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A SURVEY ON THREE DIMENSIONS OF JOB BURNOUT AMONG EMPLOYEES AT DISTRICT 2- GAS TRANSMISSION OPERATIONS IRAN

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ABSTRACT

Job burnout implies a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion which is caused by emotional distress due to long term treatment with clients. The main symptoms of burnout include feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, frustration, negative attitude towards yourselves and others. Job burnout emerges affected by sustained or chronic stress or when demand at work environment goes beyond the person's personal abilities for adjustment or success. If the person cannot cope with stress, job burnout will emerge. Long-term exposure to severe stress can lead to job burnout. Burnout is a syndrome of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion, with low self-esteem, feelings of helplessness, and intense dissatisfaction in the person, i.e. the individuals involved with job burnout feel that they will have no improvement in their personal and professional life. It can introduce a variety of factors affecting job burnout within industrial and organizational environments, that the most important one is a method adopted by supervisors and directors as a leadership style and control over organization and individuals. In the present study, statistical population consists of 212 employees serving in district 2-Gas transmission operations, where the variable "lack of success" of three variables of job burnout was confirmed among employees.

Keywords: Emotional Fatigue, Alienation, Lack of Success

INTRODUCTION

Everyone experiences stress differently in his life. Naturally healthy people are those who can cope with the long-term, short-term and transient stress. If the person fails to adjust at various areas or to cope with them, he will be subjected to disease. In fact, *stress* refers to any mental instability that threatens the general equilibrium of human, disturbs his life balance, causes negative emotions, endangers a person's sense of well- being, causes a change in person's attitude towards realities, and disturbs thinking and problem-solving process, and further mental pressure can change the relationship between individuals and sense of belonging to others or change individuals" attitude towards life (Potter and Parry, 1985). Various studies represent this reality, that being subjected to mental pressure for a long-term leads to Development of symptoms, syndromes and specific diseases.

Difference between stress and job burnout

Job burnout might derive from severe stress, but it is not exactly the same as stress. Job burnout implies feeling of inadequacy and job burnout implies feeling of emptiness. People generally experience job burnout in a way they feel helplessness for any change in their conditions, and attention to job burnout is forgotten when abundant stress in many forms enters people's lives (Benson, 2010).

Table 1: Comparison of stress and job burnout

Stress	Job burnout
Increase of activity	Impairment in activity
Increase of emotional reactions	Slowness in emotional activities
Create urgency and hyperactivity	Feelings of hopelessness and/or helplessness
Decrease of energy	Reducing motivation , ideas and hope
Anxiety disorders	Depression and isolation
Physical damage	Emotional harm

Source (Benson, 2010)

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Research Importance

maintenance of workforce and coping with early retirement have been assumed as the phenomena which are of great importance in hard industry, and continuously the workforce under hard condition will be subjected to physical and mental damages.

Due to importance of prevention at three areas of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, it must make an effort to set stress management methods at work at various areas concerning human resource management principles and techniques, to omit unfavorable pressures and to induce favorable pressures towards challenges. Since coping with *job strain* and *stress management* methods at work recognized as one of the major axes of human resource management are of great importance in modern industry, district 2-Gas transmission operations puts an emphasis on this view so as to fulfill useful actions in harmony with stress management methods at work. Such studies which focus on describing and determining job burnout can provide necessary data for preventive actions, whereby stress management techniques at work can be grounded at micro- and macro-levels of human resource management, and labor productivity can be improved as much as possible.

The major hypothesis of this research: A survey on three dimensions of job burnout among employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations

Secondary Hypotheses of this Research include

- 1- Emotional fatigue affects job burnout among employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations
- 2- Alienation affects job burnout among employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations
- 3- Lack of success affects job burnout among employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations

Scope of Research Subject

District 2-gas transmission operations in the provinces Isfahan, Kohgiloye va boyer ahmad and Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari has been considered as research scope.

