecturers showed that burn out levels significantly differed in terms of gender, teaching experience, teaching load, title, marital status and age.

Burnout is not a problem that occurs at the end of a long career. On the contrary, it can be encountered at different times throughout a work life (Toker, 2011). Also, burnout does not present itself suddenly. In fact, it grows slowly and insidiously (Tarcan İçigen and Uzut, 2012). That is why, it is highly important to measure this syndrome on time, before it becomes insuperable. At this point, understanding teachers' burnout levels and taking correct actions toward this syndrome may contribute to enhance level of personal functioning and the quality of workforce.

The purpose of this study was to provide a deeper understanding of the burnout issue, with a particular focus on university academicians in Turkey. Mainly, the current study analyzes burnout levels of academicians considering their emotional exhaustion, de-personalization, and loss of personal accomplishments. Besides, this study examines whether a number of demographic variables, including title, department, gender, marital status, age, number of children, teaching experience and economic satisfaction, has any significant effect on their burnout levels, or not.

## Method

### *Data Collection Instrument*

Burnout was assessed with "Maslach Burnout Inventory"(MBI), originally developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). It is the most widely accepted and frequently used instrument in the current burnout research. The instrument consists of 22 statements, measuring feelings an individual might have as a result of being exhausted at work. It was translated into Turkish and its validity and reliability were examined by Ergin (1992).

The instrument measures level of burnout under three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP) and Personal Accomplishment (PA). Emotional exhaustion contains 9 items, describing feelings of being emotionally exhausted because of work (e.g., I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work). Depersonalization consists of 5 items, describing impersonal response and careless treatment toward individuals (e.g., I have become more callous toward people since I took this job). Personal accomplishment consists of 8 items, dealing with feelings of competence and achievement in work life (e.g., I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job).

Data were collected during the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year. Participants scored the items on a 5 point Likert-type scale, regarding the frequency with which they experience the feelings described by each item (never=0, seldom=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, always=4). For each subscales, scores were obtained by adding the corresponding item values. For PA subscale, item values were reversed (never=4, seldom=3, sometimes=2, frequently=1, always=0), as the items were positively worded. Total burnout score was obtained by adding up the scores gathered from the three subscales. High scores indicated a high level of burnout; whereas, low scores reflected a low level of burnout. Reliability was measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Alpha values of each subscale were as follow: EE=0.78, DP=0.67 and PA=0.73.

The instrument also included a demographic section, including the academic title (Dr., Assist. Prof., Assoc. Prof., Prof), department (Computer and Teaching Technologies, Educational Sciences, Fine Arts Education, Elementary Education, Turkish Language Teaching, Foreign Language Teaching), gender (Male, Female), marital status (Married, Single, Divorced), age (between 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51 and more), number of children (0,1,2, 3 and more), year of teaching experience (between 0-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16 and more) and level of economic satisfaction (Satisfied, Good, Average, Not Enough, Not Satisfied). A number of inferential statistics were performed in order to determine the differences in level of burnout within the subcategories related to demographic variables.

### *Participants*

Data were collected from a total of 48 (60% response rate) academicians working at Education Faculty of a middle sized public university located in the Mediterranean region of Turkey. Most of the participants were assistant professors (N=33, 68.8%), working at Elementary Education department (N=20, 41.7%), male (N=28, 58.3%), married (N=40, 83.3%), having 2 children (N=23, 47.9%), aged between 41 to 50 years (N=20, 41.7%), having experience between 11 to 15 years (N=15, 31.3%), finding their level of economic satisfaction as average (N=28, 58.3%). Table 1 summarizes the demographic information about the participants.

