University Teachers Burnout Levels Measured by Maslach Burnout Inventory

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Abstract: Burnout poses a hindrance to the health, productivity, and motivation of workers across various fields. Specifically, burnout has been linked to the education profession due to its high emotional, physical, and intellectual demands. Educators experience burnout after continuously working to accomplish tasks and requirements while under extreme pressure for extended periods. The purpose of this study was to utilize the Maslach Burnout Inventory to observe the prevalence and burnout levels in university teachers. For this study, the quantitative method was applied, and lecturers from universities within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq completed the questionnaire. There were 107 participants, mostly from the private sector, consisting of 54% males and 46% females. SPSS was used to show the statistical differences in burnout regarding aspects of experience, sector, position, age, university, and gender. The results displayed moderate levels of occupational exhaustion (mean score = 20.37) and depersonalization (mean score = 9.92). The evaluation presented that decreased levels of personal accomplishment were found in lecturers with a mean of 30.70. Acknowledging and managing burnout instigators is necessary for preserving the well-being of educators and educational quality. Thus, institutions applying specific approaches or providing services can ensure that burnout is prevented or contained.

Keywords: Burnout, Educators, University, Maslach Burnout Inventory, Prevalence

1. Introduction

Burnout, known as a psychological syndrome, comes from a continuous reaction to long-term stress from a job (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). In the academic world, burnout has become a common problem that affects many employees. Academic staff are required to balance and manage many different responsibilities ranging from teaching to advising as well as being part of committees and researching. The overall workload of these duties can cause an increase in pressure to increase efforts and productivity in a manner that is not healthy or manageable. Specifically, university educators are key individuals who encounter burnout as they experience the difficulty of teaching, researching, being part of committees, etc. (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Maslach and Jackson (1981) invented a tool, known as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Tshabalala & Ncube, 2012), which is the most commonly utilized tool to evaluate the level of burnout among teachers.

The MBI divides burnout into three components (Janssen et al., 1999). The first one refers to emotional exhaustion, which represents feeling drained and lacking physical and emotional resources. Another component is depersonalization, which includes detachment towards others and results in an undesirable attitude. Lastly, decreased personal achievement refers to a reduction in a person's feeling of ability and success in work (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1997). The three components are critical for comprehending the ways burnout is demonstrated in the academic world, where teachers usually encounter stress and anxiety due to their complex positions (Schaufeli et al., 2009). The rising rates of burnout in the educational setting have severe consequences for the health of the staff as well as the educational quality and efficiency (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). Moreover, burnout has resulted in increased rates of turnover, a decline in job contentment, and reduced efficiency (Zhang et al., 2022). All of this can lead to a negative effect on students and the overall academic setting. Additionally, lecturers continue to struggle with their emotional, physical, and mental status while juggling a variety of tasks.

This study's purpose is to examine the frequency and extent of burnout in university educators by utilizing the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Statistical information was evaluated to discover the burnout range regarding gender, position, age, sector, experience, and university. This information contributes to comprehending burnout's effects on lecturers within universities located in Kurdistan, Iraq. Discovering the reasons can support lecturers in overcoming or avoiding burnout syndrome and increase their productivity and enthusiasm within the educating profession.

Research Questions:

1. What is the prevalence of burnout of university lecturers throughout Kurdistan?
2. Was there a difference in burnout between genders?
3. Which university presented the highest burnout?
4. What aspect of the lecturers' profession causes the highest burnout?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Burnout

Burnout can be defined as a psychological condition that arises as a result of continuous stress from work (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). The three main elements of burnout include being emotionally exhausted, feeling disconnected from the job, and sensing a lack of success. The concept of burnout has changed throughout the years, consisting of different speculative models influencing our comprehension of the origins and its effects (Manzano-Garcia & Ayala-Calvo, 2013). Demerouti et al. (2001) presented the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that burnout happens when pressure and workload devastate an employee's job resources. The inequality among the resources and demands results in exhaustion and eventually burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Furthermore, the Conservation of Resources (COR) introduced by Hobfoll (1989) presents an additional viewpoint. This theory suggests that burnout occurs when people feel a threat to the resources they have, or when they lose their resources without suitable replacement (Holmgreen et al., 2017). In this sense, resources can involve characteristics or external features such as self-efficacy, financial security, and social support. Once the resources are reduced or threatened, people tend to undergo burnout (Hobfoll,

1989). Burnout has been researched in different fields, and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Tshabalala & Ncube, 2012) is the most utilized instrument for evaluating this condition (Schaufeli et al., 2001).

