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Burnout, Social Support, and Coping in Crisisline Volunteers

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship among burnout, social support, and coping in volunteers. In this study, 30 volunteers from Rape Crisis Center of Bloomington, Illinois, anonymously completed four questionnaires: the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the UCLA Social Support Inventory, a coping survey, and a demographic survey. The Maslach Burnout Inventory contains three subscales, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. A question is asked on the demographic questionnaire regarding the respondent's perception of the turnover rate among the volunteers of the group. This response was correlated with the three subscales of the burnout measure in order to establish if perception of turnover is related to burnout. Also, the respondents' scores on the subscales of the burnout inventory was correlated with the total support received and the rape crisis group support to determine the impact of social support on burnout. In addition, two different coping styles, control and escapist, was computed and correlated with the three subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventory to measure the relationship between coping and burnout. The correlations for escapist coping and emotional exhaustion and escapist coping and depersonalization were significant (p < .05). Explanations for the findings and directions of future studies are presented.

Burnout, Social Support, and Coping in Crisisline Volunteers

In a country in which estimates suggest that one in four women are victims of rape, there is a strong need for volunteers to augment the services provided by professionals to rape victims. Not only do these volunteers provide free services where a professional could not, they also allow for anonymity and one-time contact for a rape victim through the telephone hotline. Unfortunately, volunteers experience a high rate of burnout due to a number of factors such as 1) client anonymity and the one-time contact with the client prevent the results of the intervention from being known (Jaffe, 1984) and 2) volunteers do not have control over the counseling because of the limitations of telephone contact. The client might hang up at any time or the line might be unclear. In a study of crisisline volunteers, Jaffe (1984) found that burnout directly influenced intention to leave the organization. Since volunteers undergo extensive training before they are able to counsel clients, an effort must be made to maintain the volunteers for as long as possible in order to maximize the efficiency of the training program and the volunteer element of the organization.

Although burnout research is abundant and has been conducted on many populations, such as supervisors and administrators (Dewe & Guest, 1990), nurses (Leiter & Maslach, 1988), staff in mental hospitals (Leiter, 1991),

teachers and ministers (Dewe & Guest, 1990), the research on burnout in volunteers is extremely limited. As Cyr & Dowrick (1991) note, there is a lack of research on crisisline volunteers in particular. In one of the few studies on volunteers performed to date, Jaffe's (1984) dissertation on hotline volunteers hypothesized that expectations, perceptions of competence and support, and other factors were identified as influencing satisfaction, burnout, and intention to quit.

In another study on crisisline volunteers, Cyr and Dowrick (1991) attempted to identify factors influencing burnout and job satisfaction. They also attempted to develop a conceptual model for understanding burnout in volunteers. However, no research has attempted to link demographic variables, social support, and coping with burnout in volunteers. In addition, the two studies on volunteers did not use an established burnout inventory. The relationship between social support, coping, and burnout in a sample of volunteers needs to be examined using valid and reliable measures.

Although burnout research in volunteers has been scarce, the burnout research on professionals has relevance to the study of burnout in volunteers. Burnout is defined as a "syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment, which can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p. 1). Christina Maslach is a pioneer in the burnout field and has developed a questionnaire that measures burnout in the human services field, the Maslach

Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The three components

mentioned in the definition, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and

personal accomplishment, are measured by the MBI. Maslach defines

emotional exhaustion as being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's

work. Higher levels of emotional exhaustion are positively correlated with

burnout in professionals (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986; Leiter, 1991;

Raquepaw & Miller, 1989; Snibbe, Radcliffe, Weisberger, Richards, & Kelly,

1989). The inclusion of emotional exhaustion as a component of burnout

reflects the assumption that burnout is most specific to people whose work is

very involving. Those individuals in the helping professions, such as counseling

and social welfare, have been extensively studied in burnout research (Kahill,

1986; Kirkcaldy, Thome, & Thomas, 1989; Leiter, 1991; Ross, Altmaier, &

Russell, 1989), which again demonstrates the assumption that workers who deal

with people perceive their work as more exhausting.

Depersonalization is defined as the development of negative, cynical

attitudes toward the clients with whom one works (Raquepaw & Miller, 1989).

Personal accomplishment refers to feelings of competence and success in

working with people. When people are experiencing burnout and feeling that

they are no longer making a meaningful contribution in their work, they

evaluate their personal accomplishment negatively (Raquepaw & Miller, 1989).

Burnout and social support, and burnout and coping have been correlated to

determine if there is a relationship, but the three constructs have not been

tested together.

In several studies testing social support and its effects on burnout, social support has been shown to be an important variable in determining burnout. Leiter and Maslach (1988) suggest that negative interactions with people can be a major source of frustration and conflict in a profession and these negative interactions could influence an employee's satisfaction with a job and commitment to continue working in it. Of course, not all contact with people is negative. In their study, Leiter and Maslach (1988) assessed both positive and negative contacts on the job and their separate contributions to burnout and organizational commitment. The sample consisted of 52 nurses and support staff in a private hospital in California. Interpersonal contacts were measured by subjects reviewing a list of all hospital employees and indicating those with whom they had regular interactions involving work, administrative, or personal issues. Hospital employees who were indicated by a subject had to independently report that they had such contacts in order for them to count as actual contacts. After identifying regular contacts, the subjects were asked to rate the relationships as generally pleasant, neutral, or unpleasant. Then, the subjects were asked to complete the MBI, a role conflict measure, and an organizational commitment measure. The results supported the hypothesis that social support is negatively related to burnout: emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were related to unpleasant contacts with supervisors; and depersonalization was related to less pleasant contact with coworkers. High

levels of exhaustion were found to lead to depersonalization which in turn led to diminished feelings of accomplishment in work. Positive interpersonal contact with coworkers decelerated this process. The Leiter and Maslach (1988) study provided evidence for the influence of social support on burnout.

