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### **Impact of Workplace Stressors on Employee Burnout: A Survey on Diversified Professionals**

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### **Abstract**

The study has focused on the impact of workplace stressors explained by workload, work hours, unsupportive supervisors, and unfair treatment on employee burnout. The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a survey method. Professional employees of different sectors have been considered as the population. The 115 usable samples have been taken for the study purpose. The sample has been taken purposively. Five Point Likert Scale and multiple-choice questionnaire have been used for the collection of the data. Questionnaires have been administered online. SPSS and Microsoft Excel software has been used to analyze data. However, data were analyzed using correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The study results suggest that work hours are the major predictor of employee burnout among Nepalese professional employees, and workload, unfair treatment, and unsupportive supervisors have negligible contributions to the burnout of Nepalese professional employees.

*Keywords:* Nepalese professionals, workload, work hours, unsupportive supervisor, unfair treatment

### **Impact of Workplace Stressors on Employee Burnout: A Survey on Diversified Professionals**

The term 'burnout' originated in the 1970s AD, and for the past fifty years, the medical community has argued on the definition of it. When Stanford researchers looked into how workplace stress affected health costs and mortality in the United States, they found that it led to spending nearly \$190 billion, roughly 8 percent of national healthcare outlays, and nearly 120,000 deaths yearly (Moss, 2019). Employee burnout had often manifested as an increasing lack of enthusiasm and engagement that built over time in response to job dissatisfaction. The consequences of burnout include increased employee absence, lower productivity, and higher turnover, all of which could affect a company's bottom line. The disruptions to work dynamics, demanding workloads, lack of social support, and blurring of work/life balance have all contributed to the pressure cooker environment for employees, leading to increased burnout in the workforce (Chua, 2022).

Employee burnout happened when the employee became exhausted in the workplace. Employee burnout is a psychological process that could arise due to continuous stress or excessive work hours. There could be various reasons behind employee burnout, like work pressure, unfair treatment, lack of support, lack of specified/prescribed role, etc. Burnout could cause feelings of emptiness, frustration, exhaustion, etc., that might lead to depression in extreme cases. The employee could have a sudden drop in performance and productivity and, with the passing of time, could collapse under pressure situations due to burnout.

Employees in recent days were undoubtedly feeling the pressure of an 'always-on' work culture, causing stress and sometimes leading to burnout (Moss, 2019). Job burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job. It has been defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion,

cynicism, and a sense of inefficacy (Maslach, 2016). Employee burnout as a type of occupational stress was recognized even by the World Health Organization (WHO), in which employees experience general unhappiness with their work and different levels of tiredness, such as; mental, physical, and emotional fatigue. As a result, an employee might no longer feel up to the task at hand or be disinterested in their work or profession, resulting in mental detachment and decreased productivity (Langballe et al., 2010). This could result in higher staff turnover and attrition, poorer employee engagement scores, and a negative impact on workplace culture, all of which could harm the company's overall performance (Langballe et al., 2010).

Employee burnout does not happen by itself; it must be induced. This was usually attributable to the way an organization functions, as well as how people processes responded to employees' requirements. Employee burnout manifested itself in a variety of ways. Based on the company's key performance indicators like; employee turnover rate, increase in employees' sick leave, simple mistakes, and poor customer service (Brandon, 2021). To know the situation of burnout, the first step was to conduct an employee engagement survey to learn how your employees feel, their current levels of engagement, and whether or not burnout was a risk for the company. Actually, there was no study found on burnout in Nepal, but a small group survey with the help of a checklist by the researchers found that workplace stress was high and employee workplace stress was vibrant. Thus, the study might help the policymakers of different industrial sectors formulate human resource policies and make decisions on employee-related issues. Thus, the main aim of the study had been confined to analyzing the relationship between workplace stressors and employee burnout.