2.2 Burnout Effects on Lecturers

Burnout occurring among university lecturers influences the physical, mental, and professional aspects of their lives. Hock (1988) stated that educators experience with burnout at diverse ranges and specific educating atmosphere features contribute to burnout increasing or decreasing. Burnout affects an individual physically and can cause various bodily issues or illnesses. Due to the extreme ranges of stress and emotional pressure it produces, burnout has been connected to numerous illnesses, which include musculoskeletal disorders, extreme fatigue, headaches, and cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease was the most commonly explored physical issue that was burnout induced (Salvagioni et al., 2017). Heart disease and hypertension are likely conditions that happen because of high and prolonged stress that is initiated by burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Moreover, the functionality of burned-out individuals possibly weakens immunity, which leads to greater vulnerability to sicknesses and infections (Mommersteeg et al., 2006). Aches and pains within the body of an individual facing burnout are frequent findings that especially occur within the neck, back, and head (Salvagioni et al., 2017).

Moreover, burnout is a mental reaction that happens because of work-related stresses and pressure for an extensive time (Khammissa et al., 2022). It causes disruptions to mental capability and energy exhaustion. These disruptions can cause a person to feel irritated, sleepless, helpless, dissatisfied, depressed, anxious, and have confidence issues (Bianchi, Schonfeld, & Laurent, 2017). Burnout hinders focus, memory, and awareness, which prompts cognitive ability complications (Grossi et al., 2015). This causes a person to lack the mental energy and comprehension to complete the necessary tasks. According to Feller et al. (2020), mental energy overuse prompts the occurrence of burnout because the amount needed to manage stress and establish self-control surpasses the range available. Mental energy reduction impedes self-control functionality and negates the ability to work through stress and maladaptive behaviors (Lykken, 2005). Furthermore, professional aspects of people's lives are seriously impacted by burnout. The educating profession has been found to be very high-pressure due to the balancing of emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of various pupils. Hence, burnout causes educators to be unsatisfied with their occupation because of feeling little success or ineptitude (Hakanen, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2006). It deters instructional quality and productivity because the drive, performance, and cognitive efforts of educators lessen (Taris, Schreurs, Van Silfhout, 2001). The abundant stress and limited support increase displeasure with their profession and prompt teachers to reconsider their careers or leave entirely (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Thus, educators encounter an abundant number of obstacles and tasks that have negative effects and drain motivation. This hurts the overall productivity and interest in continuing in the educating profession, which prompts resentment towards the job.

2.3 Burnout Prevalence and Impact

Burnout has appeared to be a prevalent problem among lecturers in higher education. Research presented that lecturers encounter abundant stress and emotional drain. Winefield et al. (2003) gathered data in Australia from academic personnel. The data exhibited that 40% of the personnel were going through psychological distress to a substantial degree due to work pressure. Research by de Araújo Leite et al.

(2019) found that sixty percent of their contributors were at the starting level of burnout. Variables connected to their burnout were having a serious illness and lecturing for many courses. Henny et al. (2014) revealed that female educators and less experienced educators had greater burnout prevalence. Their predictive analysis showed a 4 times greater chance of women educators going through burnout than men. Moreover, according to El Helou, Nabhani, and Bahous (2016), burnout mainly happens because of occupational environment, task capacity, limited support, and expectations not matching with reality. Educators not having support or gratitude from pupils, the community, and the workplace can prompt burnout (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; McLain, 2005). Also, burnout happens due to limited access to in-service training or professional development (Cephe, 2010; McLain, 2005). Workload and the pressure to manage various tasks within and beyond the classroom contribute to burnout. Goddard, O'Brien, and Goddard (2006) showed that effort and reward need to be equal or fair to properly maintain positive participation. Hence, when the effort educators apply to their work does not receive a reward on a similar level, it leads to burnout and a decrease in motivation to continue high productivity. Moreover, educators struggling to maintain pupils' concentration, not being respected, or having their authority disregarded leads to burnout and feeling disappointment (Gavish & Friedman, 2010). Correspondently, educators come into the educational occupation expecting to successfully aid pupils with academics, emotions, and morals. However, disappointment arises from the realization that their expectations are not reached, and this prompts educators to put in excessive effort that leads to burnout (Yong & Yue, 2007).