Definition of Key Terms

The person's stress tolerance and inability to cope with stress is the main infrastructure in physical illness and mental health; however nature of many jobs is intertwined with mental distress, operating staffs know how to cope with the pressures and stressors, and they know how to refrain from harmful effects of stimulants despite stressful stimulants that are encountered at their daily work. Yet, some individuals have no required ability or possibility to cope with stressful stimuli, exposing to stressful stimuli for a continuous; these individuals suffer from job burnout (fatigue or symptoms of fatigue) and express their problem at various cognitive, emotional and behavioral areas (Saatchi, 1994).

a-at the first stage, the person feels emotionally burned out and has nothing to give to others. Indeed, job burnout can be assumed as an agent for mental despair. When individuals' needs and expectations are not met affected by mental pressure, mental vacuum, frustrations and feelings of loss and atrophy will emerge. Under such a status, the person feels what has imposed on him is just a nonsense which cannot meet his needs. b-at the second stage, the person desires to neglect everything and has no feeling to his personal tasks at workplace. At this stage, employees ignore clients and neglect their problems and needs; notably, this stage at job burnout has been regarded with depersonalization which is followed by aggression and hostility during which the person condemns others for all the problems occurred, neglects his responsibilities and tasks. Further, intolerance to criticism and unpreparation to cope with others and reconciliation have been mentioned at this stage. c-at the third stage, the person deduces that he is totally unsuccessful at his work and he can do nothing at his work. Due to reducing the desire to achieve personal goals at work, the person's self-esteem decreases and his colleagues and clients will be affected by his feelings of anger, frustration, helplessness and hopelessness. The third stage of job burnout is followed by fall of sense of worth and lack of job projects.

Statistical Population, Sample Group and Sampling Method

Concerning scope of research subject, as effect of variables at district 2-Gas transmission operations is measured, district 2-gas transmission operations in the provinces Isfahan, Kohgiloye va boyer ahmad and Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari has been considered as research scope. Further, statistical population consists of 212 employees serving in district 2-Gas transmission operations.

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Literature Review

Master degree thesis entitled “effect of job burnout on employees’ performance at Telecommunication Company of Khuzestan” at the field of public administration has been conducted by Mr Karim Karimvand, in which employees’ job burnout has been measured by means of Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), and job performance has been also measured by means of Patterson's performance measurement Inventory. Ultimately, it was specified that job burnout affects employees’ performance, and extent of job burnout in each of internal dimensions has been lower than average level, and no significant relationship has been observed between demographic factors and extent of job burnout.

A study entitled “a survey on effects of mental pressure at work on performance of workforce around the country” has been conducted by Mr Davoud Heirdari Gorji (1994). The results of research indicate that 100% of statistical population has stated that they have coped with mental pressures properly. 71% of respondents have mentioned work environment as an environment replete with stress and mental pressure. This study indicates logical relationship between stressful environment and impact on performance.

A study entitled “the relationship between mental pressures derived from organizational and personal factors with managers’ performance in Jahad University” has been conducted in 1995 at faculty of economic and administrative affairs- Shahid Beheshti University by Mr Mahdi Gol bahar.

The sample size which has been selected among managers equals to 50 individuals, and the main hypothesis represents that there is a significant relationship between mental pressures derived from organizational and personal factors and managers’ performance. This test has been analyzed through correlation test, and the correlation results indicate that stressful organizational and personal factors have had effect on managers’ performance.

A study entitled “a survey on job burnout among employees at Shariati Hospital-Esfahan” has been conducted by Mehrdad (1998), in which extent of job burnout concerning personal variables (job, age, gender, marital status, and work experience, monthly income, education status, type of job) has been examined. Measurement has been fulfilled via Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), where the scores have shown that job burnout in the population under study is in critical level, and requires an immediate intervention for treatment and prevention from progress.

Shah Hosseini in a study examined the relationship between mental pressures and managers’ performance at secondary and high grades within Semnan province, where the results of research indicated that:

1-there is an inverse relationship between mental pressure from intra-organizational factors and managers’ performance.

2-male managers experience mental pressure more than female managers.

3-extnet of mental pressure derived from intra-organizational factors goes beyond among managers at secondary school grade than high school grade.

Hamid (1996) in a research examined effect of mental pressures on managers’ performance at textile industry within Isfahan province, where the results indicate that there is a significant relationship between mental pressures and the ability for understanding, organizational support, motivation, feedback, validity of decisions and environmental suitability.

Khalife (1999) in her study entitled “an overview on job burnout among managers” deduced that job burnout among managers concerning internal dimensions(emotional fatigue, negative attitude in response to others and lack of personal success) is lower than average level, yet the factors such as personality characteristics of managers which are required for the job, as well as the techniques which managers apply to cope with job pressure such as job division and delegation of authorities to subordinates, and finally effect of faith and religious beliefs against stressful factors can be the most effective way to cope with pressures, whereby job burnout can be reduced in this way.

