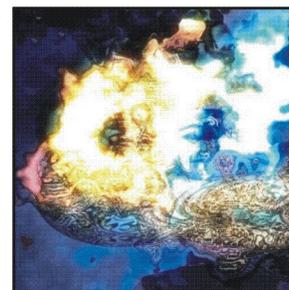


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BURNOUT AMONG HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT ... atoktamis@cumhuriyet.edu.tr, atoktamis@hotmail.com **Objective:** The purpose of present study was (a) to examine the burnout in a sample of Turkish high school teachers and (b) to test the hypothesis that Turkish teachers suffer from burnout more than the teachers in the developed countries. **Methods:** All of the high schools in the city Centrum of Sivas, Turkey were contacted for this study. Turkish version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory was used in this study. Six hundred and ten questionnaires were distributed to the teachers, and 520 questionnaires were returned. The 48 questionnaires were excluded in the final analysis, because of including inconclusive and/or incomplete data. **Result:** There was no statistically significant difference between the scores of sub samples according (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) to the gender ($p > 0, 05$). There was an insignificant negative correlation ($p = 0.08$) between the depersonalization and personal accomplishment in the group of female teachers. Drinking, smoking and marital status had no effect on burnout in this study sample ($p > 0.05$). Less experienced Turkish teachers reported higher scores on depersonalization ($p = 0.001$). **Conclusion:** Turkish teachers suffer from burnout less that of the teachers in many developed countries.

INTRODUCTION

The most widely accepted conceptualization of the burnout was found in the work of Maslach and Jackson¹.

They defined burnout as three-dimensional syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion, low personal accomplishment, and depersonalization. Particularly,

professionals working in human services e.g., teachers, physicians, social workers, nurses are vulnerable to burnout². Specifically, emotional exhaustion refers to the feelings of being emotionally drained by intense contact with other people; depersonalization refers to the negative attitude or callous responses toward people; and reduced personal accomplishment refers to decline in one's sense of competence and of successful achievement in working with people^{1,3}. In recent years, teacher's burnout has increasingly received recognition as a widespread problem⁴⁻⁶ and the term has come to be used in conjunction with teachers far more often than any other occupational group. Farber⁷ estimated that 30 to 35% of American teachers are dissatisfied strongly with their profession and 5 to 20% truly are burned out. Research findings suggest that, burnout and dissatisfaction by job are linked, but they are not identical constructs. Maslach and Schaufeli⁸ used three hypotheses to explain the nature of that relationship; (a) burnout is associated with decreased job satisfaction (b) job dissatisfaction is associated with burnout and (c) burnout and job dissatisfaction both of them may be related to third variable, such as poor working conditions.

In a literature review, Kyriacou⁹ pointed out the major sources of stress for teachers; poor pupil motivation in school performance, undisciplined behavior of pupils, poor career opportunities; low income and shortage of teaching equipment, poor facilities and large classes; time pressures and short deadlines; low societal recognition of profession; conflicts with colleagues and supervisors; rapid changes in curricular demands and adaptation of scholastic programs to changes in a rapidly changing society. All these factors are valid in the working conditions of Turkish teachers. Thus, it should be expected that Turkish teachers suffer from burnout more than the teachers in the western-developed countries. However, no research relevant to teacher's burnout in Turkey exists in the literature on burnout. The purpose of present study was (a) to examine the burnout in a sample of Turkish high school teachers and (b) to test the hypothesis that Turkish teachers suffer from burnout more than the teachers in the developed countries.

Table- I. Descriptive statistics of demographic variables		
Min. Age; 21, Max. Age; 58, Mean Age; 34.83±7.27		
Measures	No. of patients	% Age
Sex		
Men	321	68.0
Women	151	32.0
Total	472	100
Material Status		
Married	395	83.7
Single	77	16.3
Total	472	100
Age group, (years)		
20-25	37	7.8
26-30	117	24.9
31-35	126	26.7
36-40	85	18.0
41-45	59	12.1
46-50	39	8.3
51-58	9	1.9
Total	472	100
Teaching Experience, (years)		
< 3	54	11.5
4-10	176	37.5
10-15	104	22.1
16-20	62	13.2
>20	74	15.7
Total**	470	100

MATERIAL AND METHOD

All of the high schools in the city Centrum of SIVAS, TURKEY were contacted for this study. Six hundred and ten questionnaires were distributed to the teachers, and

520 questionnaires were returned. The 48 questionnaires were excluded in the final analysis, because of including inconclusive and/or incomplete data. Further descriptive information about our study sample is given in Table I.

