

## Investigating factors affecting Burnout of the Managers of State and Non-profit Schools in ChaharMahal and Bakhtiari Province

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### Abstract

Burnout is one of the commonest tensions which influences individuals' efficacy. The reasons of burnout is different from the viewpoints of different scholars. Some of them are intra-organizational factors and some others are extra-organizational factors. The present study is to investigate principals' burnout due to factors such as inflexibility of regulations, the ambiguity of roles, multi-job principals, psychological pressures and principals' personality types in state and non-profit primary-guidance and high schools in ChaharMahal and Bakhtiari Province. The measurement instrument in the present study is three questionnaires of burnout, personality types A and B, and factors affecting burnout. The reliability of the questionnaire of burnout was obtained based on the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha as 87% and the questionnaire of stressors was 81%. Data analysis indicated that there is correlation of inflexibility of regulations, the importance of individuals' roles in the organization, and the endurance of the pressure due to overwork with burnout. There is no correlation between principals' gender and the type of school and the level of education, but there is a correlation between their years of service and burnout. Based on the results of multivariate regression, there is a correlation of the endurance of psychological pressure due to overwork and the ambiguity of roles of individuals in the organization with burnout. Based on  $\beta$  coefficient, the highest degree of the effect is related to psychological pressure due to overwork.

Key words: burnout, role ambiguity, stress, role conflict

### Introduction

The world of today is rapidly changing and there is no fixed things as such. Factors which yesterday engendered success, may be condemned to failure in the world of today. Managers should apply modern models of decision making and leadership styles. International competitions and the need to efficient quality in different domains and supra national fields and cultural changes influenced by them have changed management fields significantly. Rapid changes in technology have caused the changes in methods of teaching and learning. The speed and quality of responding the needs of parents and students has had another interpretation. The advent of demand-based education instead of supply-based one has faced principals with psychological pressures more than ever. This issue may facilitate burnout in principals. The requirement for moderating these pressures is to learn strategies for compatibility with the status quo because the consistent pressure causes the occurrence of mood, attitudinal, behavioral, and physical disorders in individuals and can influence their efficiency and productivity, and as a consequence, the efficacy of the whole organization (Hamidi, 2010: 3).

Nowadays, the psychological pressure due to work and life is common among people particularly authorities. Regarding the psychological pressure due to work there are some factors such as organizational policy,

management style, the lack of clear declaration of objectives, roles, conflicts and etc. Researches have shown that work is one of the stressful resources and some of the jobs cause engendering psychological and physical diseases. When a person is exposed to psychological pressures for a long time, he will suffer from a kind of disorder called the syndrome of burnout. In general, burnout is a kind of disorder created due to being exposed to psychological pressure for a long time (Saatchi, 1997).

The significant advancement of technology and industry in recent years have engendered a wave of stress and the decrease in individuals' health in different social organizations. Psychological pressures may frustrate human activities in different psychological, physiological, social and family domains. The decrease in the production, increase in prices and errors and etc. are among signs of psychological pressures and dangers for the health of a society. Individuals who do not have required ability to endure and manage psychological pressures, gradually will suffer from burnout. Burnout among owners of sensitive jobs such as physicians, nurses, counselors, managers, leaders, principals, and air traffic control providers is more obvious. In this state, a lot of individuals know work as a phenomenon without feelings and full of burdens which frustrates them as much as possible. Work conditions without feelings and emotions cause losing motivations and in which individuals' knowledge and experience cannot be used as properly. Since burnout can influence different dimensions of organizations including their efficacy and efficiency, therefore, the role of principals of schools as the leaders of these institutions is significant. For having an efficient school, principals with high motivation and desire to advancement are needed in order that they can cope with job stresses. Burnout is one of the commonest tensions which influences individuals' efficacy. The reasons of burnout is different from the viewpoints of different scholars. Some of them are intra-organizational factors and some others are extra-organizational factors.

## **Literature review**

Maslachand Leiter(2005) divide factors of depression into two groups:

- a. Situational factors such as work volume, control, rewards, fairness, values and workplace
- b. Personal factors such as age, gender, marital status, and experiences (Kuruuzumet al. 2008).

Seagull and Mc Donald (2004), by studying on a 135 participant sample of university professors concluded that there is a strong positive and significant correlation of the consistency of person-organization values with burnout.

Bhanugopanand Fish(2006), by studying 189 participants of managers of organizations in New Guinea found out that the role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload (high volume of tasks) are among main factors of managers' burnout.

The results of a research done by Togia(2005) in studying the librarians of the universities of Greece indicated that the degree of librarians' emotional exhaustion and depersonalization was at a low level and the degree of their sense of personal success was at a moderate level. In addition, they found out that there is a correlation between age and years of service and the degree of burnout.

## **Theoretical framework**

### ***Definitions of burnout***

Ferudenberger as the first one who used burnout with the present sense in 1974. Burnout refers to excessive exhaustion due to hard work and without motivation. He called this phenomenon as the syndrome of

physical and psychological disorders and knew it as an emotional and physical state originating from the status quo in the workplace (Hallberg, 2005).