**Table 1:** Demographic Information about Participants

Info		N	%
Academic Title	Dr.	4	8.3
	Assist. Prof.	33	68.8
	Assoc. Prof.	9	18.8
	Prof.	2	4.2
Department	Computer and Teaching Technologies	4	8.3
	Educational Sciences	9	18.8
	Fine Arts Education	9	18.8
	Elementary Education	20	41.7
	Turkish Language Teaching	5	10.4
	Foreign Language Teaching	1	2.1
	Marital Status	Married	40
	Single	6	12.5
	Divorced	2	4.2
Gender	Male	28	58.3
	Female	20	41.7
Age	Between 21-30	4	8.3
	Between 31-40	17	35.4
	Between 41-50	20	41.7
	51 and more	7	14.6
Number of Children	0	10	20.8
	1	14	29.2
	2	23	47.9
	3 and more	1	2.1
	Teaching Experience	Between 0-5	10
	Between 6-10	9	18.8
	Between 11-15	15	31.3
	16 and more	14	29.2
Economic Satisfaction	Satisfied	2	4.2
	Good	2	4.2
	Average	28	58.3
	Not Enough	10	20.8
	Not Satisfied	6	12.5

## Results

Table 2 summarizes the results of descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages belonging to academicians' burnout levels considering their emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and loss of personal accomplishments, as well as total burnout. According to the descriptive statistics, it was found that in general academicians had low burnout levels (N=31, 64.6%). In particular, considering emotional exhaustion subscale (Mean=1.32, SD=0.60), nearly half of the participants showed low burnout level (N=23, 47.9%). Similarly, regarding loss of personal accomplishment subscale (Mean=1.15, SD=0.46), more than half of the participants had low burnout level (N=31, 64.6%). Besides, for depersonalization subscale (Mean=0.58, SD=0.55), most of the participants indicated very low burnout level (N=30, 62.5%).

In addition, no participant reported very high burnout level for any of the burnout categories. Only for emotional exhaustion subscale, two participants (4.2%) indicated high burnout level. Both of these participants were male and married. They stated their economic satisfaction as 'Not Enough'. One of these participants had no child; his age was above 50, and had teaching experience between 6 to 10 years. The other participant had one child; his age was between 31 and 40, and had teaching experience between 11 to 15 years. When their responds to the questionnaire items were examined, it was found that they indicated 'Always' options for the following items; 'I feel I am working too hard on my job' (Item 1), 'Working with people all day is a real strain for me' (Item 3), and 'I feel burned out from my work' (Item 18).

**Table 2:** Burnout Levels of Academicians for MBI Subscales

Subscale	Mean	SD	Level of Burnout	Range	N	%
EE	1.32	0.60	Very low burnout	0-0.79	10	20.8
			<b>Low burnout</b>	0.80-1.59	23	47.9
			Medium burnout	1.60-2.39	13	27.1
			High burnout	2.40-3.19	2	4.2
			Very high burnout	3.20-4.00	0	0
DP	0.58	0.55	<b>Very low burnout</b>	0-0.79	30	62.5
			Low burnout	0.80-1.59	16	33.3
			Medium burnout	1.60-2.39	2	4.2
			High burnout	2.40-3.19	0	0
			Very high burnout	3.20-4.00	0	0
PA	1.15	0.46	Very low burnout	0-0.79	11	22.9
			<b>Low burnout</b>	0.80-1.59	30	62.5
			Medium burnout	1.60-2.39	7	14.6
			High burnout	2.40-3.19	0	0
			Very high burnout	3.20-4.00	0	0
Total Burnout	1.09	0.43	Very low burnout	0-0.79	12	25.0
			<b>Low burnout</b>	0.80-1.59	31	64.6
			Medium burnout	1.60-2.39	5	10.4
			High burnout	2.40-3.19	0	0
			Very high burnout	3.20-4.00	0	0

A number of inferential statistics were conducted in order to explore the impact of the demographic variables on participants' burnout levels. Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 summarize One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, loss of personal accomplishment, and total burnout scores, respectively. The results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference at the  $p < 0.05$  level in any of the EE, DP or total burnout scores for any of the demographic variable examined.