2.4 Studies Applying the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Tshabalala & Ncube, 2012) to Assess Burnout in the Educational Field

To assess burnout in the educational field, the MBI is a frequent tool used that presents a clear understanding of the difficulties encountered by university staff (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Studies regularly demonstrate a significant degree of depersonalization, exhaustion, and decreased achievement among teachers, caused by issues like high expectations, workload, and disagreements (Agyapong et al., 2022). For example, Watts and Robertson (2011) discovered that teachers in universities felt emotionally exhausted, specifically the early-career staff who usually feel overwhelmed by the requirements of forming their role in the academic field. Additionally, a study by Kantas and Vassilaki (1997) used the MBI to evaluate burnout among Greek teachers and showed that younger teachers felt more emotionally exhausted than older teachers.

Another study using MBI was done by Grayson and Alvarez (2008), which involved the association between burnout and school climate. They concluded that a negative school climate was a leading cause of teacher burnout. Gholami (2015) examined the relationship between a teacher's self-efficacy and the degree of burnout they experience. They found an inverse relationship between the participants' self-efficacy and their burnout. In other words, a teacher who was confident in their abilities was less likely to undergo severe levels of burnout.

Furthermore, Barkhuizen et al. (2014) conducted a study about burnout at a South African university and found that the staff that were teaching and researching showed a greater degree of burnout, specifically feeling emotionally exhausted and depersonalized. The research focused on the effect of double-rolled requirements on the staff's welfare. Moreover, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) performed a study in Norway and revealed that burnout is worsened by not being socially supported in the educational setting, and they

recommend that creating a supportive environment can aid in reducing burnout. These studies highlight the efficacy of the MBI in describing the complex characteristics of burnout in the academic setting and emphasize the importance of establishing a support system for educators and decreasing the negative effects of burnout.

3. Methods

3.1 Research design

This paper implemented a quantitative methodology that required the participants to answer a survey like Inventory. Choosing a quantitative method assists with maintaining the objectives of this paper. A quantitative method provides a wide range of data to be collected, facilitates a way to measure attitudes and opinions, and can be generalized (Mohajan, 2020). Furthermore, to measure the burnout levels we need quantitative data more than qualitative. This paper focuses only on whether the participants experience burnout or not, it does not focus on why they are experiencing or not experiencing burnout. The setting of this paper is universities in Kurdistan- Iraq. The data was collected in two forms, by Google Forms and paper based. The researchers were permitted by the Rectorate of Tishk International University to conduct this study. Furthermore, all the universities staff members who filled the survey did so voluntarily and anonymously.

3.2 Participants

The target population of this paper was the university teachers who are currently teaching in both public and private universities. Snowball sampling was the method that was used to get the survey to the participants. Some limitations were present regarding snowball sampling data collection specifically regarding bias, diversity, and non-random selections. However, this was not a major issue for data collection because the sampling was taken from specifically selected universities. The Kurdistan region was only survey and studied because of the convenience and ability to access participants. Mainly teachers from Tishk International University, Salahaddin University, and Sulaymaniyah University answered the survey. A total of 107 university teachers filled in the survey. According to Dornyei (2007), more than 100 participants is an adequate number for a quantitative analysis in alignment with Dorney's perspective, the sample size of over 100 participants in this paper provides a sufficient basis for generalizing the findings.

3.3 Tools and Data Analysis

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (Tshabalala & Ncube, 2012) is an inventory that measures the burnout levels in various proficient (Oluwadiya, Adeoti, Ogidan, Bamisi & Akintoye, 2023). MBI measures burnout with 22 items put in three categories: occupational exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments. The items in the inventory are categorized as follows: occupational exhaustion items (01. 02. 03. 06. 08. 13. 14. 16. 20), depersonalization items (05. 10. 11. 15. 22), and personal accomplishments (04. 07. 09. 12. 17. 18. 19. 21). IBM SPSS (V- 26) program was used to analyze the obtained data. After the normality test by SPSS, it was shown that the data was not normally distributed. Due to the nonnormality of the data, the Kruskal Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests were administered.