Maslach and Jackson (1982) presented a comprehensive definition of burnout. These two researchers considered burnout as a psychological syndrome which is a combination of three components of emotional analysis, depersonalization and the reduction of personal success occurring among individuals who work with people in different extents (Hakanen, 2006).

One of the main job issues which usually is represented in the form of reaction against job and organizational tensions among the staff is known as burnout. This phenomenon is among job risks which in recent years has been paid attention to. This challenge, in addition to the occurrence of unfavorable physical effects, have different psychological side effects. Burnout is defined as a psychological state originates from higher levels of long-term stress in job life (Bahri Binabaj et al. 2007).

Job pressures is an inevitable issue in line with job demands. Although these increasing pressures may be endurable in short-term periods, in long-term periods, the physical and psychological resistance weakens, and at last, it results in burnout. Therefore, different researches indicate that the unfavorable effects of job pressures and burnout influence the public health and its influence as well (Beirami et al. 2011).

Amani (1999) states that burnout is observed more among physicians, nurses, advocates, counselors, and individuals working in police. In this jobs, hard working conditions have a lot of changes and direct relations with others. In other words, professions which are to help other people are more exposed to burnout. However, he points out that the owners of professions may suffer from burnout.

### **Different types of personality**

Two cardiologists called Mriedman and Roesenman, based on their own observations, presented a theory about the existence of personality models in those who were exposed to heart attack. Based on their observations, individuals who are always in hurry, quarrelsome and competitive are more exposed to hearth attack. These individuals have personality type A, and the group which do not have these characteristics are called type B (Sarason and Sarason, 1999).

Personality type A has the following features:

It is a combination of action and emotion, individuals in this group are aggressively trying to attain to their best objectives at the minimum of time. In addition, if necessary, they do not get involved in other objects and individuals (Loutans, 1992).

Robins (1998) considers the members of this group are always in motion, dynamic, and lively. They are always walking, eat foods fast, and feel anxious. They do two or more activities at the same time, suffer from great psychological pressures, feel that they have insufficient time for doing affairs and determine particular times for doing affairs.

The most important behavior of these individuals is “time urgency”. They are dissatisfied with low motions and staying in lines, and in general everything which causes wasting their time. These individuals tend to unite physical resources as much as possible (Dewrite, 1998). The individuals who have personality type B feel calmness and are not in hurry. They are less ambitious and patient. They are more conservative and obey disciplines (Rathus, 1996).

### Research hypotheses

1. To investigate the relationship of inflexibility of rules and regulations with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
2. To investigate the relationship of the ambiguity of individuals' role with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
3. To investigate the relationship of necessary facilities for advancement with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
4. To investigate the relationship of multi-job with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
5. To investigate the relationship of enduring psychological pressures due to overwork with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
6. To investigate the relationship of personality type (A and B) with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.
7. To investigate the relationship of demographic characteristics (age, years of service, education level and gender) with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.

### Population and sampling

In the present study, the population includes all principals of state and non-profit primary, guidance and high schools in ChaharMahal and Bakhtiari Province. They are 1534 individuals. A sample were selected from among them using stratified random sampling in such a way that from 16 regions of education, 8 regions were selected randomly and then, from each selected region, some schools were selected randomly and afterwards, questionnaires were distributed among the principals of the selected schools. They were 192 participants, but 176 questionnaires were returned. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula.

### Research method

The research method employed in the present study is correlation. In descriptive studies, unlike studies whose objectives is to explore causal relationships, the objective is to describe systematically a situation in an objective way, or as it is in the reality (Naderi and Naraghi, 1989: 19).

In a correlational study, the relationship between variable are analyzed based on the objectives of that study.

### Statistical analysis

Table 1: correlation coefficient between inflexibility of rules and regulations with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation coefficient	The square of correlation coefficient	Sig.
inflexibility of rules and regulations	burnout	20%	0.40	0.008

Based on the results of the table, correlation coefficient between inflexibility of rules and regulations with burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools is significant at the significance level 0.01; therefore, the inflexibility of rules and regulations is effective on principals' burnout.

Table 2: correlation coefficient between the ambiguity of individuals' role with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation coefficient	The square of correlation coefficient	Sig.
the ambiguity of individuals' role	burnout	0.283	0.40	0.008

Based on the results of the table, correlation coefficient between the ambiguity of individuals' role with burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools is significant at the significance level 0.01; therefore, the ambiguity of individuals' role is effective on principals' burnout.

Table 3: correlation coefficient between necessary facilities for advancement with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation coefficient	The square of correlation coefficient	Sig.
necessary facilities for advancement	burnout	0.023	0.0005	0.765

Based on the results of the table, correlation coefficient between necessary facilities for advancement with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools is not significant at the significance level  $p \leq 0.05$ ; therefore, the necessary facilities for advancement is not effective on principals' burnout.

Table 4: correlation coefficient between psychological pressures due to overwork with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation coefficient	The square of correlation coefficient	Sig.
psychological pressures due to overwork	burnout	0.334	0.011	0.000

Based on the results of the table, correlation coefficient between psychological pressures due to overwork with burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools is significant at the significance level  $p \leq 0.01$ ; therefore, psychological pressures due to overwork is effective on principals' burnout.