Foreign studies

A study entitled “an impression about job burnout” has been conducted by Jackson *et al.*, (1986) concerning job burnout among teachers. This study has defined job burnout as a psychological syndrome including emotional fatigue, negative attitude in response to others and sense of lack of personal success. Findings of this research indicate that unexpected job expectations do not have any effect on job burnout,

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yet emotional fatigue has the severest relationship with role conflict. The highest extent of sense of personal success relates to the individuals who receive support at their workplace. Lacking support from the person at his workplace is the only factor which associates to negative attitude in response to others. Another study entitled “overview of job burnout among managers at Canada” has been conducted by James SARS (1988). Major findings of research include: emotional fatigue of managers is lower than average level, negative attitude in response to others is lower among managers, lack of personal success among managers is lower than average level, extent of negative attitude in response to others goes beyond among male managers than female managers, extent of negative attitude in response to others goes beyond among managers whose work experience has been above 16 years than the managers whose work experience has been less than 10 years.

Another study entitled “overview of job burnout among managers and supervisors” has been conducted by Ehrirtt (1991). The results of this study indicate that supervisors experience high levels of personal success and negative attitude in response to others. Yet, level of emotional fatigue has been reported in average level. The main reason for job burnout among supervisors lies on ambiguity of incoherent organizational role and policies. Further, role conflict and perceived job density as a coping mechanism mediates effect of role conflict on job burnout.

Data Analysis

The first hypothesis: emotional fatigue affects job burnout among employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations

Null hypothesis: $\mu \leq 3$
 :alternative hypothesis: $\mu > 3$

To test this hypothesis, alternative hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is greater than 3, and null hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is less than or equal to 3. According to table 1, t-value has not been significant, where alternative hypothesis is not confirmed concerning the significance level which is not less than 0.05. Hence, emotional fatigue has not affected job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*.

Table 1: One-sample t-test relating to the first hypothesis

First hypothesis	Mean	t	Freedom degree	p
job burnout	3/1	1/5	211	0/13

The second hypothesis: Alienation affects job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*.

null hypothesis: $\mu \leq 3$
 :alternative hypothesis: $\mu > 3$

To test this hypothesis, alternative hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is greater than 3, and null hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is less than or equal to 3. According to table 2, t-value has not been significant, where alternative hypothesis is not confirmed concerning the significance level which is not less than 0.05. Hence, aalienation has not affected job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*.

Table 2: One-sample t-test relating to the first hypothesis

first hypothesis	Mean	t	Freedom degree	p
Alienation	2/9	-.99	211	31./

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The third hypothesis: lack of success affects job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*

$\mu \leq 3$ null hypothesis
 $\mu > 3$ alternative hypothesis

To test this hypothesis, alternative hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is greater than 3, and null hypothesis is stated in this way that mean of score for responses at confidence level(95%) is less than or equal to 3. According to table 3, t-value has been significant, where alternative hypothesis is confirmed concerning the significance level which is less than 0.05. Hence, lack of success has affected job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*.

Table 3: One-sample t-test relating to the third hypothesis

First hypothesis	Mean	t	Freedom degree	p
lack of success	3/4	9/8	211	000./

Hypotheses Testing Based on the Results

The first hypothesis: Emotional fatigue affects job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*

Master degree thesis entitled “effect of job burnout on employees’ performance at Telecommunication Company of Khuzestan” at the field of public administration has been conducted by Mr Karim Karimvand, indicating job burnout affects employees’ performance and extent of job burnout in each of internal dimensions has been lower than average level, and no significant relationship has been observed between demographic factors and extent of job burnout, which this is totally relevant with the first research hypothesis.

A study entitled “a survey on effects of mental pressure at work on performance of workforce around the country” has been conducted by Gorji (1994). The results of research indicate that 100% of statistical population has stated that they have coped with mental pressures properly. 71% of respondents have mentioned work environment as an environment replete with stress and mental pressure. This study indicates a logical relationship between stressful environment and impact on performance.

A study entitled “an impression about job burnout” has been conducted by Jackson *et al.*, (1986) concerning job burnout among teachers. Findings of this research indicate that unexpected job expectations do not have any effect on job burnout; emotional fatigue has the severest relationship with role conflict. The highest extent of sense of personal success relates to the individuals who receive support at their workplace. Lacking support from the person at his workplace is the only factor which associates to negative attitude in response to others.

Another study entitled “overview of job burnout among managers and supervisors” has been conducted by Ehritt (1991). The results of this study indicate that supervisors experience high levels of personal success and negative attitude in response to others. Yet, level of emotional fatigue has been reported in average level. The main reason for job burnout among supervisors lies on ambiguity of incoherent organizational role and policies. Further, role conflict and perceived job density as a coping mechanism mediates effect of role conflict on job burnout.

