

# DIFFERENTIATION OF BURNOUT SYNDROME BY PROFESSION AND JOB: GAZI BURNOUT INVENTORY

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**Abstract:** Defined as the situation individuals undergo in the face of stress, burnout syndrome appears to be a handicap not only conveying the feeling of isolation towards a specific job or profession but diminishing the productivity of individual in profession-related settings as well. This study sets out to develop and design an attitude scale in order to explore the differentiation of burnout of individuals in terms of job and profession concepts. In order to measure professional and job burnout, a trial scale was formed covering 106 statements obtained from 80 students with a job or profession at an MBA program and this scale was administered. Reliability and validity analyses of the Data obtained were performed and as the results of the analyses performed a 14-item professional burnout scale and a 12-item job burnout scale were developed.

**Keywords:** burnout, measurement, professional burnout, job burnout

**JEL Codes:** M12, M54

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of burnout was put forward for the first time by Freudenberg in 1974 (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) and was taken into consideration as a syndrome together with stress in the workplace. Basically defined as the emotional and physical exhaustion, burnout brings about many disadvantages in organizational settings (Budak & Sürgevil, 2005). In other words, burnout syndrome is the syndrome in which individuals develop physical exhaustion,

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chronic exhaustion, feelings of despair and desperation as well as low self-accomplishment and negative feelings and attitudes towards the recipients of the service (Maslach & Jackson,1981; Özdemir et al.,1999; Kuçer,2005; Pines & Keinan,2005; Holmqvist & Jeanneau,2006; Becker, Milad & Klock, 2006; Piko, 2006; Kim, Shin & Umbreit,2007).

Burnout syndrome leads to severe individual and organizational problems. A highly advanced burnout syndrome may give rise to psychosomatic anomalies, problems in family and marriage life, insomnia, alcohol and substance addiction. As for organizational contexts, burnout may result in complications such as late-coming and early-leaving of employees, quitting, having frequent medical reports, and the lack of productive and constructive ideas and criticism in the occupational settings (Sayıl et al.,1997). Burnout arises, in particular, with the feelings of physiologic and emotional exhaustion experienced as a result of failure in coping with stress in occupational contexts requiring intensive communication and interaction with service recipients (Tuğrul & Çelik,2002).

Burnout is assessed as the long-term consequence of stress in a job or profession and very common among professionals working in areas such as teaching, health care, social work or emergency legal services (Gorter, Eijkman & Hoogstraten, 2000; Özdemir et al., 2003; Pines & Keinan,2005). In the studies into burnout, the concepts of job and profession were treated in a similar manner and no difference was taken into regard in the treatment of the concepts and many findings and results stated as job burnout were characterized as professional burnout. Hence, in these studies (Avşaroğlu et al., 2005; Basım & Şeşen, 2006; Cao & Miao, 2006; Cemaloğlu & Şahin,2007;Chou,1993; Frey, 2000; Girgin & Baysal,2005; Glebocka & Lisowska,2007; Gorter et al.,1999; Hayes et al.,2004; Jaracz & Gorna & Konieczna, 2005; Nemes, 2004; Nyklicek & Pop, 2005; Özdemir et al.,1999; Piko, 2006; Richardson & College, 2005; Rupert & Kent,2007;Schoot, Oginska & Estry,2003; Vanheule & Verhaegle, 2005; Yang & Farn, 2005; Vanheule & Verhaeghe, 2005; Zhang, Leiter & Laschinger, 2006) , there is a conceptual confusion in the use of the terms “job” and “profession”, thus leading to misunderstanding.

On the other hand, the profession an individual has and the job he/she performs are two concepts different from each other. Profession is the culmination of knowledge, skill and competence an individual obtained through a series of training. An individual with a profession can hold the title of the profession

throughout his/her life span even if he/she doesn't perform it. On the other hand, job is an activity which people do for pay in order to meet needs and subsistence. The title of a job can be used as long as individuals perform their jobs. Hence, the most distinguishing difference between "profession" and "job" is that profession title can be used throughout life, while title for a job can be used confined to the duration individuals hold their position in their jobs. That's why, in this study, burnout level of employees was examined in two different perspective as "professional burnout" and "job burnout".