Ross, Altmaier, and Russell's (1989) study substantially supported the findings of Leiter and Maslach (1988). The study was designed to identify stressful events in the work environment and the role of social support on job-related stress. Ross, Altmaier, and Russell (1989) hypothesized that support which enhances a counselor's sense of competence will be beneficial in preventing burnout. The sample for this experiment was obtained by contacting staff members at university counseling centers by mail. The return rate of 65.6% resulted in a sample of 169 staff members. The questionnaire included a measure designed by the researchers to identify job stress, two social support measures, and the MBI. The two different measures of social support focused on support received in the context of job-related stress and the extent to which the person's current social relationships provided attachment, social integration, reassurance of worth, guidance, reliable alliance, and opportunity for nurturance (Weiss, 1974). The results indicated that certain events were agreed upon as being stressful: having clients cry during a session, serving on an administrative committee, conducting a presentation for another university agency, and having a client threaten to commit suicide. The number of stressful events that the counselors experienced was found to be predictive of burnout.

In addition, counselors with the fewest years of experience, those supervising another counselor, and those who were married reported greater emotional exhaustion. As for social support, the researchers found no evidence of a buffering effect of social support on the relation between job-related stress and burnout. Lack of supervisor support did lead to higher rates of burnout. Subjects who had a more extensive network of persons with whom they shared interests and concerns reported less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. In conclusion, social support has been found to be positively correlated with burnout in both the Leiter and Maslach (1988) and the Ross, Altmaier, and Russell (1989) studies. However, the effect of social support outside of the organization is not directly tested in these studies.

Coping is also an important variable in burnout research. Janina Latack (1986) defines coping as "efforts to master conditions that tax or exceed adaptive resources" (p. 377). Two different types of coping have traditionally been described: problem-focused coping, which combats the source of stress (e.g., "Got the person responsible to change his or her mind"), and emotion-focused coping (e.g., "Tried to look at the bright side of things"), which attempts to deal with the emotional discomfort caused by the stress (Dewe & Guest, 1990). Latack developed a measure of coping which encompassed problem-focused and emotion-focused coping and added some strategies that were not included in the previous distinction. Her analysis resulted in the emergence of two clusters of coping strategies, control and escapist. Control

coping is problem-focused coping with the addition of cognitive reappraisals that were not included in the original concept of problem-focused coping. Escapist includes the emotion-focused coping but places more emphasis on the attempt to ignore or escape from the unpleasant stressor. Control consists of actions and cognitive reappraisals that are take-charge in tone and escapist coping is actions and cognitive reappraisals that suggest an avoidance mode (Latack, 1986). Control coping is not consistent with burnout because workers with burnout have a lack of energy and optimism (the opposite of the cognitions that would be expected in workers who use control coping strategies). To test the relationship between coping strategies and burnout, Leiter (1991) conducted an experiment with a sample of 177 staff members at a mental hospital. He predicted that control coping would be negatively correlated with burnout, while escapist coping would be positively correlated with burnout. Questionnaires were distributed to the staff, including the MBI, an organizational commitment measure, an interpersonal conflict measure, a work overload measure, contact ratings, and the coping survey developed by Latack (1986). Leiter found that control coping was negatively associated with burnout. However, he also found that control and escapist coping tended to be positively associated with one another, which makes the conclusion that control coping is negatively associated with burnout while escapist coping is positively associated with burnout difficult to prove. Leiter concluded that mental health workers who use cognitive and action control strategies tended to be less

exhausted and felt a higher level of personal accomplishment. Also, escapist coping was determined to be an ineffective means of avoiding burnout; in fact, it was associated with higher levels of exhaustion. Control coping is believed to be incompatible with burnout in that it enables workers to endure stressful events and enhances their assessments of their accomplishments. Coping is an important variable in burnout and has implications for intervention strategies. If control coping is related to lower levels of burnout, this method can be introduced to employees as a strategy to be learned and utilized. However, the relationship between control coping and escapist coping needs to be examined to determine whether the two coping strategies can be separated. Coping has been studied in the burnout literature but not with a volunteer sample. All of the abovementioned studies dealt with professionals, while the Cyr and Dowrick (1991) study is a study dealing with volunteers.

The research of Cyr and Dowrick (1991) included 62 volunteers from a sexual assault agency and 68 volunteers from a suicide prevention agency for a total of 130 volunteers. A burnout questionnaire was developed by the researchers to gather general information and burnout details (the creation of this questionnaire is a threat to the internal validity of their study). The questionnaire was mailed and was returned by 39 volunteers (30% response rate). Only 54% of the respondents directly indicated that they had felt burned-out but 97% implied they had encountered burnout. They implied burnout by marking stages of burnout they had experienced or marking

satisfaction factors that were absent from their volunteer experience. Several factors for preventing and managing burnout were then identified and were rated by the volunteers as the strategy they most often used. Most of these strategies dealt with supervisors. In a different part of the questionnaire, the top 20% of factors contributing to burnout were indicated by the respondents. These factors are volunteer turnover, lack of contact with peer volunteers, lack of discussion about work stresses and/or complaints among peer volunteers, no standards to evaluate success, feelings of incompetence in counseling skills, lack of identification by the volunteer group of ways to manage burnout, expectations of appreciation, and lack of "completion" in the volunteer work. Cyr & Dowrick (1991) suggest that volunteers working with victims of sexual assault rely on their peers and superiors for strength and support instead of their own coping strategies. The purpose of the Cyr and Dowrick (1991) study was to produce a set of recommendations to reduce burnout in crisisline agencies. Unfortunately, the validity of the results were sacrificed by the methodological process (the dependence on a response to a mail questionnaire and the creation of the burnout measure).