The second hypothesis: Alienation affects job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*.

Master degree thesis entitled “effect of job burnout on employees’ performance at Telecommunication Company of Khuzestan” at the field of public administration has been conducted by Mr Karim Karimvand, indicating job burnout affects employees’ performance and extent of job burnout in each of internal dimensions has been lower than average level, and no significant relationship has been observed

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between demographic factors and extent of job burnout, which this is totally relevant with the second research hypothesis.

A study entitled “a survey on effects of mental pressure at work on performance of workforce around the country” has been conducted by Gorji (1994). The results of research indicate that 100% of statistical population has stated that they have coped with mental pressures properly. 71% of respondents have mentioned work environment as an environment replete with stress and mental pressure. This study indicates a logical relationship between stressful environment and impact on performance, which this is totally relevant with the second research hypothesis.

A study entitled “an impression about job burnout” has been conducted by Jackson *et al.*, (1986) concerning job burnout among teachers. Findings of this research indicate that unexpected job expectations do not have any effect on job burnout; emotional fatigue has the severest relationship with role conflict; the highest extent of sense of personal success relates to the individuals who receive support at their workplace. Lacking support from the person at his workplace is the only factor which associates to negative attitude in response to others, which this is totally relevant with the second research hypothesis.

Another study entitled “overview of job burnout among managers and supervisors” has been conducted by Ehrhrit (1991). The results of this study indicate that supervisors experience high levels of personal success and negative attitude in response to others. Yet, level of emotional fatigue has been reported in average level. The main reason for job burnout among supervisors lies on ambiguity of incoherent organizational role and policies. Further, role conflict and perceived job density as a coping mechanism mediates effect of role conflict on job burnout, which this is totally relevant with the second research hypothesis.

The third hypothesis: Lack of success affects job burnout among *employees at district 2- Gas transmission operations*

Master degree thesis entitled “effect of job burnout on employees’ performance at Telecommunication Company of Khuzestan” at the field of public administration has been conducted by Mr Karim Karimvand, indicating job burnout affects employees’ performance and extent of job burnout in each of internal dimensions has been lower than average level, and no significant relationship has been observed between demographic factors and extent of job burnout, which this is totally relevant with the third research hypothesis.

A study entitled “a survey on effects of mental pressure at work on performance of workforce around the country” has been conducted by Gorji (1994). The results of research indicate that 100% of statistical population has stated that they have coped with mental pressures properly. 71% of respondents have mentioned work environment as an environment replete with stress and mental pressure. This study indicates a logical relationship between stressful environment and impact on performance, which this is totally relevant with the third research hypothesis.

A study entitled “an impression about job burnout” has been conducted by Jackson *et al.*, (1986) concerning job burnout among teachers.

Findings of this research indicate that unexpected job expectations do not have any effect on job burnout; emotional fatigue has the severest relationship with role conflict; the highest extent of sense of personal success relates to the individuals who receive support at their workplace. Lacking support from the person at his workplace is the only factor which associates to negative attitude in response to others, which this is totally relevant with the third research hypothesis.

Another study entitled “overview of job burnout among managers and supervisors” has been conducted by Ehrhrit (1991).

The results of this study indicate that supervisors experience high levels of personal success and negative attitude in response to others. Yet, level of emotional fatigue has been reported in average level. The main reason for job burnout among supervisors lies on ambiguity of incoherent organizational role and policies. Further, role conflict and perceived job density as a coping mechanism mediates effect of role conflict on job burnout, which this is totally relevant with the third research hypothesis.

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Suggestions

- 1-Since human resources satellite project encompasses abundant job pressures, it is suggested to put a huge emphasis on personality property of mental pressure in selection of this group of human resources in order that a suitable structural resistance against coping with job pressure is demonstrated.
 - 2- Principles of industrial medicine must be considered, and an attempt must be made in order to apply suitable approaches for coping with workplace noise.
 - 3-with regard to increasing mass of job pressures, it is suggested to use detailed leisure plans and progressive coping strategies with job pressures such as training creative visualization, relaxation and so forth, in order to train the coping strategies with job pressures to the human resources.
 - 4-providing necessary facilities to train employees in the context of prevention from complications from job burnout as well as an attempt in the context of improving mental health level of workforce at district
- 2- Gas transmission operations.
- 5-attempts must be made to cope with intra-organizational stimuli such as rumor and so forth in order to prevent mental pressure among human resources.

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