

The Burnout Assessment Tool: An Initial U.S. Validation Study

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Despite the long-standing history of studying burnout, it remains a prevalent concern, with nearly 6 out of 10 U.S. workers self-reporting at least moderate levels of burnout (Forbes, 2023). Burnout, as defined by Maslach and Leiter (2016), is a psychological syndrome that emerges as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors encountered in the workplace. The repercussions of burnout are far-reaching, impacting employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism rates, turnover intentions, and job performance (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has historically served as the gold standard for assessing burnout, being employed in a staggering 88% of all publications on the subject (Schaufeli et al., 2020). However, concerns have been raised regarding its suitability for accurately capturing the complex phenomenon of burnout. These concerns revolve around three major flaws in the MBI. Firstly, it was developed inductively, derived from interviews with human service professionals rather than being grounded in a comprehensive conceptual framework. Secondly, the MBI exhibits technical and psychometric weaknesses that have raised doubts about its reliability and validity. Lastly, the absence of clear cut-off scores in the MBI manual complicates the determination of when a score signifies burnout (Schaufeli & De Witte, 2023).

In response to these concerns, researchers have developed a new burnout assessment tool called the Burnout Assessment Tool using Flemish and Dutch working population samples (BAT; Schaufeli et al., 2020a, 2020b). The BAT seeks to address the limitations of the MBI and has been validated in countries overseas (e.g., Poland, Sweden, Brazil, Portugal). However, there is a notable gap in research concerning its applicability, reliability, and validation in the context of U.S. workers. The present study aims to contribute to this field of research by providing evidence for the reliability and validity of the BAT in a sample of U.S. workers, as scant evidence is available thus far.

A sample of U.S. participants completed online self-report surveys across two time points – September 2021 and May 2023. Our sample includes 170 part- and full-time employees ($M_{\text{age}} = 46.5$, 62.4% White, 56.5% female). Analyses are currently being conducted to establish the reliability and construct validity of this new burnout measure using a U.S. sample. Full results will be available in time for presentation if accepted.

References

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