The objectives of the present study are: to add to the small body of data on burnout in volunteers; to determine the effects of social support through other members of the volunteer group and sources outside the group; to determine whether volunteers use a control or escapist coping strategy; and to compare the level of burnout with each of these coping strategies. Also, this

study is different from prior studies that have been conducted with volunteers because this study uses the MBI, a standardized measure, while the other studies used questionnaires that were created by the experimenters. These objectives lead to the predictions the study makes. The hypotheses are as follows:

1.   Perception of high turnover will be related to greater burnout. This hypothesis is consistent with the Cyr and Dowrick (1991) study which noted that perception of high turnover was the most frequently cited reason for burnout among volunteers.

2.   Higher levels of social support will relate to lower levels of burnout. The actual relationship of social support and burnout in the literature is unclear so this study will attempt to clarify this relationship.

3.   Volunteers who use more control coping strategies and fewer escapist coping strategies will have lower levels of burnout and volunteers who use more escapist coping strategies and fewer control coping strategies will have higher levels of burnout. The research by Leiter (1991) and Latack (1986) found this relationship between control and escapist coping strategies and burnout among professionals. This study will attempt to generalize their findings to volunteers.

Also, demographic variables will be examined to determine their relationship to

burnout, but the literature on professionals suggests that demographics are

inconsistently related to burnout. Therefore, this finding needs to be studied in

a previously ignored sample--volunteers.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 30 volunteers at the Rape Crisis Center in Bloomington,

Illinois, who agreed to fill out the questionnaires described below. Rape Crisis

Center (RCC) is entirely staffed by volunteers. Volunteers complete forty

hours of training and then begin pager duty which involves carrying a pager for

one week per month. Four volunteers are on duty at all times--two on days and

two on nights. When the pager goes off, whoever is on duty is expected to call

into the dispatcher. In other words, two volunteers should respond every time

the pager goes off. In addition to pager duty, volunteers must attend the

monthly volunteer meeting which normally lasts two hours. Volunteers are also

encouraged to join a workgroup such as the board, the education workgroup, or

the victim services' workgroup. These workgroups take approximately three to

four hours of extra time a month. Another duty of volunteers is to assist in

training new volunteers twice a year. Depending on the extent of involvement

in training, the time commitment can be up to 40 hours in one month. No

hierarchy exists within the group but there is a tendency to look to experienced

volunteers (those who have been with the group for a few years) for advice and

assistance. The sample was 83.3% female and 16.7% male. The mean age was

29.27 years and the mean education level was 15.3 years of schooling. The

mean income of the group was $10,629.70 a year. The average time the

volunteers had been with RCC was 41.9 months. The ethnic diversity sample

was as follows: 90% were white, 3.3% were Asian, 3.3% were African-

American, and 3.3% marked the "other" ethnic category. Of the people who

had children living with them, 3.3% had one child, and 3.3% had two children;

93.3% of the sample had no children living with them.

Materials

Four questionnaires were used: the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI;

Appendix A), the University of California at Los Angeles Social Support

Inventory (UCLA-SSI; Appendix B), a coping survey (Appendix C), and a

demographic questionnaire (Appendix D).

<u>MBI</u>

The MBI is a 22-item survey with responses on a scale from 0 to 6

("never" to "every day"). The current version uses only a frequency measure

because intensity and frequency were highly correlated in previous studies. The

MBI measures burnout using three different subscales: Emotional Exhaustion,

Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. A global scale of total

burnout is not calculated due to the limited knowledge about the relationship

among the three aspects (the subscales) of burnout. Reliability, both internal

and test-retest, has been determined for the MBI. Cronbach's coefficient alpha

is .90 for Emotional Exhaustion, .79 for Depersonalization, and .71 for Personal

Accomplishment. Test-retest reliability was reported for two different samples: graduate students in social welfare and administrators in a health agency for the first sample and teachers for the second sample. The test-retest reliability for the students/administrators sample was .82 for Emotional Exhaustion, .60 for Depersonalization, and .80 for Personal Accomplishment (all are significant beyond the .001 level). In the teacher sample, test-retest reliability was .60 for Emotional Exhaustion, .54 for Depersonalization, and .57 for Personal Accomplishment. Convergent validity was assessed in three different ways. First, MBI scores for an individual were correlated with ratings made independently by a peer. Second, MBI scores were correlated with the existence of job characteristics that were predicted to contribute to burnout. Third, MBI scores were correlated with measures of various outcomes that were hypothesized to be related to burnout. These three sets of correlations were all significant beyond the .05 level and therefore, provided evidence for the validity of the MBI. Based on prior norms, global scales can be differentiated into three categories: high, moderate, and low.

