

Investigating Relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit Job Among Working Professionals

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the paper is to investigate the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The paper is based on primary data to understand relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit. Correlation analysis was used to measure the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit.

Findings: Job Burnout had significant relationship with Intention to Quit. Also dimensions of Job Burnout were also reported to be related with Intention to Quit.

Implications: The present study enriches the understanding of Job Burnout and Intention to Quit. It contributes to understanding the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit. Several implications are also suggested in the study.

Scope for Future Work/Limitations: Empirical studies could be carried out in diverse geographic and cultural milieus to make the picture more clear.

Key words: *Job Burnout, Intention to Quit, Professional, Disengagement, Exhaustion.*

Introduction –

Professionals today encounter a variety of psychological difficulties due to shifting workplace dynamics, and burnout is not uncommon. A definition by Pines & Aronson (1988) defined burnout as “a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in situations that are emotionally demanding” (p. 9). The early phase of burnout studies, the concept was explored mainly in human service professionals (Burke & Greenglass, 1995; Firth & Britton, 1989; Maslach, 1982; Freudenberger, 1974) which was subsequently stretched to other sectors also (Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003). Professionals are facing a growing threat from burnout and its detrimental outcomes. One of the major outcomes of job burnout is intention to quit. Intention to quit is understood as an individual’s voluntary parting from an organization (Price & Mueller, 1981). Intention to quit is the outcome of amalgamation of several factors such as organizational events, working conditions and psychological factors.

Literature Review –The concept of burnout emerged in 1970 and early 80’s and invited attention of practitioners as well as academicians since the beginning. The term ‘burnout’ was first used by Freudenberger (1974) to describe a condition of mental fatigue in terms of loss of energy, motivation and commitment.

Since beginning, burnout has been the topic of interest among researchers. It is reflected in various publications on burnout along with defining burnout in numerous ways. Brill (1984) defined “burnout as an exceptionally mediated, job-related, dysphoric and dysfunctional state in an individual without major psychopathology, who has (a) functioned for a time at adequate performance and affective levels in the same job situation and who (b) will not recover to previous levels without outside help or environmental rearrangement” (p.15).

Burnout in the context of work, known as job burnout, is a multidimensional construct consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment (Schaufeli et al., 1996). Later, Maslach et al. (1996) updated definition stating that burnout is “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity” (p.192).

Although substantial body of literature has emerged in Western context on burnout but studies undertaken in Indian context are scanty. Sharma (2002) made an attempt to learn more about the impact of role related factors on job burnout in terms

of its three dimensions viz., Depersonalization, lack of personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion on Indian executive using MBI and reported that lack of personal accomplishment dimension was not valid for the Indian sample as there were high achievers who were found to suffer from burnout. Later based on empirical research on executives from Indian industry Sharma (2007) defined the phenomena as “executive burnout as marked by persistent feelings of inadequacy, ambiguity, dissatisfaction and powerlessness accompanied by behavioural manifestations of apathy and indifference (depersonalization) and physical and emotional exhaustion” (p.36).

Job burnout is detrimental and expensive for not only the employee but also their loved ones, colleagues, the organization and society at large. (Garland, 2002, Maslach, 1982a; Schaufeli & Peeters ,2000).

The concept of intention to quit garnered significant focus in management literature during the 1980s and 1990s (Brown, 1996; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Steele & Ovalle, 1984). The intention to quit reflects either an attitudinal inclination or a cognitive expression of the decision to leave a job (Elangovan, 2001). The Intention to quit is commonly regarded as a dependent variable utilized to predict the likelihood of an employee departing from the organization in the near future (Brown, 1996).

The intention to quit is characterized by the strength of an individual's belief regarding whether they will remain with or depart from the current organization where they are employed (Boshoff et al, 2002; Elangovan, 2001). Frequently assessed within a specific timeframe (e.g., within the next six months), the intention to quit is portrayed as the final step in a series of cognitive withdrawals that an individual may undergo before exiting an organization.

It has been widely acknowledged that the intention to quit is probably influenced by various factors (Steers & Mowday, 1981). In the early stages of exploring this topic, Mobley (1977) and Steers and Mowday (1981) formulated models to elucidate the process by which an employee decides to depart from their current organization.