4. Result

The results were obtained after analyzing the data by the SPSS program. The participants were mostly male 54% (N= 58) and 46% (N= 49) were female, aged 40 and over 46% (N= 49). Over a quarter of the participants have more than 20 years of experience with 29% (N=31). The participants are mostly from the private sector by 64% (N= 68), and from Tishk International University by 59% (N= 63). Finally, the participants were mostly teaching staff, 78% (N= 83). For more detailed information see table 1.

Table 1: Background information frequencies

			Frequency	*Percent*	*Valid Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Gender	Valid	Male	58	54.2	54.2	54.2
		Female	49	45.8	45.8	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	
Position	Valid	Teaching Staff	83	77.6	77.6	77.6
		Administrative Staff	14	13.1	13.1	90.7
		Both	10	9.3	9.3	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	
Age	Valid	22-27	13	12.1	12.1	12.1
		28-33	19	17.8	17.8	29.9
		34-39	26	24.3	24.3	54.2
		40-over	49	45.8	45.8	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	
Experience	Valid	1-5 years	29	27.1	27.1	27.1
		6-10 years	15	14.0	14.0	41.1
		11-15 years	27	25.2	25.2	66.4
		16- 20 years	5	4.7	4.7	71.0
		over 20 years	31	29.0	29.0	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	
Sector	Valid	public	36	33.6	33.6	33.6
		private	68	63.6	63.6	97.2
		both	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	
University	Valid	Tishk International University	63	58.9	58.9	58.9

		Salahaddin University-Erbil	15	14.0	14.0	72.9
		University of Sulaimani	11	10.3	10.3	83.2
		Other	18	16.8	16.8	100.0
		Total	107	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Burnout level Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
OE	106	20.37	9.604
DP	107	9.92	6.326
PA	107	30.70	9.814

To evaluate participants' burnout levels descriptive statistics were used. According to the MBI, there are three categories and each one of them contains a different number of questions that the participants answer. If MBI is used for an individual, they only need to calculate the marks for each category, and it will show them their level of burnout. However, in this study the number of participants is larger than an individual; therefore, the researchers had to investigate into the mean scores of each category to determine the level of burnout that the participants had. Since this paper has 107 participants the mean scores of each category were calculated and the numbers show to which degree participants burned out on the scale. The mean score of occupational exhaustion is 20.37, which is in moderate degree. Occupational exhaustion is one of the most important parts of the MBI which is the part that mostly relates to the burnout part of the inventory. It deals with the feeling of the participants being emotionally exhausted by the demands of their workload. In this paper, the OE levels are moderate which means that the participants are experiencing a noticeable exhaustion rate but not alarmingly high. This level of OE will affect negatively the participants' work performance, job satisfaction, physical and mental health, and interpersonal relationships.

The score of the depersonalization levels of the participants is 9.92 which means a moderate degree of depersonalization. DP is a dimension of the MBI that deals with the way the participants deal with their surroundings or their impersonal response to their surroundings, in the case of this paper their colleagues and students. With a moderate degree of DP, the participants are starting to experience a detachment from their work, colleagues, or their surroundings. This level of DP will negatively affect the participants' teaching and student-teacher relations, job satisfaction, and work environment.

The feeling of how accomplished a person is or how much their meaningful contribution to their work is called personal accomplishments (PA) in MBI. The analysis shows that the participants with a 30.70 mean score show a low degree of PA. They are more likely to feel less competent in their workplace or they might have doubts about their effectiveness in their workplace. This low level of PA is negatively affecting job satisfaction, motivation, engagement, and resilience.

Table 3: Comparative analysis for variables except for gender

Test Statistics				
		DP	OE	PA
Position	Kruskal-Wallis H	1.630	.322	1.975
	df	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.443	.851	.372
University	Kruskal-Wallis H	1.412	1.761	9.957
	df	3	3	3
	Asymp. Sig.	.703	.623	.019
Sector	Kruskal-Wallis H	1.669	1.324	4.514
	df	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.434	.516	.105
Experience	Kruskal-Wallis H	1.141	2.478	7.017
	df	4	4	4
	Asymp. Sig.	.888	.649	.135
Age	Kruskal-Wallis H	.591	2.673	6.963
	df	3	3	3
	Asymp. Sig.	.898	.445	.073