### **Literature Review**

Physical burnout is universal and not limited to employees of certain professions. Although burnout is directly linked with excess work-related

stressors, other factors that are the primary cause of burnout can be divided into organizational factors, personal characteristics, and work factors. As a job resource, job autonomy is expected to yield beneficial effects for employees. Considering the diversified workplace, the study argued that how job autonomy affected burnout depends on individuals' power distance orientation (PDO) levels. PDO moderated the relationship between job autonomy and three role stressors; role conflicts, ambiguity, and overload. In addition, the study found that people with different levels of PDO experienced different processes of job autonomy burnout relation (Guo et al., 2022). The negative association between the three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, feelings of cynicism, and a sense of being less effective, and the mediators: contribution to productivity and appropriate salary, were found in the study. However, it was detected that a strong mediating role of salary in the relationship between the burnout syndrome dimension of low effectiveness and quality of work life (Pereira et al., 2022). The results showed that burnout had increased drastically among hotel employees during the COVID-19 crisis. The results also indicated different demographic and job characteristics that had been found to have significantly high burnout values. The hotel industry needs to focus on employee welfare to avoid employee burnout and human resource strategies and initiatives should be taken to reduce burnout (Eason & Weerakit, 2022).

In the organizations, the most common factor which had been cited as the main cause of burnout was work overload. Due to continuous pressure in work and in personal life, once the employees become old, they tend to be more prone to burnout. Role uncertainty, employment guarantee, and brain drain were some of the main factors which were found as prominent dimensions in most of the literature (Nagaraj & Mahadevan, 2015). The work factors might include long working hours, frequent call duties, and time spent at home. Moreover, mundane documentation might also contribute to burnout at the workplace (Moss, 2019).

Job stress and burnout originate from environmental factors in the workplace. Job stress disturbs the physical balance, and burnout affects the quality of work and services, which might result in leaving a job, increased absence, and low morale and responsibility (Taheri et al., 2012).

A study conducted among Professors and Employees at the University of Tabriz by Zamini et al. (2011) showed how organizational culture and job burnout were interrelated. There were four types of organizational cultures: rational culture; focused on efficiency and effectiveness, ideological culture; focused on decentralization of power and increasing competitiveness, consensual culture; focused on decentralization of power, variation in activities, and human relation and hierarchical culture; focused on centralization of power and integration of activities. Job burnout was higher in rational organizational culture and lower in participative organizational culture. Zamini et al. (2011) concluded that there was a significant difference between professors' and employees' job burnout. Differences in reward, social support, and working environment, payment system were the major causes of the difference in professors' and employees' job burnout. Similarly, there was a significant difference between male employees' and female employees' job burnout. This resulted from differences in the method of dealing with stressful situations. Further, the respective University should identify its type of organizational culture and should work to integrate its organizational values with individual values for the better performance of the University itself along with the job satisfaction of its professors and employees. Likewise, individuals should know their ability and method of handling stressful situations and work to improve their weaknesses (Zamini et al., 2011). The personal characteristics leading to burnout might include sleep deprivation, work-life imbalance, inadequate support from family and colleagues, and over-commitment, among others. The work-home conflict was found to be higher among women as compared to men. Another study suggested that the odds of burnout in employees

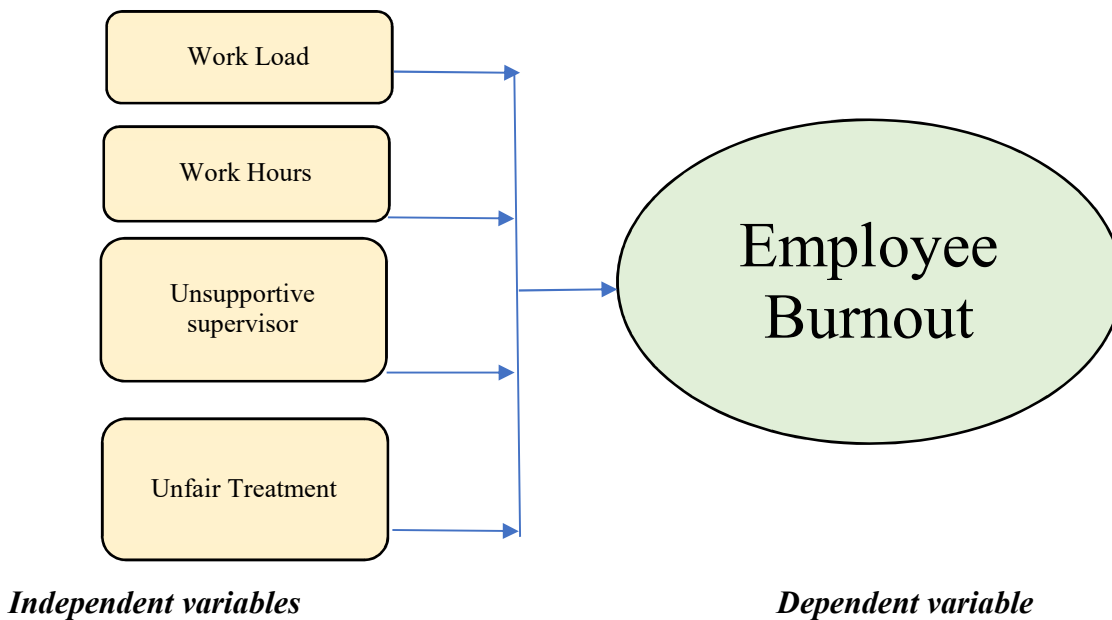
increased by 54 percent that had children younger than 21 years (Langballe et al., 2010). The authors discussed the next factor was the organizational factor. The organizational factors included were the lack of rewards, negative leadership behaviors, and lack of interpersonal collaborations (Langballe et al., 2010). Regular surveys using established scales were found essential for physicians before the effect of burnout was too serious. Work overload was the main contributor to physical burnout, as per physicians. Yoga, meditation, and similar relaxation techniques were helpful to some extent. However, in the severed situation, interaction with therapists was the right move (Langballe et al., 2010).