Only, there was a statistically significant difference in loss of personal accomplishment scores regarding participants' year of teaching experience:  $F(3, 44) = 4.07, p = 0.01$ . Participants were divided into four groups according to their year of teaching experience (Group 1: between 0-5 years; Group 2: between 6-10 years; Group 3: between 11-15 years; and Group 4: 16 years or more). According to the results, academicians with the most year of teaching experience (Group 4;  $N = 14, \text{Mean} = 0.88, \text{SD} = 0.43$ ) had the lowest burnout scores, whereas academicians with teaching experience between 6 to 10 years (Group 2;  $N = 9, \text{Mean} = 1.47, \text{SD} = 0.36$ ) had the highest burnout scores.

Effect size was calculated by using the eta squared values. Effect size provides an indication of the magnitude of the differences between the groups. It is calculated by dividing the sum of squares for

between groups (2.18) by the total sum of squares (10.02). Eta squared was obtained as 0.22. Cohen (1988) classifies an eta squared value of 0.01 as a small effect size, 0.06 as a medium effect size, and 0.14 or greater as a large effect size. According to this classification, the eta squared statistic of 0.22 would be considered as a large effect size ( $>0.14$ ).

After obtaining a large effect size, post-hoc test was conducted to find exactly where the differences among the groups occurred. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test (see Table 7) indicated that the mean score for Group 2 (participants with teaching experience between 6 to 10 years) was significantly different from Group 4 (participants with teaching experience more than 15 years) at the  $p < 0.05$  level ( $p = 0.11$ ). The other groups did not differ significantly from each other.

**Table 3:** ANOVA Results for Emotional Exhaustion Subscale

Info		N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Academic Title	Dr.	4	1.08	0.47	0.32	0.81
	Assist. Prof.	33	1.36	0.57		
	Assoc. Prof.	9	1.25	0.78		
	Prof.	2	1.44	0.62		
Department	Computer and Teaching Technologies	4	1.44	0.53	0.90	0.49
	Educational Sciences	9	1.27	0.41		
	Fine Arts Education	9	1.23	0.74		
	Elementary Education	20	1.21	0.60		
	Turkish Language Teaching	5	1.77	0.62		
	Foreign Language Teaching	1	1.77	-		
Marital Status	Married	40	1.33	0.63	0.54	0.59
	Single	6	1.12	0.25		
	Divorced	2	1.61	0.39		
Gender	Male	28	1.22	0.56	1.66	0.20
	Female	20	1.45	0.62		
Age	Between 21-30	4	0.94	0.41	1.06	0.38
	Between 31-40	17	1.47	0.55		
	Between 41-50	20	1.31	0.54		
	51 and more	7	1.17	0.86		
Number of Children	0	10	1.16	0.39	1.72	0.18
	1	14	1.58	0.56		
	2	23	1.20	0.65		
	3 and more	1	1.77	-		
Teaching Experience	Between 0-5	10	1.15	0.40	0.34	0.80
	Between 6-10	9	1.34	0.66		
	Between 11-15	15	1.40	0.70		
	16 and more	14	1.33	0.58		
Economic Satisfaction	Satisfied	2	1.11	0.94	0.45	0.77
	Good	2	0.88	0.78		
	Average	28	1.30	0.51		
	Not Enough	10	1.45	0.67		
	Not Satisfied	6	1.38	0.80		

**Table 4:** ANOVA Results for Depersonalization Subscale

Info		N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Academic Title	Dr.	4	0.55	0.61	0.17	0.91
	Assist. Prof.	33	0.55	0.53		
	Assoc. Prof.	9	0.68	0.56		
	Prof.	2	0.70	0.98		
Department	Computer and Teaching Technologies	4	0.55	0.68	0.25	0.94
	Educational Sciences	9	0.62	0.62		
	Fine Arts Education	9	0.60	0.55		
	Elementary Education	20	0.57	0.56		
	Turkish Language Teaching	5	0.68	0.41		
	Foreign Language Teaching	1	0.00	-		
Marital Status	Married	40	0.58	0.56	0.39	0.68
	Single	6	0.50	0.53		
	Divorced	2	0.90	0.42		
Gender	Male	28	0.53	0.56	0.50	0.48
	Female	20	0.65	0.53		
Age	Between 21-30	4	0.40	0.36	0.25	0.86
	Between 31-40	17	0.63	0.62		
	Between 41-50	20	0.55	0.50		
	51 and more	7	0.65	0.65		
Number of Children	0	10	0.62	0.48	0.49	0.69
	1	14	0.65	0.64		
	2	23	0.54	0.52		
	3 and more	1	0.00	-		
Teaching Experience	Between 0-5	10	0.50	0.61	0.29	0.83
	Between 6-10	9	0.64	0.56		
	Between 11-15	15	0.66	0.54		
	16 and more	14	0.51	0.54		
Economic Satisfaction	Satisfied	2	0.10	0.14	0.68	0.61
	Good	2	0.30	0.14		
	Average	28	0.64	0.63		
	Not Enough	10	0.64	0.39		
	Not Satisfied	6	0.46	0.41		