Table 4: Pairwise analysis for universities

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.[a]
Tishk International University-Salahaddin University- Erbil	-2.346	8.906	-.263	.792	1.000
Tishk International University-University of Sulaimani	-13.413	10.129	-1.324	.185	1.000
Tishk International University-other	-24.996	8.285	-3.017	.003	.015
Salahaddin University-Erbil-University of Sulaimani	-11.067	12.305	-.899	.368	1.000
Salahaddin University-Erbil-other	-22.650	10.837	-2.090	.037	.220
University of Sulaimani-other	-11.583	11.863	-.976	.329	1.000

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .05.
Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Table 5: Mean ranks

Ranks			
	University	N	Mean Rank
DP	Tishk International University	63	52.78
	Salahaddin University- Erbil	15	48.73
	University of Sulaimani	11	58.86
	Other	18	59.69
	Total	107	
EE	Tishk International University	62	50.61
	Salahaddin University- Erbil	15	54.07
	University of Sulaimani	11	56.59
	Other	18	61.08
	Total	106	
PA	Tishk International University	63	48.09
	Salahaddin University- Erbil	15	50.43
	University of Sulaimani	11	61.50
	Other	18	73.08
	Total	107	

The comparative analysis of the various variables such as Age, Experience, Sector, Position, and University are shown in Table 3 and the following tables 4., and 5. The results indicate that there are no significant differences between the variables and the level of burnout that the participants are feeling except for the university variable. All the other variables' P-value or Sig. is more than .05, which indicates an insignificant difference. Only the university variable has a significant level of difference by a p-value of .019. To understand this significant difference a pairwise analysis should be administered. Table 4 shows the pairwise analysis for all the universities that the participants are working at. The significant difference is between the two groups: Tishk International University group with a p-value of .003, and Salahaddin University - the other group with a p-value of .037. The mean scores indicate which university of each group is leaning toward that significant difference, table 5 shows the mean scores. The first group is Tishk International University-other, the mean score of TIU in all three categories of MBI are lower than the mean scores of participants in other universities. This means that TIU participants are less likely to feel burnout, depersonalized, and personal accomplishment. The second group is Salahaddin University -other, the mean score of Salahaddin University is lower than the mean scores of the participants from other universities. This means that Salahaddin University participants are less likely to feel burnout, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

Table 6: Comparative Analysis of Gender

Test Statistics			
	DP	OE	PA
Mann-Whitney U	1355.500	1346.500	1394.500
Wilcoxon W	2580.500	2571.500	2619.500
Z	-.410	-.317	-.166
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.682	.751	.868
a. Grouping Variable: Gender			

To evaluate the difference between the genders of the participants regarding their burnout levels, a Mann-Whitney test was administered. The result from the test shows that there are no significant differences between both genders. The P-value of all three categories is more than .05, DP .68, OE .75, and PA .86, which means there are no significant differences regarding gender as a variable.

5. Discussion

The study aimed to evaluate burnout levels among university teachers using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Tshabalala & Ncube, 2012) and to examine how demographic and institutional factors such as gender, experience, and type of university influence burnout dimensions (OC, DP, PA). The results demonstrate expected and novel insights in comparison to previous studies. Findings indicate moderate levels of occupational exhaustion (OC) and depersonalization (DP) along with low levels of personal accomplishment (PA).

Occupational Exhaustion – In this study, the mean score for occupational exhaustion (20.370) was moderate reflecting noticeable emotional exhaustion but not to the point of concern. The findings of this study are partly consistent with previous studies that show the prevalence of burnout in educational settings. In this regard, Schaufeli, Enzmann, and Girault's (2017) study highlighted that instructors often experience emotional exhaustion as a result of demanding workloads, a lack of control over educational policies, and insufficient support from management. Similar to the moderate OE levels found in this study Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) noted that high job expectations and emotional strain are frequently the primary factors causing burnout in academics. Leung et al (2011) study also reported high levels of emotional exhaustion among educators in more demanding institutional settings.

However, in contrast to these studies, the OE level in this research is not exceedingly high, revealing that while participants experience exhaustion it may not be severe enough to result in significant burnout. The divergence in findings can be linked to differences in institutional culture, workload distribution, or teaching expectations.