Table 4: correlation coefficient between personality type (A and B) with the burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation coefficient	The square of correlation coefficient	Sig.
personality type (A and B)	burnout	0.051	0.0026	0.505

Based on the results of the table, correlation coefficient between personality type (A and B) with burnout of principals of state and non-profit schools is not significant at the significance level  $p \leq 0.05$ ; therefore, personality type (A and B) is not effective on principals' burnout. Furthermore, male principals have characteristics of type A than female principals.

Among 176 principals, there are 72 women and 104 men. The results indicate that the degree of burnout in male and female principals is relatively same.

Regarding the fact that among this number of managers, 77 participants work at primary schools, 62 work at guidance schools and 37 work at high schools, the results indicate that the degree of principals' burnout in different educational levels is the same.

In terms of principals' educational levels, 20 participants hold diploma, 80 associate diploma, and 71 participants hold BA and higher levels. Investigations indicate that the degree of burnout in principals holding associate diploma, BA and higher degrees is higher than those with diploma.

In terms of principals' years of service less than 10 years are 120 individuals, those with 10 to 15 years are 38 individuals and those with more than 15 years of services are 14 individuals. The results indicate that by increasing the years of services, the degree of their burnout increases.

### Research findings

1. Analyzing the findings related to the first hypothesis of the research indicates that there is a significant correlation between the inflexibility of rules and regulations and burnout ( $p=0.000$ ). The coefficient of determination indicated that 4 percent of the variance of principals' burnout can be explained by the inflexibility of rules and regulations.
2. Analyzing the findings related to the second hypothesis of the research indicates that there is a significant correlation between the ambiguity of individuals' role in the organization and burnout ( $p=0.000$ ). The coefficient of determination indicated that 8 percent of the variance of principals' burnout can be explained by the ambiguity of individuals' role in the organization. This result is consistent with the results of Abdi (1994), Brown and Viranker (1992) and Ketranz (2002).
3. Analyzing the findings related to the third hypothesis of the research indicates that there is no significant correlation between the necessary facilities for advancement and burnout ( $p=0.765$ ).
4. Analyzing the findings related to the fourth hypothesis of the research indicates that there is a significant correlation between enduring psychological pressures due to overwork and burnout ( $p=0.000$ ). The coefficient of determination indicated that 11 percent of the variance of principals' burnout can be explained by enduring psychological pressures due to overwork.
5. Analyzing the findings related to the fourth hypothesis of the research indicates that there is no significant correlation between personality type (A and B) and burnout ( $p=0.505$ ). The result is not consistent with those of Khakpour (1997) and Enyati (2000).

The results of multivariate regression indicated that there is a correlation of personality type (A and B) and the ambiguity of individuals' role in the organization with burnout. According to  $\beta$  coefficient, the highest impact is related to enduring psychological pressures due to overwork.

6. Analyzing the findings related to the third hypothesis of the research indicates that there is no significant correlation between principals' gender and burnout ( $\text{sig}=0.419$ ). This result is consistent with Heidari (2000) and are not consistent with Khakpour (1997) and Enayati (2000).
7. Analyzing the findings related to the third hypothesis of the research indicates that there is no significant correlation between principals' gender and burnout ( $\text{sig}=0.176$ ). This result is not consistent with that of Enayati (2000).
8. There is no significant correlation between principals' working in educational levels (primary, guidance and high school) and the degree of their burnout ( $\text{sig}=0.074$ ). But there is a correlation between years of service and the degree of burnout ( $\text{sig}=0.027$ ). In other words, by increasing the years of service in principals, the degree of their burnout increases. The results are consistent with those of Bousari (1995).

## Conclusion

Nowadays, psychological pressures due to work and life is very common among people and authorities and the necessary action for moderating these pressures is to learn strategies for consistency and compatibility with the status quo because continuous pressure causes the occurrence of mood, attitudinal, behavioral, and physical disorders in individuals and can influence their efficiency and productivity, and as a consequence, the efficacy of the whole organization.

Burnout is one of the threats of organizational health and the factor reducing the abilities of human resources and at last, reducing efficacy, efficiency and consequently, organization productivity. Therefore, paying attention to it seems necessary and considering the competitive environment for organizations, it is inevitable. Regarding that population of the present study includes all principals working in state and non-profit schools in different educational levels in ChaharMahal and Bakhtiari Province, therefore, to evaluate principals' burnout and factors affecting it, questionnaires were used. In these questionnaires, the effects of indices and variables such as inflexibility of regulations, the ambiguity of roles, multi-job principals, psychological pressures, the lack of necessary facilities for job advancement, and principals' personality types (A and B) as well as demographic characteristics (age, years of services, and gender) on principals burnout were investigated and mentioned comprehensive in findings section of the present article. Accordingly, regarding the fact that organizational and occupational factors have the highest effect on burnout, and the main objective of the present study is to present strategies for improving conditions, the findings of the present study can be suggestive.

## Resources

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