**Table 5:** ANOVA Results for Loss of Personal Accomplishment Subscale

Info		N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Academic Title	Dr.	4	1.12	0.36	0.11	0.95
	Assist. Prof.	33	1.17	0.48		
	Assoc. Prof.	9	1.11	0.44		
	Prof.	2	1.00	0.53		
Department	Computer and Teaching Technologies	4	0.96	0.67	1.36	0.26
	Educational Sciences	9	1.34	0.25		
	Fine Arts Education	9	1.08	0.29		
	Elementary Education	20	1.08	0.51		
	Turkish Language Teaching	5	1.42	0.50		
	Foreign Language Teaching	1	0.50	-		
Marital Status	Married	40	1.13	0.48	0.41	0.66
	Single	6	1.16	0.27		
	Divorced	2	1.43	0.44		
Gender	Male	28	1.05	0.52	2.96	0.09
	Female	20	1.28	0.31		
Age	Between 21-30	4	1.03	0.32	0.45	0.72
	Between 31-40	17	1.25	0.42		
	Between 41-50	20	1.11	0.49		
	51 and more	7	1.07	0.55		
Number of Children	0	10	1.16	0.45	0.88	0.46
	1	14	1.24	0.43		
	2	23	1.11	0.47		
	3 and more	1	0.50	-		
Teaching Experience	Between 0-5	10	1.06	0.45	4.07	<b>0.01*</b>
	Between 6-10	9	1.47	0.36		
	Between 11-15	15	1.25	0.41		
	16 and more	14	0.88	0.43		
Economic Satisfaction	Satisfied	2	0.68	0.26	1.95	0.12
	Good	2	1.00	0.53		
	Average	28	1.11	0.39		
	Not Enough	10	1.12	0.55		
	Not Satisfied	6	1.56	0.49		

\*p&lt;0.05

**Table 6:** ANOVA Results for Total Burnout

Info		N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Academic Title	Dr.	4	0.97	0.42	0.11	0.95
	Assist. Prof.	33	1.10	0.41		
	Assoc. Prof.	9	1.07	0.50		
	Prof.	2	1.11	0.67		
Department	Computer and Teaching Technologies	4	1.06	0.56	0.70	0.63
	Educational Sciences	9	1.15	0.28		
	Fine Arts Education	9	1.03	0.48		
	Elementary Education	20	1.02	0.45		
	Turkish Language Teaching	5	1.40	0.37		
	Foreign Language Teaching	1	0.90	-		
Marital Status	Married	40	1.08	0.45	0.60	0.55
	Single	6	1.00	0.26		
	Divorced	2	1.38	0.22		
Gender	Male	28	1.00	0.42	2.62	0.11
	Female	20	1.20	0.42		
Age	Between 21-30	4	0.85	0.31	0.88	0.46
	Between 31-40	17	1.20	0.39		
	Between 41-50	20	1.06	0.38		
	51 and more	7	1.01	0.66		
Number of Children	0	10	1.04	0.32	0.94	0.43
	1	14	1.25	0.44		
	2	23	1.02	0.45		
	3 and more	1	0.90	-		
Teaching Experience	Between 0-5	10	0.97	0.30	1.10	0.36
	Between 6-10	9	1.23	0.47		
	Between 11-15	15	1.18	0.45		
	16 and more	14	0.98	0.43		
Economic Satisfaction	Satisfied	2	0.72	0.25	0.82	0.52
	Good	2	0.79	0.54		
	Average	28	1.08	0.39		
	Not Enough	10	1.15	0.49		
	Not Satisfied	6	1.24	0.50		