Depersonalization – the DP score (9.92) in this study reflects a moderate degree of emotional distancing and detachment from colleagues and students. This study's findings align with Freudenberger (1974) Burn Out Theory, which connects depersonalization to coping mechanisms individuals employ to distance themselves from overwhelming job demands. The moderate depersonalization levels found in this study

align with the Burn Out Contagion Model proposed by Meredith et al. (2020), the research emphasizes how burnout symptoms, including depersonalization, can spread through social networks. The moderate level of DP in participants of this study indicates that they are starting to emotionally detach themselves from their teaching responsibilities, possibly as a result of interaction with colleagues who are experiencing burnout symptoms. If this emotional detachment is not addressed, it may lead to further disengagement and diminished teaching performance. This study's results are also consistent with the research of Sadeghi and Khezrlou (2016). In an Iranian study instructors also showed moderate to high levels of DP, suggesting that emotional detachment is a common symptom across different teaching environments. The teachers in both studies showed signs of becoming impersonal in their responses to students, which will negatively affect student-teacher relationships and overall classroom dynamics. However, the determinants of burnout are different in both studies. The study conducted in Iran focused more on the individual determinants of burnout, such as teachers' self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and personal stress management skills. Teachers who had lower self-efficacy or difficulty with stress management were more likely to be highly depersonalized. In addition, in the same study English language teachers face unique challenges like pressures related to language proficiency (Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2016). In contrast in our study, the stressors were more related to workloads, students' behavior, and instructional support. The study of Van Droogenbroeck, Spruyt, and Vanroelen (2014) contributes to the reported results of this study. The findings of both studies underscore the critical role of workload in causing burnout and depersonalization. Overall, in the current study, the depersonalization levels indicate that participants are beginning to experience emotional detachment, but not at a critical level. It remains within a manageable range allowing participants to maintain a reasonable connection with their work environment. Nevertheless, even a moderate level of DP needs to be handled, as prolonged exposure could lead to more severe burnout.

Personal Accomplishment - the low mean score for personal accomplishment (30.70) indicates that participants feel less competent and effective in their work. The current study's findings align with Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010), which displayed that high demands (workplace, parents' expectations), limited feedback, and unrecognized efforts often lead to low levels of personal accomplishment. The study findings are also in line with research results from Safiye et al. (2023) by revealing that lower PA is a significant component of teacher burnout, as teachers struggle with feelings of inefficacy and detachment from their professional detachment. Their study found that teachers with lower mentalizing (the ability to understand one's own and others' mental states) abilities had higher burnout, particularly in personal accomplishment. Teachers who experienced feelings of reduced competence and professional achievement were particularly notable in the comparative analysis of this where teachers from certain universities (Tishk International University and Slahaddin University) reported significantly lower PA compared to their peers at other universities. The findings show that despite being in academic roles the participants struggle with anxiety about their effectiveness in the workplace which could lead to lower motivation and job satisfaction. On the other hand, studies like Taris, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, and Schreurs (2005) show that workplaces with stronger mentoring programs and with more opportunities for professional growth reported higher PA. This divergence may suggest that universities in this current study do not offer sufficient initiative for professional development programs or recognition, leading to lower self-assessment of personal accomplishment (PA). Therefore, enhancing PA can improve mental well-being and reduce burnout among educators in high-stress teaching environments. Anton and Van Ryzin

(2024) suggest incorporating strategies like technology-supported learning. A novel technology-supported cooperative learning intervention directly enhanced PA and addressed burnout in a proactive manner. This could be a valuable approach to improve PA among university teachers who deal with different sets of challenges including bureaucratic demands and the dual responsibilities of research and teaching.

The incorporative analysis of variables such as age, experience, sector, and position showed no significant difference in burnout level except for the university variable. The results contrast with the findings of the study of Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2006), which showed that burnout levels can vary significantly based on years of experience, more experienced teachers often display lower levels of burnout due to better coping mechanisms. The significant difference in burnout levels between universities especially the lower levels of burnout reported at Tishk International University, indicates that institutional and social support, workload, and policies may be beneficial factors. This corresponds with Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) research which points out that organizational resources and support systems are essential in reducing burnout irrespective of individual demographics. Moreover, Cormier, Wong, McGrew, Ruble, and Worrell (2021) and Cao, Hassan, and Omar (2024) studies found that with clear job expectations, and managerial support, educators with higher perceived social support experienced a lower level of burnout, especially in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, what improve lecturer institutional commitment. Social support within the occupational setting in an educational environment may be found in peers, departments, and colleagues, as well as corporate events which are designed in purpose to strengthen emotional and professional wellbeing among university educators. Corporate events like team building, wellness program activities, social events such as celebrating holidays, or special occasion with faculty members and their families, organize retreats and gateways can provide faculty members with opportunities to relax, recharge and connect with colleagues which all can reduce the level of burn out.