UCLA-SSI

A measure developed at the University of California, Los Angeles, was used to measure social support. Christine Dunkel-Schetter, Lawrence Feinstein, and Jyllian Call (1986), the creators of the UCLA-SSI, identify three types of support: information and advice, aid or assistance, and emotional support. Support is a global construct with many dimensions which are

measured by the UCLA-SSI, including extent to which support is wanted, assessment of social support needs, and quality of support or satisfaction with it. The questions are clustered into indices. In order to score a particular index, the subject's responses to the items comprising it are summed, and the sum is divided by the number of items. The resulting sum is the measure of that specific type of support. The indices to be measured are total support and rape crisis support. These indices are to be measured from experiences occurring in the past three months. The inventory has been used with college students but the authors mention that the structure and the format of the questionnaire make it applicable to a wide range of populations. No normative data are reported; nor are data on reliability and validity reported. However, the authors do advise keeping the survey intact (without any significant changes) because the reliability and validity will be affected. The SSI was slightly modified for use in the present study. A section for support from other rape crisis volunteers was added to the survey given the emphasis put on talking about concerns with other members of the group during training. The section follows the format and structure of the rest of the survey.

Coping survey

A coping survey developed by Janina Latack was used for this study (Latack, 1986). Minor modifications were also implemented on this survey due to the nature of the rape crisis group. Since there are no supervisors in the organization, the questions regarding supervisors were changed. For example, a

statement that said "Turn to my supervisor for guidance" was changed to "Turn to a more experienced volunteer in the group for guidance." The survey consists of 28 items measured on a scale of 1 to 5 ("hardly ever do this" to "almost always do this"). These items can be divided into two categories of coping, control and escapist. Therefore, two scores are derived from this measure: the sum of control coping items and the sum of escapist coping items. Refinement of the scale consisted of two steps: a judgement of item clarity relative to action, cognitive reappraisal, and symptom management; and a cluster analysis of items performed to determine the empirical dimensionality of the coping scales. Data are presented which provide evidence of convergent validity (there were significant correlations for the same coping strategy across situations) and discriminant validity (correlations for different coping strategies measured in the same situation were significantly lower). Normative data have been presented on workers in a mental hospital (Leiter, 1991).

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire was created for the present study. It consists of 19 items covering sex, religion, ethnicity, and other information. The sample is primarily comprised of young, white, college females. In order to assess the heterogeneity of the sample, demographic information was sought for the purpose of increasing generalizability to other populations (married women, Catholics, Protestants) Also, the question regarding perception of high turnover (which is measured on a 5-point scale and pertains to hypothesis one)

is contained on the demographic survey.

Procedure

Information about the study was presented to all volunteers at the RCC

during a monthly volunteer meeting. Informed consent was obtained from all

subjects who agree to participate. Then, subjects anonymously filled out the

MBI, the UCLA-SSI, Latack's coping survey, and the demographic

questionnaire in the group. Anonymity was maintained by ensuring that no

identifying data is attached to the questionnaires.

RESULTS

Spearman rho correlations were calculated to test all hypotheses. The

first hypothesis was tested using three separate correlations (see Table 1). The

question regarding the respondent's perception of turnover at RCC was

correlated with the three subscales of the MBI. None of the correlations were

significant. Perception of turnover was not significantly correlated with

emotional exhaustion ($r = .1214$; $p > .05$). Perception of turnover was also not

significantly correlated with depersonalization ($r = -.1184$; $p > .05$). Third,

perception of turnover was not significantly correlated with personal

accomplishment ($r = -.0262$; $p > .05$).

The second hypothesis was tested by correlating total support received

and rape crisis support as measured by the UCLA-SSI with the three subscales

of the MBI (see Table 2). Total support received was not significantly

correlated with emotional exhaustion ($r = -.2288$; $p > .05$). Total support

received was also not significantly correlated with depersonalization (r = .0929; p > .05). Total support was not significantly correlated with personal accomplishment (r = .0915; p > .05). Rape crisis support was not significantly correlated with emotional exhaustion (r = -.3222; p > .05). Rape crisis support was also not significantly correlated with depersonalization (r = -.1888; p > .05). Rape crisis support was not significantly correlated with personal accomplishment (r = .2471; p > .05).

The third hypothesis was measured by correlating the two coping style scores with the three subscales of the MBI (see Table 3). Control coping was not significantly correlated with emotional exhaustion (r = -.0351; p > .05). Control coping was also not significantly correlated with depersonalization (r = .1386; p > .05). Control coping was not significantly correlated with personal accomplishment (r = .3262; p > .05). Escapist coping was also correlated with the three subscales. Two of these correlations were significant. Escapist coping was correlated with emotional exhaustion (r = .4868; p < .05); this correlation was significant. Escapist coping was also correlated with depersonalization (r = .3744; p < .05); this correlation was also significant. Lastly, escapist coping was not significantly correlated with personal accomplishment (r = .0289; p > .05).

Table 1

Perception of Turnover by the Three Subscales of the MBI

	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Perception of Turnover	.1214	-.1184	-.0262

Note: The values represent the correlation coefficient as calculated by Spearman rho correlations. Significant correlations are marked with an asterisk (*), $p < .05$.

Table 2

Support by the Three Subscales of the MBI

	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Total Support	-.2288	.0929	.0915
Rape Crisis Support	-.3222	-.1888	.2471

Note: The values represent the correlation coefficient as calculated by Spearman rho correlations. Significant correlations are marked with an asterisk (*), p < .05.