**Table 7:** Multiple Comparisons for Loss of Personal Accomplishment Subscale

Teaching Experience	Teaching Experience	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Conf. Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Group 1 (Between 0-5)	Group 2	-0.40	0.19	0.17	-0.92	0.10
	Group 3	-0.20	0.17	0.67	-0.65	0.26
	Group 4	0.18	0.17	0.74	-0.28	0.64
Group 2 (Between 6-10)	Group 3	0.21	0.17	0.63	-0.26	0.68
	Group 4	0.58	0.18	<b>0.01*</b>	0.10	1.06
Group 3 (Between 11-15)	Group 4 (16 and more)	0.37	0.15	0.10	-0.04	0.79

\*p&lt;0.05

### Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted in an attempt to examine academicians' burnout levels considering their emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and loss of personal accomplishments. Mainly, the results indicated that academicians had low burnout level for emotional exhaustion and loss of personal accomplishment subscales, and very low burnout level for depersonalization subscale. Besides, when the impact of the demographic variables was examined, it was found that there was no difference in any of the burnout scores for any of the demographic variables examined, except for the loss of personal accomplishment subscale. Particularly, there was significant difference in loss of personal accomplishment scores regarding academicians' year of teaching experience. Specially, academicians with teaching experience more than 15 years had the lowest loss of personal accomplishment scores, whereas academicians with teaching experience between 6 to 10 years had the highest loss of personal accomplishment scores.

Briefly, the findings of this study mean that the risk of burnout syndrome was low in the sample, and the demographic aspects were not associated with burnout levels, except for academicians' year of teaching experience. While some of these findings are highly in line with a number of studies conducted in this field, there are also some findings that contradict with the previous ones. For example, similar to this study, most of the studies conducted with academicians in Turkey revealed that year of teaching experience has significant impact on academicians' burnout levels (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2007; Sağlam, 2011; Şahin, 2005; Toker, 2011). Besides, similar to this study, there are studies showing that a number of demographic variables such as academic title, level of economic satisfaction (Sağlam, 2011) and gender (Toker, 2011) have no significant effect on academicians' burnout levels. On the other hand, unlike the findings of this study, there are some other studies showing that gender, marital status, age, and academic title significantly relate to academicians' burnout levels (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2007; Şahin, 2005).

These inconsistent findings gathered in the literature may imply that demographic aspects are not significant distinctive factors regarding academicians' burnout levels. They may impact the outcomes with respect to the conditions in which the study take place. For instance, in this study, demographic variables did not impact academicians' burnout levels; possibly because the internal factors in the institute did affect academicians equally regardless of their gender, age, academic title or marital status. Besides, attaining the result that year of teaching experience play significant role in academicians' personal accomplishment levels may imply that experienced academicians develop more skills for coping with excessively demanding works. Specially, in later years, academicians may become more stable, mature and resistant toward the problems they face in the work, so they have less amount of burnout.

## Suggestions

Burnout is an important topic in work life that needs special attention. According to research results, burnout mostly occurs due to the inappropriate conditions in the work environment and it can be prevented only if working conditions are regularly assessed and monitored, and possible changes take place (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). In the literature, there are a number of suggestions made for preventing and reducing burnout. These suggestions include encouraging personal development and autonomy, decreasing work load (Maslach and Leiter, 1997), clearly identifying the tasks of the job, providing feedback (Pedrini et. al, 2009), improving employee benefits, and training about motivation, stress management, and communication (Lackritz, 2004).