To serve this purpose, this study sets out to develop and design an attitude scale in order the put forward differentiation of the burnout level of individuals in "profession" and "job". A scale with 14 items and a scale with 12 items were developed and designed for professional burnout and job burnout, respectively.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAME**

### **2.1 Differentiation of Profession and Job Concepts**

The concepts of "job" and "profession" are oftentimes confused with each other. Job and profession are concepts different from each other. Profession is the title one earns through training and a formal qualification (Oxford, 1993). Job is a paid position of regular employment (Oxford, 1993), activity and work in order to achieve and reach a result through making efforts (tdk, 2007) or physical and mental work performed for material returns.

Professions originate from the labour division required by social, cultural and economic structure as well as technological advances. Professions are usually pass from one generation to another in underdeveloped societies, as for developing societies, professions are learnt through master-apprentice relation and when it comes to advanced societies professions are obtained through formal education. In contemporary societies, it is regarded as a qualification requiring a diploma (Uçan, 2001).

A person can have the same profession and job at the same time. To illustrate, a person entitled to be a doctor through a formal training can also be performing his/her profession, in which case we call this his/her job and profession title and the job title of this person is the same in this example. On the other hand, a person can have a different profession and job. For instance, a person holding a degree in medicine could be employed as a manager at an establishment.

Since profession is the title earned through a formal training and education period, a person can have a job although he/she doesn't have a profession. Or, a person doesn't have a job but a profession title, for profession title can be used throughout one's life once it is earned.

## **2.2 Job Burnout**

Business life has a competitive nature and hence creates a continual pressure on managers and employees alike to reach the targets set before. Employees are expected to set forth swift, preferable and cost-efficient solutions to business problems. Thus, it could be held that this situation lead to job burnout due to the ever-increasing pressure on the employees and over-stress (Telman & Önen, 2006).

Cherniss (1980) sums experienced burnout in business life as psychological discouragement from job as a reaction to intense stress and dissatisfaction and admits that it is a pressure equal to combination of all the factors that make up the motivational, emotional, attitudinal and behavioral changes as a response to job stress (Avşaroğlu, Deniz & Kahraman, 2005).

Burnout syndrome experienced in the early periods of work life might seem to bring about no troubles at all. However, if experienced in the later periods of the work life, it might lead to severe and long-lasting troubles. Interestingly, factors that help alleviate the effect of the burnout syndrome may at the same time pave the way for burnout syndrome. Among these factors are new job environment, more autonomy, managerial support and attractiveness of the job (Ersoy, Yıldırım & Edirne, 2001).

## **2.3 Professional Burnout**

Professional burnout can be defined as the psychological discouragement and estrangement from a profession or profession title. The feeling of exhaustion in a profession may arise from such motives as the inability to meet the expectations, the unwilling choice of the profession, clash between the requirement of the profession and personal abilities, promising no benefit for future developments and psychological isolation from the profession.

Feeling of exhaustion is influential in adjusting attitude and behavior towards one's profession. Individuals experiencing professional burnout do not do or prefer any jobs, and do not prefer to make use of the knowledge and skills obtained from profession.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is to develop and design a scale in order to determine burnout level of the employees in different work groups (doctors, nurses, teachers, police officers, *etc...*) and to set forth the difference between professional burnout and job burnout levels.

The study was completed in four stages. During the first one, data was collected from some 80 students, enrolled in Atılım University Institute of Social Sciences MBA program, who were informed of the topic of the study. The major reason why these students were chosen is that they have a job and a profession as well as their familiarity with the topic of the study. After elucidating the difference between job and profession to the students, students were asked to write down statements on burnout taking the profession and the job they have into account. Items of statements were analyzed systematically and some clues were obtained in a manner that will form the basis of the statements of attitude towards burnout. Then, by means of the clues obtained, 106 pilot statements on attitude towards burnout were picked, 50 of them on professional burnout, 56 on job burnout.

During the second phase of the preparation of the pilot scale, statements of attitude were put in the form of a scale. To do this, 106-item statements of attitude were written one under the other and they were treated with a five-level Likert scale measuring “1 Disagree Strongly”, “2 Disagree Somewhat”, “3 Neutral”, “4 Agree Somewhat”, “5 Agree Strongly”. The pilot scale included affirmative and negative statements and in order to lessen the effect of manipulation and directing, affirmative and negative statement are presented in a mixed order. Besides, expert opinions were taken into account in the preparation of the 106-item preliminary form of the scale.

In the implementation, the third phase, the pilot scale was administered to 1296 people, selected randomly, from different jobs and occupations, among which are nurses, doctors, lawyers, academicians, managers and police officers. 176 people were left out since they had no profession title nor had a job. 1120 people comprised the database of the study.