Table 3

Control and Escapist Coping by the Three Subscales of the MBI

	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Control Coping	-.0351	.1386	.3262
Escapist Coping	.4868 *	.3744 *	.0289

Note: The values represent the correlation coefficient as calculated by Spearman rho correlations. Significant correlations are marked with an asterisk (*), $p < .05$.

In addition to testing the three hypotheses, all the variables were correlated for post-hoc discussion purposes. Emotional exhaustion was positively correlated with the number of children living with the respondent ($r = .4007$; $p < .05$). In addition, emotional exhaustion was negatively correlated with the satisfaction level the respondents indicated regarding the time they spend volunteering for RCC ($r = -.4151$; $p < .05$). Emotional exhaustion also was correlated with intention to leave RCC within the next year ($r = .5332$; $p < .01$). Personal accomplishment was negatively correlated with the education level of the respondents ($r = -.4770$; $p < .01$). Also, personal accomplishment was negatively correlated with a respondent's intention to leave RCC within the next year ($r = -.5214$; $p < .01$). The length of time a respondent had volunteered at RCC was positively correlated with his or her perception of turnover ($r = .5679$; $p < .01$). Perception of turnover was also positively correlated with intention to leave RCC within the next year ($r = .3970$; $p < .05$). Total support received was correlated with intention to leave RCC within the next year ($r = -.3867$; $p < .05$). Rape crisis support was correlated with perception of turnover in the group ($r = -.4697$; $p < .01$), satisfaction regarding the amount of time spent volunteering ($r = .4255$; $p < .05$), and intention to leave RCC within the next year ($r = -.5227$; $p < .05$).

DISCUSSION

The results do not confirm the first two hypotheses and only partially confirm the third hypothesis. There are several possible explanations as to why the results do not confirm the hypotheses. First, the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) could explain the lack of significance in this study. Since rape crisis members are volunteers, they are choosing to do work for which they are not being monetarily rewarded. In other words, the only satisfaction they can derive from their work at Rape Crisis Center is personal satisfaction, experience, or an item to put on a resume. The volunteers do not benefit in any other way; therefore, they might experience a great amount of dissonance by the high level of burnout that they feel. In order to reduce the amount of cognitive dissonance, the amount of burnout the volunteer experiences will be minimized in reports such as the surveys used in the present study.

Another possible explanation for the results is the small sample size of the study. The study included volunteers who had been in the group longer than the last training session and were willing to respond. Since the organization is not that large, the sample size of 30 includes almost everyone in the group, but that might not have been enough respondents to achieve significance.

The only significant correlations were those between escapist coping and emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. These results lead to several

possible intervention strategies for the group. First, when training occurs at RCC, this study would suggest that the trainers should stress the dangers of using escapist coping strategies because of their relationship to burnout. Also, an alternative coping strategy could be taught to replace the escapist coping (possibly not the control coping strategy since it was not significantly correlated with lower rates of burnout).

The present experiment extended the results of experiments conducted with professionals to an experiment with volunteers. A problem existed which might have affected the results of the experiment. The sample is very homogeneous. Most of the sample consists of single, white, female college students. Due to the lack of variability in the sample, the results cannot be generalized to more diverse populations. However, if studies could show that most volunteer organizations are composed of this type of population, the results could be easily generalized to other volunteer groups. Since this information is not available, the results can only be generalized to other groups that are similar in composition to Rape Crisis Center. The use of questionnaires which have been used in previous studies increases the internal validity of this study. The MBI is a standardized questionnaire with statistical validity and reliability. The other two surveys are slightly less established, but they have been successfully used in several studies. The demographic questionnaire was created for this study; however, the information requested is factual in nature. Therefore, the validity and reliability should not have been

affected.

The secondary analyses that are listed in the results were done in order to test the relationship of some of the demographic variables to burnout as well as to study factors which might be important to include in future studies. A problem exists when calculating this many correlations. The fifteen correlations calculated for the hypotheses are within acceptable error levels. However, as the number of correlations increases, the possibility of obtaining a significant correlation by chance also increases. Therefore, none of these correlations can actually be considered as truly significant. They are included in this study merely for discussion purposes. Not all of the variables that were correlated are included in the results; instead, the variables that seem to lead to predictions for future studies have been reported. Emotional exhaustion seems to be an important component of burnout. Not surprisingly, if a respondent had children living with him or her, they experienced a higher degree of burnout. Obviously, volunteering at a crisis organization in addition to childcare responsibilities could be very exhausting, both emotionally and physically. In addition, emotional exhaustion was indicative of the satisfaction level of the respondents as well as their intention to leave RCC within the next year. Either the respondents were emotionally exhausted which led to them being dissatisfied with their volunteering, and therefore, ready to leave the organization; or the respondents were dissatisfied with their volunteering, ready to leave the organization, and therefore, reported higher emotional exhaustion

in their work. Future studies should clarify the direction of the relationship between these three variables. Personal accomplishment was associated with a respondent's education level, intention to leave RCC within the next year, and perception of the turnover rate within RCC. The finding about education level and personal accomplishment is interesting because it suggests that the members of the group derive more satisfaction from their volunteer experience with more years of schooling. If this variable is included in future studies on burnout, it would be interesting to learn what exactly is causing this increase in personal accomplishment. Personal accomplishment is also important because greater feelings of personal accomplishment might reduce the volunteer rate. The relationship between length of time volunteering at RCC and perception of turnover is one which also needs to be examined further. The longer a volunteer worked at RCC, the higher their perception of the turnover rate was. In turn, perception of turnover was indicative of intentions to leave RCC within the next year. This finding might suggest that volunteers burn out over time. Since the study is correlational, future studies need to determine the direction of the relationship, i.e., whether intention to leave influences a volunteer's perception of turnover or whether perception of turnover influences the intention to leave. Support was also found important in regards to intention to leave the group. Both total support received and rape crisis support were associated with intention to leave. This association suggests that support is an important aspect in mediating turnover, if not actual burnout of volunteers.