A study conducted among employees in Canada and China by Jamal (2005) showed how job stress related to total burnout and its three components; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of accomplishment as well as health problems. Job stress could be conceptualized as an individual's reactions to work environment characteristics that appear emotionally and physically threatening to the individual. It had shown the poor fit between the individual's abilities/ experiences and the work environment in which excessive demands had been regularly put on the individual or the individual was not fully equipped to handle a particular situation. Job stressors such as work overload, work ambiguity, work conflict, and resource inadequacy were related to overall burnout, including its three dimensions; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of accomplishment. But the relation between these factors among two different cultures was found to be differing from each other, which showed that the feelings of burnout could be led by different dimensions of similar job stressors in cross-cultures. Although the job stressors were significantly related to overall burnout, individual relationship with the dimensions of burnout were found to be different from dimension to dimension in each culture (Jamal, 2005). JDC theory of workplace burnout explains that when an individual faces high



demand with low control, led to psychological stress, work-related stress, and in the long term, weak physical and mental health (Karasek, 1979).

Raisiene et al. (2023) assumed that teleworking negatively affected employee well-being, as many teleworkers tended to suffer mental and physical exhaustion and social deprivation when working from home during the pandemic. The psycho-emotional state of employees had sought to be a key factor influencing an organization's intellectual resources in a period of uncertainty. Salama et al. (2022) concluded that there existed a strong positive association between work stress and turnover intentions as well as a positive association between job burnout and work stress. The findings of this study would help policymakers, hotel managers as well as practitioners to formulate policies for lessening work stress, job burnout, and turnover intentions among hotel employees. Doghan and Malik (2022) concluded that the relationship between job burnout and job satisfaction was inverse and statistically significant, while the relationship between stress and job satisfaction was insignificant. The results demonstrated that burnout harms job satisfaction, whereas stress had no bearing on measuring job satisfaction. Kloutsiniotis et al. (2022) found that HRM practices could enforce the impact of TFL on burnout. A study by Rozman et al. (2019) found statistically significant differences in occupational stress and symptoms of burnout in the workplace between older and younger employees. On average, younger employees perceived higher levels of occupational stress and burnout as compared to the older group. The research results also showed that occupational stress, behavioral symptoms, and emotional symptoms of burnout, as well as age, had a significant impact on employees' work satisfaction. Based on the reviews and JDC theory following theoretical framework has been developed as under:

**Figure 1***Theoretical Framework*

### Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between workload and employees burnout

H2: There is a significant relationship between work hours and employees' burnout

H3: There is a significant relationship between unsupportive supervisors and employees' burnout

H4: There is a significant relationship between unfair treatment and employees' burnout

### Research Methods

The research was based on a primary source of data using a quantitative research approach. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The data was collected using a mailed questionnaire. To collect the data, a survey was conducted among the respondents. Questionnaires were prepared in Google

Docs, and the prepared questionnaire was sent through online means (Gmail). Multiple choice questions and Likert Scale questions were used to collect the data. A purposive sampling method was used for selecting the samples. Similarly, the sample size for the research was confined to 115. The response rate was 53 percent. Professionals from different fields were the respondents in the study. The SPSS software and Microsoft Excel were used for the tabulation and the analysis of data. The correlation matrix and ordinary least square regression were used to examine the degree of relationship and impact analysis.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **Demographic and Descriptive Analysis**

**Table 1**

*Age-Wise Profile of Respondents*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 24	13	11.3%
25 to 30	59	51.3%
31 and above	43	37.4%
Total	115	100%

The results have shown that among 115 respondents, 13(11.3%) were in between 18 and 24 years of age, 59(51.3%) were in between 25 and 30 years of age, and 43(37.4%) were in between 31 and 35 years of age. The frequency and percentage of age indicated that among the 115 respondents, individuals between the age of 25 to 30 years were large in number, followed by respondents of age between 31 and above and 18 to 24. It indicated that the results of the study are more applicable to the professionals of the age group between 25 to 35 years.