Then, reliability and validity analyses were performed. Cronbach alpha coefficient, the most suitable one for Likert type scales, was computed. As for validity, no test was performed for content validity and expert opinions taken in the preparation of attitude scales were thought to be adequate and acceptable. As for construct validity, factor analysis was applied.

There are some approaches in the literature towards the minimum number of questionnaire items to be administered in scale construction and design studies. In this study, number of item/number of observation ratio was employed. According to Pedhazur (1997) this is 1:15 and 1:30. That is to say, 15 or 30 observation per item was suggested. The number of questionnaire in this study is within this limit.

In the last part of the study, the scale we called “Gazi Professional Burnout Inventory” and “Gazi Job Burnout Inventory” was administered and we aimed to find out the level of differentiation.

### 3.1 Construction of The Gazi Professional Burnout Inventory

A Cronbach's Alpha test has been performed to measure the reliability of the inventory and the reliability has been found to be 0.814. Factor analyses have been used to determine the scale and Quartimax rotation method has been applied.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value for sampling adequacy is 0.773. This value indicates that the data used is appropriate for factor analysis. As a result of Bartlett's test, approximate Chi-Square value has been found to be 46980.334 ( $p < 0.000$ ). These results indicate that the size of the sampling, subject to factor analysis, is enough and that the data is appropriate for analysis.

The 50 items in the questionnaire have been evaluated by factor analysis and the factors with eigenvalues higher than 1 have been identified. According to this criterion, 14 factors have been obtained. The eigenvalues, the percentages of variance explained and the percentage of total variance explained of the obtained factors are given in the table below. As is seen in Table 19, the 14 factors obtained account for 79.2% of the total variance. It is clear that this percentage verifies the limitation that factors must account for at least the 2/3 of the total variance.

**Table 19** *The Eigenvalues and Total Variance Explained Percentages of the Factors*

Factor	Total Variance Explained		
	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9,408	18,817	18,817
2	5,583	11,166	29,983
3	3,946	7,891	37,874
4	3,183	6,366	44,240
5	2,629	5,258	49,498
6	2,434	4,868	54,366
7	2,164	4,328	58,694

Factor	Total Variance Explained		
	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
8	2,010	4,020	62,714
9	1,676	3,352	66,066
10	1,623	3,247	69,313
11	1,399	2,799	72,111
12	1,295	2,590	74,701
13	1,199	2,398	77,099
14	1,051	2,102	79,200

For the 14 factors obtained in the analysis, for each factor, the item with the highest factor load has been chosen. The chosen factors are given sequentially in Table 20 according to factor loads.

**Table 20** *Item Factor Loadings for the Gazi Professional Burnout Inventory*

Item Code	Items	Factor Load
GPBI 42	The competition to be promoted in the profession I was trained for is really wearisome.	0,833
GPBI 18	I attend in-service training programs about my profession.	-0,811
GPBI 11	Employers do not appreciate the importance or value of my profession.	0,737
GPBI 02	I regret choosing this profession.	0,748
GPBI 38	It is demotivating me that job opportunities for the profession I was trained for is limited.	0,804
GPBI 27	In my profession, I want to deal with routine tasks only.	0,725
GPBI 10	I never thought of working in the profession I was trained for.	0,729
GPBI 24	It is demotivating me that not enough employment opportunities are available in the profession I was trained for.	-0,805
GPBI 22	My opinions and suggestions about the subjects concerning my profession are not appreciated.	0,782
GPBI 28	I am tired and bored with the too many formal procedures in my profession.	0,841
GPBI 31	The profession I was trained for is a highly desired and admired profession.	0,828
GPBI 30	People who are trained in similar professions can also do the jobs I do.	0,709
GPBI 03	I do not like having a job related with my profession.	0,508
GPBI 17	I like to develop myself professionally.	-0,624

When Table 20 is analyzed, it can be seen that factor loads are higher than 0.500. It can also be seen on the table that the item with the highest eigenvalue is “GPBI42” and it is followed by “GPBI18” and “GPBI11”, respectively.