Beyond any doubt, academicians' work performance is a highly important factor for determining the quality of higher education, and their burnout is a major point that can affect academic performance. Specially, attaining the result that less experienced academicians have more burnout, it becomes necessary to inform young academicians about what burnout is, how it occurs and grows, and its effects on the individuals as well as on organizations and the society. The study is limited to a small sample size and a single data collection instrument. For future studies, it is recommended perform studies associated with feelings of burnout, with larger samples, using multiple instruments and data analyses techniques.

## References

- BLANDFORD Sonia (2000). **Managing Professional Development in Schools**. London: Routledge.
- BLIX, Arlene Grey, CRUISE Robert, MITCHELL Bridgit McBeth, and BLIX Glen (1994). "Occupational stress among university teachers", **Educational Research**, 36(2), 157-169.
- COHEN Jacob (1988). **Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences** (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hillsdale, NJ:Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- DICK Rolf Van and WAGNER Ulrich (2001). "Stress and strain in teaching: a structural equation approach", **British Journal of Educational Psychology**, 71, 243-259.
- ERGIN Canan (1992). "Burnout levels of physicians and nurses and adaptation of Maslach Burnout Inventory", 7th National Psychology Congress, Ankara, Turkey.
- EVERS Will, TOMIC Welko, and BROWERS Andre (2005). "Does equity sensitivity moderate the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and teacher burnout?", **Representative Research in Social Psychology**, 28, 35-46.
- HARRISON Bill (1999). "Are you destined to burn out?", **Fund Raising Management**, 30(3), 25-27.
- KOUSTELIOS Athanasios and TSIGILIS Nikolaos(2005). "The relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among physical education teachers: A multivariate approach", **European Physical Education Review**, 11(2), 189-203.
- KÜÇÜKSÜLEYMANOĞLU Ruyam (2007). "Burnout syndrome levels of education faculty academic staff", **Educational Reserach**, 28, 101-112.
- LACKRITZ Jamis (2004). "Exploring burnout among university faculty: incidence, performance, and demographic issues", **Teaching and Teacher Education**, 20, 713-729.
- MASLACH Christina and JACKSON Susan (1981). "The measurement of experienced burnout", **Journal of Occupational Behavior**, 2, 99-113.
- MASLACH Christina and LEITER Michael (1997). **The Truth about Burnout**. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- MASLACH Christina, SCHAUFELI Wilmar and LEITER Michael (2001). "Job burnout", **Annual Review of Psychology**, 52, 397-422.
- PEDRINI Laura, MAGNI Laura Rosa, GIOVANNINI Caterina, PANETTA Valentina, et al. (2009). "Burnout in nonhospital psychiatric residential facilities", **Psychiatric Services**, 60(11), 1547-1551.

- SAĞLAM Aycan Çicek (2011). "Relationships of socio-demographic characteristics of academicians with their burnout levels", **Mustafa Kemal University Journal of Social Sciences**, 8(15), 407-420.
- ŞAHİN Sulen (2005). "KKTC'de görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının tükenmişlik düzeylerinin bazı değişkenler açısından incelenmesi", **Abant İzzet Baysal University Journal of Education Faculty**, 5(1), 145-159.
- TARCAN İÇİGEN Ebru and UZUT İsmail (2012). "A Study on the Burnout and Job Satisfaction of Food and Beverage Employees", **Niğde Üniversitesi IIBF Dergisi**, 5(2), 107-118.
- TOGIA Aspasia (2005). "Measurement of burnout and the influence of background characteristics in Greek academic librarians", **Library Management**, 26(3), 130-138.
- TOKER Boran (2011). "Determination of burnout levels of teaching staff: Salihli Vocational School case study", **ZKU Journal of Social Sciences**, 7(13), 339-350.
- VAN HORN Joan, SCHAUFELI Wilmar, GREENGLASS Esther, and BURKE Ronald (1997). "A Canadian-Dutch Comparison of Teachers Burnout", **Psychological Reports**, 81(2), 371-382.
- WRIGHT Thomas and BONNETT Douglas (1997). "The Contributions of Burnout to Work Performance", **Journal of Organizational Behavior**, 18, 491-499.