The analysis of the current study reveals no significant difference between male and female participants in terms of burnout levels. The Purvanova and Muros (2010) meta-analysis shows that while males and females may experience burnout differently (with women often reporting higher emotional exhaustion and men's higher depersonalization) the overall burnout level tends to be comparable. However, recent studies reveal that women in academia experience a higher level of stress compared to men, due to work overload combined with family responsibilities, which creates a dual burden on female academics. Despite the higher stress levels, women are often better equipped to manage stress and tend to possess better coping abilities. The current research diverges from the findings and raises the possibility that gender may not be a significant factor in burnout within the specific context of university educators.

6. Limitations

The paper presented some significant insight into the matter of teacher burnout and its results are valuable. Despite those valuable findings, some limitations should be clearly mentioned. The main limitation that this paper faced was the sample size, which limits the generalizability. Moreover, the targeted participants' rate set by Dorney for quantitative research in the applied linguistic field was reached; however, a larger number of participants will enhance the generalizability of the findings. Access to the participants was a limitation due to the geographical distance and connection between the participants and the researchers. Hence, the quantitative method was solely applied due to geographical distance. A mixed method would

have given a broader insight. Qualitative data would have given more insight into the participants' opinions about the causes of burnout. Finally, this paper was conducted only in the Kurdistan region of Iraq and the other parts of the country were not included, which limits the geographical scope. As a result, the findings of the study may not fully represent the whole of Iraq where cultures and work environments are different. Hence, the findings of this study cannot be generalized for all countries.

7. Conclusion

Burnout has had a constant presence in universities around the world due to the high demand of educational quality expected by institutions. Burnout is a condition that influences educational staff physical, emotional, and mental status by initiating feelings of dread, exhaustion, and professional disinterest. It occurs overtime due to the accumulation of pressure and stress encountered within the occupational environment. Lecturers are responsible not only for academic tasks and professional development, but they are essential for the guidance and support of students. These abundant responsibilities paired with their work environment cause increase the frequency and depth of burnout. Research has indicated that the MBI is an effective tool to apply and assess burnout in the educational environment. It provides content regarding the challenges and struggles educators face daily during employment. Moreover, published works have shown that burnout does affect educators' motivation and satisfaction, which does influence their work quality. Hence, this necessitates the need for proper attention and management to be available to protect the well-being of educators and ensure productivity is efficient.

This paper implemented a quantitative method to gather the necessary data for obtaining the goals. This paper's goal was to find out if the university lecturers are burned out or not, to see if there is any difference in gender, position, age, experience, sector, and university. Therefore, the MBI survey was chosen as a tool for this paper. The participants for this paper were university lecturers that were working as academic staff or as academic and administrative staff at the same time. The results showed that the lecturer has a moderate level of burnout according to the MBI scale. Moreover, no sizable differences between the variables of gender, position, age, gender, experience, and sector were discovered.

8. Recommendations

Considering the findings of this paper, some recommendations are necessary to mention. The recommendations will focus on ways the stakeholders and the lecturers can follow to reduce the level of burnout. The recommendations will be divided into three categories (stakeholders, participants, and further research). The stakeholders are the main people who can take quick and effective steps to solve the issue of burnout. Support systems should be planned and implemented to ensure that educators have the proper resources to rely on to prevent burnout. These programs can be in the form of hiring a psychologist who can provide therapy sessions to help the lecturers. Moreover, stakeholders can provide extra staff for the departments to reduce the workload, hence reducing the burnout of the lecturers.

Furthermore, the lecturers are part of the solution to the issue of burnout. They can take courses or attend seminars and workshops about resources/ time management. They also can reduce their expectations about the workplace and workload. Another way would be by dividing their responsibility, this would help with

reducing workload and getting less stress. The lecturers would benefit from their time off and managing their work hours and vacations or they can get therapy if they think they need more professional help.

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