Finally, rape crisis support was correlated with the perception of turnover in the group and the satisfaction regarding the amount of time spent volunteering. These correlations indicate that rape crisis support is also a significant variable in burnout research. In conclusion, several variables need to be studied in future research on burnout in volunteers including emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, intention to leave the group, satisfaction with the amount of time spent volunteering, total support received, and rape crisis support.

Given the negative effects that burnout has on volunteers and their treatment of clients, a better understanding of the components of burnout and possible mediating factors is crucial to the mental health field. The lack of funding for social service programs increases the demand for volunteer services. The extensive training that volunteers must undergo in order to become a phone counselor necessitates some program to keep the trained volunteers for a longer period of time. Future studies need to replicate the findings of the present study with larger sample sizes to determine if any other factors are important in mediating burnout.

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APPENDIX A

Christina Maslach • Susan E. Jackson

Human Services Survey

The purpose of this survey is to discover how various persons in the human services or helping professions view their jobs and the people with whom they work closely. Because persons in a wide variety of occupations will answer this survey, it uses the term *recipients* to refer to the people for whom you provide your service, care, treatment, or instruction. When answering this survey please think of these people as recipients of the service you provide, even though you may use another term in your work.

On the following page there are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way *about your job*. If you have *never* had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. An example is shown below.

Example:

HOW OFTEN:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

HOW OFTEN
     0 - 6   Statement:

_____   I feel depressed at work.

If you *never* feel depressed at work, you would write the number "0" (zero) under the heading "HOW OFTEN." If you *rarely* feel depressed at work (a few times a year or less), you would write the number "1." If your feelings of depression are fairly frequent (a few times a week, but not daily) you would write a "5."

Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.
3803 E. Bayshore Road • Palo Alto, CA 94303

Human Services Survey

HOW OFTEN:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

HOW OFTEN
0 - 6   Statements:

1. _____   I feel emotionally drained from my work.

2. _____   I feel used up at the end of the workday.

3. _____   I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

4. _____   I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.

5. _____   I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.

6. _____   Working with people all day is really a strain for me.

7. _____   I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.

8. _____   I feel burned out from my work.

9. _____   I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.

10. _____   I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.

11. _____   I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.

12. _____   I feel very energetic.

13. _____   I feel frustrated by my job.

14. _____   I feel I'm working too hard on my job.

15. _____   I don't really care what happens to some recipients.

16. _____   Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.

17. _____   I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.

18. _____   I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.

19. _____   I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.

20. _____   I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.

21. _____   In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

22. _____   I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.

APPENDIX B

UCLA Social Support Inventory

(adapted from Dunkel-Schetter, Feinstein, & Call, 1986)

This survey is concerned with key interpersonal relationships and their dynamics. We are interested in many aspects of the support you give and get from these relationships.

1. Please choose one parent (preferably the one you are closest to). If you do not have a parent, please choose a guardian or other adult that is of major importance in your life.

a. Please indicate which one you have chosen (circle one).

Mother (1)   Father (2)   Stepmother (3)   Stepfather (4)

Foster-parent (5)   Guardian (6)   Other (7)

b. Do you live with this person?

yes (1)   no (2)

c. Within the past three months, how often have you talked with this person, either in person or on the phone?

    every day 1
    several times a week 2
    about once a week 3
    2 or 3 times a month 4
    once a month 5
    less than once a month 6

When the survey refers to "parent" from here on, please answer concerning this and only this person

2.   Please think of one very close friend with whom you are not romantically or sexually involved. Please do not choose a sibling, cousin, or other relative.

a.   Which is this person? (circle one)

same sex (1)   opposite sex (2)

b.   What is this person's age?

_____ years.

c.   Within the past three months, how often have you talked with your friend, either in person or on the phone?

every day 1
several times a week 2
about once a week 3
2 or 3 times a month 4
once a month 5
less than once a month 6

When the survey refers to "friend" from here on, please think of this person.

3a.   Are you currently in a romantic relationship that has been going on for three months or more? (circle one)

yes (1)   no (2)   (If no, skip to question 4)

b.   What is the length of time you have been together?

_____ years _____ months

c.   What is the most accurate description of this relationship? (circle one)

married (1)   engaged (2)   see only one another (3)

other (4)

When the survey refers to "romantic partner" from here on, please answer concerning this person. If you don't have a romantic partner, please ship all questions regarding this person.

4.   At certain times, we want information or advice about school related concerns (e.g. a particular class, one's major or schedule, social activities, etc.) For example, we might want information about a particular problem, or advice in making an important decision. Within the past three months, how often have you desired information or advice from others concerning school? (Please skip to number six if you do not attend school)

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

5a.   How often did your parent provide information or advice about school in the past three months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often did your friend provide this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often did your romantic partner provide this? (SKIP IF NONE)

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

6.   At certain times, we want information and advice about our relationship with another person, or others in general (e.g. conflict with someone, concern about other's opinions, developing a new relationship, etc.). Within the past three months, how often have you desired information or advice from others concerning your relationships?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

7a.   How often did your parent provide information or advice about your relationship with another person within the past three months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often did your friend provide this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often did your romantic partner provide this? (SKIP IF NONE)

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

8.   In general, which one of the following best describes you when you need information or advice?

1	2	3	4	5
I usually don't show that I need it, nor do I ask for it.		My need is probably obvious, but I usually don't ask for it directly.		I usually ask for it.