**Table 2**

*Gender-Based Profile of Respondents*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	63	54.7%
Female	52	45.3%
Total	115	100%

The results have shown that among 115 respondents, 63(54.7%) were male, and 52(45.3%) were female. This indicated that among the 115 respondents, more than 50 % were male and female participants were less than male. Even though the numbers were different but the ratio had not been highly different. Thus, the results were applicable to both male and female employees.

**Table 3**  
*Respondents' Profile Based on Education*

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
SLC	1	0.9%
+2 level	9	7.8%
Bachelor Degree	63	54.7%
Master's Degree	42	36.5%
Total	115	100%

The results shown that among 115 respondents, only 1(.9%) had passed SLC, 9(7.8%) had passed +2, 63(54.3 %) had the bachelor's degree and 42(36.2%) had the master's degree. It showed that most respondents had bachelor's and master's degrees. It meant that the research result was dominated by the opinion of educated persons.

**Table 4**  
*Profession Wise Profile of Respondents*

Profession Field	Frequency	Percentage
Academic	26	22.6%
Medical	14	12.2%
Engineering	13	11.3%
IT	13	11.3%
Hospitality	17	14.8%
Hospitality and Tourism	11	9.6%
Government	21	18.3%
Total	115	100%

The results had shown that among 115 respondents, 26(22.6%) were from the academic field, 14(12.2%) were from the medical, 13(11.2%) were from the engineering field, 13(11.2%) were from IT, 17(14.8%) were from hospitality, 11(9.6%) were from tourism, and 21(18.3%) were from the government sector. This showed that out of the 115 respondents, most of them came from the academic field, followed by the government sector, medical, hospitality, engineering, and IT. Similarly, there was the least participation from the tourism sector. The mixture of respondents was from various professions. Therefore, the opinion covered the feeling of every sector of employees.

**Correlation Analysis**

**Table 5**

*Relationship between Employee Workload and Burnout*

		Workload	Employee Burnout
Workload	Pearson Correlation	1	.129**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Employee Burnout	Pearson Correlation	.129**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

Pearson correlation of employee burnout and workload was found to be significant at a one percent level of significance. The study indicated that there was a positive relationship between employee burnout and workload. Further, the positive correlation indicated that both variables, i.e., workload and employee burnout, were moved in the same direction, which means that high workload leads to high employee burnout.

**Table 6**  
*Relationship between Employee Work Hours and Burnout*

		Workhours	Employee Burnout
Work hours	Pearson Correlation	1	.152**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Employee Burnout	Pearson Correlation	.152**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

A significant relationship between work hours and employee burnout was found at a one percent level of significance. That meant a positive correlation existed between work hours and employee burnout. Further, both variables, i.e., work hours and employee burnout, were moved in the same direction, which indicated that with an increase in work hours, employee burnout also tends to increase.

**Table 7**  
*Relationship between Unfair Treatment and Employee Burnout*

		Unfair Treatment	Employees Burnout
Unfair Treatment	Pearson Correlation	1	.123**

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Employee	Pearson		
Burnout	Correlation	.123**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

A significant relationship between employee burnout and unfair treatment was found at a one percent significance level. There was a positive correlation between unfair treatment and employee burnout. Both variables, unfair treatment, and employee burnout, had moved in the same direction, which indicated that an increase in unfair treatment in the organization led to employee burnout.

**Table 8**

*Relationship between Unsupportive Supervisor and Employee Burnout*

		Unsupportive Supervisor	Employee Burnout
Unsupportive Supervisor	Pearson Correlation	1	.096**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Employee Burnout	Pearson Correlation	.096**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

There was the positive and significant relationship between unsupportive supervisors and employee burnout found at a one percent level of significance. There was a positive correlation between unsupportive supervisors and employee burnout. Further, both variables, i.e., unsupportive supervisor and employee burnout, were moved in the same direction, indicating that lack of supervisor support may lead to employee burnout. The correlation results showed that variables were significantly and positively associated with each other. It means

dependent and independent variables were perfectly correlated to each other and in the hypothesized directions.