## Academics' Burnout Levels

Fatma Kayan Fadlelmula<sup>iii</sup>

**Extended Abstract:** Burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in work related situations that are excessively demanding (Harrison, 1999). It has a negative impact on work life by affecting working efficacy, productivity and participation (Dick and Wagner, 2001). It is generally encountered by individuals that have a high degree of interaction with many people (Evers, Tomic, and Browsers, 2005). Specially, teachers are known to be suffering from this syndrome due to their relationships with large numbers of students, families, teachers and administrators (Blandford, 2000; Van Horn, Schaufeli, Greenglass, and Burke, 1997). It affects teaching performance by decreasing the quality of teaching (Koustelios and Tsigilis, 2005), drawing the teacher away from personal development, decreasing interest and attention toward students, which in turn affect students' academic performance (Van Horn et al., 1997).

The purpose of this study was to examine the burnout levels of academics considering their emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and loss of personal accomplishments, and to determine the impact of a number of demographic variables on their burnout levels. In particular, the demographic variables included academics' title, department, gender, marital status, age, number of children, teaching experience and economic satisfaction. Burnout was assessed with "Maslach Burnout Inventory" (MBI), originally developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). It is the most widely accepted and frequently used instrument in the current burnout research. The instrument consists of 22 statements, measuring feelings an individual might have as a result of being exhausted at work. The instrument was administered to 48 academics working at Education Faculty of a middle sized public university located in the Mediterranean region of Turkey. Most of the participants were assistant professors (68.8%), working at Elementary Education department (41.7%), male (58.3%), married (83.3%), having 2 children (47.9%), aged between 41 to 50 years (41.7%), having experience between 11 to 15 years (31.3%), finding their level of economic satisfaction as average (58.3%). Data were collected during the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic years.

Mainly, the results indicated that academics had low burnout level for emotional exhaustion and loss of personal accomplishment subscales, and very low burnout level for depersonalization subscale. Besides, when the impact of the demographic variables was examined, it was found that there was no difference in any of the burnout scores for any of the demographic variables examined, except for the loss of personal accomplishment subscale. Particularly, there was significant difference in loss of personal accomplishment scores regarding academics' year of teaching experience. Specially, academics with teaching experience more than 15 years had the lowest loss of personal accomplishment scores, whereas academics with teaching experience between 6 to 10 years had the highest loss of personal accomplishment scores.

The findings of this study imply that the risk of burnout syndrome was low in the sample, and the demographic aspects were not associated with burnout levels, except for academics' year of teaching experience. While some of these findings are highly in line with a number of studies conducted in this field, there are also some findings that contradict with the previous ones. For example, similar to this study, most of the studies conducted with academics in Turkey revealed that year of teaching experience has significant impact on academics' burnout levels (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2007; Sağlam, 2011; Şahin, 2005; Toker, 2011). Besides, similar to this study, there are studies showing that a number of demographic variables such as academic title, level of economic satisfaction (Sağlam, 2011) and gender (Toker, 2011) have no significant effect on academics' burnout levels. On the other hand, unlike the findings of this study, there are some other studies showing that gender, marital status, age, and academic title significantly relate to academics' burnout levels (Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2007; Şahin, 2005).

---

<sup>iii</sup> Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İlköğretim Matematik Öğretmenliği Programı, fatmakayan@mehmetakif.edu.tr

These inconsistent findings gathered in the literature may imply that demographic aspects are not significant distinctive factors regarding academicians' burnout levels. They may impact the outcomes with respect to the conditions in which the study take place. For instance, in this study, demographic variables did not impact academicians' burnout levels; possibly because the internal factors in the institute did affect academicians equally regardless of their gender, age, academic title or marital status. Besides, attaining the result that year of teaching experience play significant role in academicians' personal accomplishment levels may imply that experienced academicians develop more skills for coping with excessively demanding works. Specially, in later years, academicians may become more stable, mature and resistant toward the problems they face in the work, so they have less amount of burnout.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Emotional Exhaustion, De-Personalization, Personal Accomplishment, Academicians