Although Intention to quit is considered as a main outcome of Job Burnout, there is little research on intention to quit as an outcome of job burnout.

Maslach (1982) delineated the consequences of burnout, positing that it serves as a robust predictor of employees' attitudinal outcomes. Chronic burnout has been demonstrated to instigate an employee's intention to withdraw. Initially, this withdrawal may manifest as extended breaks, absenteeism, and physical isolation, as individuals experiencing higher levels of burnout are less inclined to engage with their colleagues. If burnout persists over an extended period, individuals are more likely to opt for permanent evasion by departing from their position, organization or even their career.

Objectives –

1. To study the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit in working professionals.
2. To study the relationship between dimensions of Job Burnout and Intention to Quit in working professionals.

Research Methodology –

The present study is descriptive in nature with survey based method. Research design of present study comprised of two variables –Job Burnout and Intention to Quit, with the aim to study the relationship between them. The data used for present study are both primary data and secondary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and secondary data included research papers, articles, publications, magazines, etc. which were accessed through online websites and databases.

Job Burnout was measured through ‘Oldenburg Burnout Inventory’ (OLBI) 16 item scale (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008) comprised of two dimensions Disengagement and Exhaustion. The scale had items such as – “I never find new and interesting aspect of my work”. Intention to Quit was measured through 6 item Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6) by Bothma & Roodt, 2013; Roodt,2004 . This scale incorporates items such as; “I have often considered leaving my job”. All the scales have confirmed reliability and validity.

The responses of the participants were collected on the basis of the 5-point Likert scale. The sample size of the present study was 50. For analysis, Correlational analysis was used to study the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit.

Hypothesis – On the basis of objectives, hypotheses framed are –

H₀1 : *Job burnout is not related to Intention to quit*

H₀2 : *Disengagement is not related to Intention to quit*

H₀3 : *Exhaustion is not related to Intention to quit*

Findings of the Study -Demographic Profile – As mentioned in research methodology part, questionnaire was administered on 50 professionals. Among 50 respondents, 54% were males and 46% were females. With respect to age, 40% respondents belonged to 31-40 age group, 36% came under 21-30 age group, and remaining 20% and 4 % were covered by 41-50 and 51-60 age group professionals respectively. The demographic profile of the respondents are detailed in Table 1 –

Table 1 – Demographic Profile

Particulars	Items	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender	Male	27	54%
	Female	23	46%
Age (in years)	21-30	18	36%
	31-40	20	40%
	41-50	10	20%
	51-60	2	4%
Marital Status	Single	22	44%
	Married	28	56%
Family Type	Nuclear	39	78%
	Joint	11	22%

Source : Obtained from Primary Data

To study the relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit among their dimensions Pearson correlation was deployed. The correlation result showed that Job Burnout is significantly and positively correlated with Intention to Quit. Therefore, Hypothesis H₀1 : *Job burnout is not related to Intention to quit* is rejected. The result of this analysis is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Correlations Matrix 1

		JB	IQ
JB	Pearson Correlation	1	.414*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.023
	N	50	50
IQ	Pearson Correlation	.414*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	
	N	50	50

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Among the relationship between dimensions, Intention to quit is found to be positively correlated with Disengagement and Exhaustion. Hence, H₀2 and H₀3 are rejected. Results of correlation analysis among the dimensions are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 - Correlations Matrix 2

	DE	EX	IQ
DE	1		
EX	.525*	1	
IQ	.107	.189	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Implications & Conclusion

The present study reported significant relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to Quit. Organizations may adopt some approach to reduce job burnout and combat the problem of intention to quit. Organizations may provide professionals with clear performance expectation, which would help them, perform better and feel less stressed about their performance. Flexible timing could help professionals to balance their personal and professional life. Career development programs and career counseling represent additional organizational strategies aimed at mitigating burnout, particularly to prevent early career exhaustion (Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003). Bi-directional communication between management and employees could help women professionals from job burnout.

The present study is an attempt in understanding the relationship of Job Burnout and Intention to Quit among working professionals. Based on the findings, managerial interventions have been proposed. There is a need for more studies on job burnout and intention to quit in different research settings to gain deeper insights of the problem.

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