### 3.2 Construction of the Gazi Job Burnout Inventory

A Cronbach's Alpha test has been performed to measure the reliability of the inventory and the reliability has been found to be 0.972. Factor analyses have been used to determine the scale and Quartimax rotation method has been applied.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value for sampling adequacy is 0.937. This value indicates that the data used is appropriate for factor analysis. As a result of Bartlett's test, approximate Chi-Square value has been found to be 71653,746 ( $p < 0.000$ ). These results indicate that the size of the sampling, subject to factor analysis, is enough and that the data is appropriate for analysis.

The 56 items in the questionnaire have been evaluated by factor analysis and the factors with eigenvalues higher than 1 have been identified. According to this criterion, 12 factors have been obtained. The eigenvalues, the percentages of variance explained and the percentage of total variance explained of the obtained factors are given in the table below. As is seen in Table, the 12 factors obtained account for 79.6% of the total variance. It is clear that this percentage verifies the limitation that factors must account for at least the 2/3 of the total variance.

**Table 21** *The Eigenvalues and Total Variance Explained Percentages of the Obtained Factors*

Factor	Total Variance Explained		
	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	24,001	42,859	42,859
2	3,916	6,994	49,853
3	2,808	5,014	54,867
4	2,282	4,076	58,943
5	1,952	3,485	62,428
6	1,828	3,265	65,693
7	1,604	2,865	68,558
8	1,540	2,750	71,308
9	1,334	2,382	73,690
10	1,181	2,109	75,799
11	1,077	1,924	77,723
12	1,032	1,842	79,565

For the 12 factors obtained in the analysis, for each factor, the item with the highest factor load has been chosen. The chosen factors are given sequentially in Table 22 according to factor loads.



**Table 22** *Item Factor Loadings for the Gazi Job Burnout Inventory*

Item Code	Items	Factor Load
GJBI 47	The fact that in my work place, knowledge, skills and talents are not considered in the employment process makes me alienated from the profession.	0,855
GJBI 28	It demotivates me that the job does not offer enough social security, if any.	0,746
GJBI 07	I think I properly fulfill the requirements of my job.	0,761
GJBI 38	It demotivates me that institutionalization is not applicable in my work place.	0,621
GJBI 31	The conflicts with managers and colleagues bother me.	0,679
GJBI 10	I wish I did not need money and I could work at my own sweet will.	0,769
GJBI 16	I think my work place fails to offer career and Professional development opportunities.	0,632
GJBI 15	I am concerned with not being able to live up to the expectations of my employer.	0,647
GJBI 30	I feel reluctant to follow up the developments in my job.	0,572
GJBI 20	I hate my colleagues.	0,736
GJBI 12	My opinions and suggestion in the work place are considered and appreciated.	-0,750
GJBI 23	I think I am underpaid.	0,794

When Table 20 is analyzed, it can be seen that factor loads are higher than 0.500. It can also be seen on the table that the item with the highest eigenvalue is “GJBI47” and it is followed by “GJBI27” ve “GJBI07”, respectively.