9.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with all the information and advice you have received in the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied		neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		very satisfied

10a.   In general, how often have you provided information and advice to your parent in the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often have you provided it to your friend?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often have you provided it to your romantic partner?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

11.   At certain times, we want minor assistance, like help with a small task
(e.g. doing laundry, a ride somewhere close by, help with a homework
assignment, etc.) or we want some small material thing (e.g. a small
amount of money such as $5, or a small item). Within the past three
months, how often have you desired such assistance?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

12a.   How often did your parent provide minor assistance within the past three
months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

b.   How often did your friend provide it?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

c.   How often did your romantic partner provide it?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

13.   At certain times we want major assistance or help with a large task (e.g.
moving, a ride somewhere pretty far away, etc.) or we want some large
item (e.g. a large amount of money or something sort of expensive).
Within the past three months, how often have you desired such
assistance?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

14a.   How often did your parent provide major assistance within the past three
months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

b.   How often did your friend provide it?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

c.   How often did your romantic partner provide it?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

15.   In general, which one of the following best describes you when you need minor or major assistance?

1	2	3	4	5
I usually don't	My need is			I usually
show that I	probably obvious,			ask for it.
need it, nor	but I usually			
do I ask for	don't ask for			
it.	it directly.			

16.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the assistance (minor and major) you have received from everyone in the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very		neither		very
dissatisfied		satisfied nor		satisfied
		dissatisfied		

17a.   In general, how often have you given assistance (minor or major) to your parent within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often have you given it to your friend?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often have you given it to your romantic partner?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

18.   At certain times, we want to feel loved and cared about by others. Within the past three months, how often have you desired to feel loved and cared about by others?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

19a. How often did your parent convey love and caring within the past three months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b. How often has your friend conveyed this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c. How often has your romantic partner conveyed this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

20. At certain times, we want to feel like a good person whom others think well of. Within the past three months, how often have you desired to feel respect, approval and/or acceptance from others?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

21a. How often did your parent convey respect, approval, and/or acceptance within the past three months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b. How often has your friend conveyed this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner conveyed this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

22.   At certain times, we want encouragement and reassurance to help us manage or deal with a specific situation. For example, sometimes we want to be consoled when we're upset or encouraged in general. Within the past three months, how often have you desired this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

23a.   How often did your parent convey encouragement and reassurance within the past three months (whether you wanted it or not)?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend provided this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner provided this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

24.   In general, which one of the following best describes you when you need love and caring; respect, approval, and acceptance; or encouragement and reassurance?

1	2	3	4	5
I usually don't show that I need it, nor do I ask for it.		My need is probably obvious, but I usually don't ask for it directly.		I usually ask for it.

25.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the love and caring you've received within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied		neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		very satisfied

26.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the respect, approval, and acceptance you've received within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied		neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		very satisfied

27.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the encouragement and reassurance you've received within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied		neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		very satisfied

28.   At certain times, we want someone to listen to our concerns and feelings. Within the past three months, how often have you desired this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

29a.   How often did your parent listen to you within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

30.   At certain times, we want someone to do more than listen to us. We want them to understand our situation and empathize with our feelings. Within the past three months, how often have you desired this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

31a.   How often did your parent understand and empathize with you within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

32.   In general, which one of the following best describes you when you need someone to listen, or understand and empathize with you?

1	2	3	4	5
I usually don't show that I need it, nor do I ask for it.		My need is probably obvious, but I usually don't ask for it directly.		I usually ask for it.

33.   In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the listening, understanding, and empathy you've received within the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied		neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		very satisfied

34a.   In general, how often have you given emotional support (e.g. love and caring; respect, approval and acceptance; encouragement and reassurance; listening; understanding and empathy) to your parent?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often have you given this to your friend?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often have you given this to your romantic partner?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

Part II

Relationships usually involve a certain amount of stress. For example, our friendships go through difficult times, we don't always get along with our families, and our romantic relationships can sometimes be hard to maintain. The next few questions deal with various types of stress you may have felt in your interpersonal relationships within the past three months.

1a.   A relationship can become stressful when another person is critical or displeased with us. Sometimes this takes the form of comments and other times it is just felt. In the past three months, how often has your parent seemed critical or displeased with you?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend seemed this way?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner seemed this way?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

2a.   A relationship can also be stressful when the other person is angry or short tempered with us. Within the past three months, how often has your parent seemed angry with you?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend seemed this way?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner seemed this way?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

3a.   People we care about let us down now and then, even if they don't mean to. There are many possible reasons for this, and it can be stressful. Within the past three months, how often have you been disappointed by your parent or felt he or she let you down?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

4a.   Whether intentional or not, sometimes others bug us or get on our nerves. Within the past three months, how often has your parent done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

5a.   A relationship can sometimes take a lot of us. At times the people that we care about make certain demands of us. For example, they may burden us with their problems or needs. Within the past three months, how often has your parent done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often has your friend done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

c.   How often has your romantic partner done this?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

Part III

1a.   Talking with members of Rape Crisis Center about clients and concerns with the group is a way of dealing with stress that is suggested to all members of RCC during training. How often have you talked with other members of RCC about clients and concerns in the past three months?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often

b.   How often have you talked to your parent about RCC?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

c.   How often have you talked to your friend about RCC?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

d.   How often have you talked to your romantic partner about RCC?