**Impact Analysis**

The multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis and analyze the impact of independent variables on dependent variables. The model specification has been expressed as;

$$Y=0.329+0.053\beta_1 +0.168 \beta_2+ 0.005\beta_3+ 0.040\beta_4+\varepsilon$$

Where,

$\beta_1$  = Work Load;

$\beta_2$  = Work Hours;

$\beta_3$  = Unfair Treatment;

$\beta_4$  = Unsupportive Supervisor;

$\varepsilon$  = Error

**Table 9**

*Model Summary*

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.826	0..529	.2781

**Table 10**

*Test of Fitness of Model using ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.982	4	.245	16.734	0.000
	Residual	37.085	111	.334		
	Total	38.066	115			

**Table 11**

*Regression Analysis Results*



Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Significance
	Constant	.329	.218		1.040	2.3425
1	Workload	.053	.153	.087	.348	.072
	Work Hours	.168	.183	.278	.914	.036
	Unfair Treatment	.005	.116	.007	.041	.096
	Unsupportive Supervisor	.040	.096	.065	.419	.076

The coefficient of determination 0.826 showed the variance explained by independent variables on a dependent variable. It meant that employee burnout could be explained by the workload, work hours, unfair treatment, and unsupportive supervisors in the 82.6 percent. The standard error was found to be 0.2781, which showed that the variance of employee burnout around the fitted regression equation was 0.174. It meant the fitted model could not explain 17.4 percent. The F- statistic showed the fitness of the regression model. Table 11 provides information on constants, coefficients, standard error, and P- values. It had shown that the fitted model was good for the impact prediction, and other variables were not the major predictors of workplace burnout except work hours in the Nepalese context. It meant an increase in work hours increased workplace burnout.

## Testing of Hypotheses

### Hypothesis 1

The P-value was found to be 0.072, which was higher than the significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. It meant there was no significant relationship between workload and employee burnout. It indicated that overload burnout typically affected highly dedicated employees who felt obliged to work at an unsustainable pace. As a result, they had driven themselves to the point of physical and mental exhaustion.

### Hypothesis 2

The P-value of work hours on employee burnout was found to be 0.036. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between work hours and employee burnout. It indicated that the employees had recommended that their employers ensure mandatory downtime after work hours, employee-care activities, and more specified deadlines. It might be the case for old aged people.

### Hypothesis 3

The P-value of unfair treatment on employee burnout was found to be 0.096. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, and the alternative hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between employee burnout and unfair treatment. It indicated that unfair treatment of the employees in the workplace does not increase the burnout problem in the Nepalese context.

### Hypothesis 4

The P-value of unsupportive supervisors on employee burnout was found to be 0.076. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, and the alternative hypothesis was not accepted. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between unsupportive supervisors and employee burnout. It indicated that the employees' burnout was a problem with the company, not within an individual. The leaders need to own up to their role in creating the workplace stress that led

to burnout. Once leaders confront the problem at an organizational level and addressed the most common organizational culprits of burnout, they could reduce burnout and raise productivity.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The workload, unfair treatment, and an unsupportive supervisor all have insignificant predictors of employee burnout. These variables do not affect the stress level of employees because employees have prior preconceptions of having such stress in the workplace. However, work hours affect the personal life of employees. Thus, they feel stress if more work hours are demanded by the employer. Employee burnout has far-reaching consequences for both employees and business organizations. Organizational surveys should be conducted to minimize employee burnout. Rather than assuming that one solution fits all, the business should evaluate other factors such as employee capacity, reward systems, participatory decision-making, and so on when major decisions are taken, for example, increased participation in the decision-making process is likely to prevent employee fatigue. While comparing to the JDC theory, most of the variables of the stressors are not accepted in the Nepalese context. It may be so because employment opportunities in Nepal are very low, so the employees and professionals do not express their opinion related to workplace burnout. Furthermore, each organization should make an effort to understand employees' perceptions regarding their work hours, the number of tasks, various reward systems, promotion opportunities, and supervisory behavior. Business organizations trying to compete in the market should not neglect the importance and values of their employees. They should pay special attention to identifying the causes, effects, and corrective steps to deal with the issue of employee burnout.

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