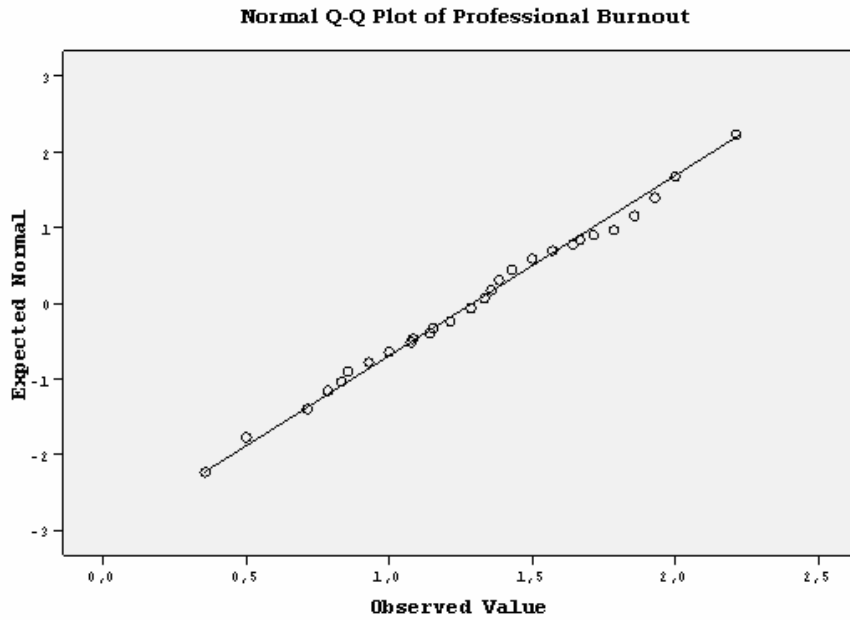
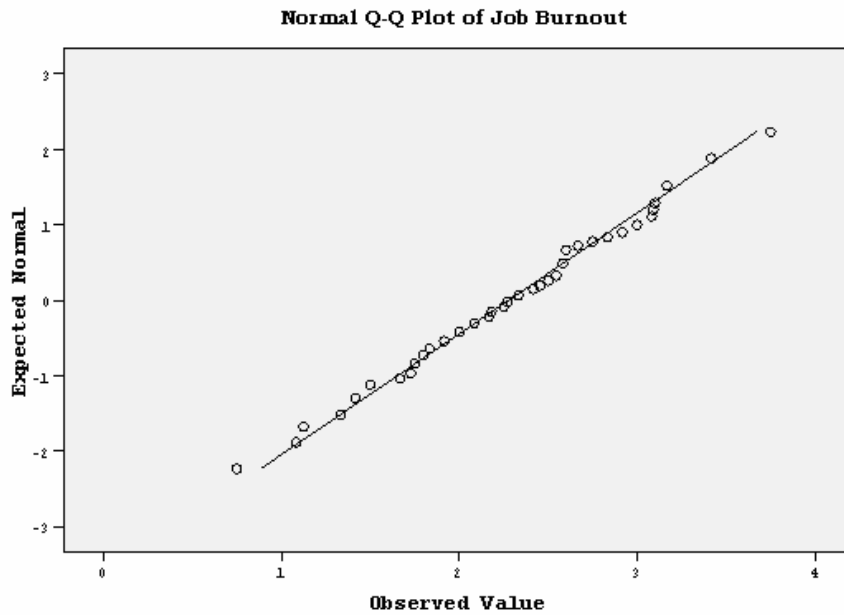
#### 4. DIFFERENTIATION OF PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT FROM JOB BURNOUT

The inventory has been administered to 120 respondents. The arithmetic average of the 14 items about professional burnout has been calculated, considering the items with opposite meanings, and the resulting score is called as professional burnout. Similarly, the arithmetic average of the 12 items about job burnout has been calculated, considering the items with opposite meanings, and the resulting score is called as job burnout.

**Table 23** *The Results of Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality of Distribution*

	Statistic	Shapiro-Wilk df	Sig.
Professional Burnout	,983	116	,151
Job Burnout	,989	116	,456

In order to test the distributional normality of the two newly obtained variables, a Shapiro-Wilk has been conducted and a Q-Q plot graphic has been provided. Both variables have turned out to have normal distribution. The findings are given in Table 23, Chart 1 and Chart 2.

**Chart 1** Normal Q-Q Plot of Professional Burnout**Chart 2** Normal Q-Q Plot of Job Burnout

A matched-pair t-test has been conducted in order to test the differentiation between professional burnout and job burnout of the people in the sampling group. The findings are given below in Table 24.

**Table 24** *Matched-pair t-test*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Professional Burnout	120	1,27	0,435	-15,851	0,000
Job Burnout	120	2,34	0,702		

It is clear from Table 24 that professional burnout of the employees differentiates from their job burnout and this is a statistically significant difference ( $t=-15.851$ ,  $p<0.000$ ). This can be considered evidence indicating that in terms of burnout syndrome of individuals professional burnout differentiates from job burnout. In other words, measuring burnout syndrome in terms of professional and job burnout using different scales stand out as a significant difference in identifying the burnout conditions of individuals.

## 5. CONCLUSION

There are plenty of studies on burnout syndrome, which causes individual and organizational problems. This study, however, suggests that burnout syndrome differs according to profession and job concepts and therefore, it is essential that professional burnout and job burnout be measured using different scales.

In the study, two inventories have been developed; “The Gazi Job Burnout Inventory”, an inventory of 12 items, intended to identify job burnout and “The Gazi Professional Burnout Inventory”, an inventory of 14 items intended to identify professional burnout. The idea of developing these inventories was born out of the need to measure the two different dimensions of burnout syndrome; namely, professional burnout and job burnout. This will contribute to the studies of researchers in identifying the reasons for the negative outcomes of burnout syndrome.

Presenting whether burnout syndrome stems from work life or the choice of profession, these inventories will ensure to identify how to handle the precautions and suggestions to be developed for burnout syndrome.

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