Participants were asked to fill out a background information sheet and respond to the intensity dimension of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (22 items)^{1,10}. Turkish version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used in this study¹¹. Participants were requested to

evaluate each item in terms of the frequency of their feelings ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). The items are scored into the three components of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment.

High scores of the first two scales and low scores of the last scale are indicative of burnout. Quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and Student-t test on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (ver.10.0).

Table II. Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations of sub scale scores of burnout inventory

Sub Scale	Sex		Total
	Male n = 322	Female n= 150	Male + Female n = 477
Emotional exhaustion	11.30±6.37	11.63±5.69	11.40±6.16
Depersonalization	4.02±3.25	3.94±3.68	4.0±3.38
Personal accomplishment	22.39±4.87	21.75±4.99	22.18±4.91

Table III. Individual characteristics and sub scale scores of burn out inventory

Individual Characteristics		No of Pts	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal accomplishment
Martial	Married	395	12.26±6.07	3.87±3.39	22.32±5.02
Status	Single	77	12.14±6.55	4.66±3.30	21.47±4.27
Drinking	Yes	74	11.92±7.06	4.91±3.74	22.08±5.35
	No	398	11.31±6.07	3.83±3.29	22.20±4.83
Smoking	Yes	240	10.88±5.81	4.07±3.65	22.40±4.88
	No	232	11.94±6.46	3.92±3.09	21.96±4.94
Teaching experience (years)	0-10	304	11.51±6.22	4.28±3.56	21.91±5.22
	10+	166	11.16±6.06	3.48±3.00*	22.65±4.27
Income	Good	32	8.88±6.39	3.09±2.25	23.47±3.85
	Moderate	239	10.76±5.74	3.75±3.12	22.30±4.86
	Low	196	12.62±6.33*	4.44±3.79*	21.80±5.09*

RESULTS

The mean burnout scores and standard deviations are shown in Table II. There was no statistically significant difference between the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scores of sub samples according to the gender ($p > 0, 05$).

In the group of male teachers; there was a statistically significant positive correlation ($p = 0.00$) between the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, a slightly negative correlation ($p = 0.05$) between the emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment and a statistically significant negative correlation ($p = 0.00$) between depersonalization and personal accomplishment. In the group of female teachers; there was a positive correlation ($p = 0.00$) between the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and a negative correlation ($p = 0.019$) between the emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment.

However, there was an insignificant negative correlation ($p = 0.08$) between the depersonalization and personal accomplishment in the group of female teachers. Drinking, smoking and marital status had no effect on burnout in this study sample ($p > 0.05$). Less experienced Turkish teachers reported higher scores on depersonalization ($p = 0.001$). The teachers who have lower income had higher scores on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization ($p < 0.05$). However, they had similar scores on personal accomplishment ($p > 0.05$) (Table III).

DISCUSSION

This is the first study examining the burnout among a relatively large group of Turkish teachers. The mean scores and standard deviations suggest that the burnout reported by this sample of Turkish teachers was lower than the burnout of teachers in the USA¹, Italy, France¹² Netherland, Canada¹³ Emirate, and Palestine¹⁴ and in the Greece¹⁵. Thus the hypothesis of Turkish teacher suffers from burnout more than the teacher in the developed countries was rejected. We explained the low burnout scores of Turkish teachers by the on going traditional life style and cultural characteristics. There is no statistically

significant difference between male and female teachers neither in emotional exhaustion nor in depersonalization and personal accomplishment. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of JE van Horn et al¹³ who showed significant difference in burnout scores upon on gender. For marital status, drinking alcohol and smoking; there was no statistically significant difference in burnout subscale scores ($p > 0.05$). For teaching experience; no difference existed in emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment scores. However, there was statistically significant difference in depersonalization. Opposite to Canadian and Dutch teacher¹⁴ we found that teachers who had teaching experience more than 10 years had lower depersonalization scores. Our hypothesis was that the teachers who had low money income they would report higher scores on burnout. This hypothesis was supported. The Turkish teacher who had low income had high burnout scores. There is statistically significant difference in emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and in depersonalization scores.

In conclusion, this study produced a baseline data on burnout of Turkish teachers. Further research on teachers' burnout is required in Turkey.

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