1   2   3   4   5
never   rarely   sometimes   often   very often

APPENDIX C

Coping survey

(adapted from Latack, 1986)

Indicate the extent to which you engage in the following when you are having difficulties with your job responsibilities.

1	2	3	4	5
hardly ever do this				almost always do this

     1. Get together with a more experienced volunteer to discuss this.

     2. Try to be very organized so that I can keep on top of things.

     3. Talk with other people who are involved.

     4. Try to see this situation as an opportunity to learn and develop new skills.

     5. Put extra attention on planning and scheduling.

     6. Try to think of myself as a winner - as someone who always comes through.

     7. Tell myself that I can probably work things out to my advantage.

     8. Devote more time and energy to doing my job.

     9. Try to get additional people involved in the situation.

     10. Think about the challenges I can find in this situation.

     11. Try to work more efficiently.

     12. Decide what I think should be done and explain this to the people who are affected.

     13. Give it my best effort to do what I think is expected of me.

     14. Request help from people who have the power to do something for me.

     15. Seek advice from people outside the situation who may not have power but who can help me think of ways to do what is expected of me.

     16. Work on changing policies which caused this situation.

     17. Throw myself into my work and work harder, longer hours.

     18. Avoid being in this situation if I can.

     19. Tell myself that time takes care of situations like this.

     20. Try to keep away from this type of situation.

     21. Remind myself that work isn't everything.

     22. Anticipate the negative consequences so that I'm prepared for the worst.

_____ 23. Delegate work to others (e.g., try to avoid beeper duty).
_____ 24. Separate myself as much as possible from the people who created this situation.
_____ 25. Try not to get concerned about it.
_____ 26. Do my best to get out of the situation gracefully.
_____ 27. Accept this situation because there is nothing I can do to change it.
_____ 28. Set my own priorities based on what I like to do.

APPENDIX D

Demographic Data Sheet

Your sex:

_____ Male   _____ Female

Your age:

_____ years

Are you (check only one group)

_____ Asian, Asian American
_____ Black
_____ Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American
_____ Native American, American Indian
_____ White, Caucasian
_____ Other, (please specify _____)

What is your religion?

_____ Protestant (specify denomination _____)
_____ Roman Catholic
_____ Jewish
_____ Other (please specify _____)
_____ None, no religion

How religious do you consider yourself to be? (Circle the appropriate number.)

1	2	3	4	5
very religious				not at all religious

Marital status:

_____ Single
_____ Married
_____ Divorced
_____ Widowed
_____ Other (please specify _____)

If married, how long have you been married to your current spouse?

_____ years

If you have children, how many of them are living with you?

_____ children live with me
_____ I have no children

Fill in the highest grade you have completed from 0-16 or the highest degree completed.

_____

What occupation/position do you currently hold (full-time or part-time)?

_____

What is your income?

_____ dollars per year

How many hours per week do you work at the job indicated above?

_____ hours per week

How long have you been a volunteer at Rape Crisis Center?

_____

How high is the turnover rate of volunteer at Rape Crisis Center, in your opinion? (Please circle one.)

1   2   3   4   5
low   high

How many hours per week do you spend volunteering for Rape Crisis Center, including meeting, workgroups, pager duties, and other activities?

_____ hours per week

How satisfied are you with the amount of time you spend volunteering for Rape Crisis Center?

1	2	3	4	5
very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neutral	satisfied	very satisfied

During the next year, how likely are you to leave Rape Crisis Center?

1	2	3	4	5
not likely				very likely

How many days a week, if any, do you drink alcoholic beverages?

_____ days per week

During an average week, how many beers, glasses of wine, or servings of liquor do you drink?

_____

Research Honors Proposal

Lisa Beal

For my research honors project, I will be measuring burnout and the coping strategies used to deal with these feelings of burnout in crisis hotline volunteers. My sample will be the volunteers at Rape Crisis Center. My study is important to the Rape Crisis Center because the group has a high turnover rate of volunteers and would like to know if there is a feasible way to keep more volunteers. I will use an established Burnout Inventory to determine level of burnout and will correlate burnout level with social support and certain personal characteristics of each volunteer, such as length of time as a volunteer, age, and alcohol intake. Burnout will consist of three measures: depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion, which are measured in the Maslach Burnout Inventory. My primary interest is what coping strategies volunteers use to deal with burnout, and whether these strategies are effective. A questionnaire measuring coping strategies will either be created or an appropriate survey will be chosen from the existing literature. My hypothesis is that volunteers who internalize depression and stress will have a higher rate of burnout, while volunteers who externalize their anxiety (by talking with other volunteers, significant others, or turning to religion) will have a lower rate of burnout.

Also, I hypothesize that volunteers who have been with Rape Crisis Center for over a year will have lower rates of burnout, while fairly new volunteers with less than a year's experience will have higher burnout rates. Although this hypothesis is the opposite of the normal burnout scenario, informal observation suggests this hypothesis will be confirmed.

My research idea has been a topic of previous research as far as burnout and coping strategies are concerned. However, the subjects, volunteers, have not been extensively covered in the literature. In other words, I will be able to review the existing literature, but the sample group I am using has not been frequently studied which will make my research unique.