

Burnout on University Students: The Research in Turkey

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Abstract – Nowadays, the burnout which is one of the most influential concepts of work experience has become an important focus of attention in scientific studies by recognizing the negative effects that it has on organizations and individuals. In the business world, the phenomenon of burnout, which is often seen in employees who are in intensive and constant communication with people, is also felt in university students as well as employees. The aim of this study is to examine the burnout levels of students who graduated from the same faculties as those who pursue undergraduate education in the Applied Sciences Faculties in Turkey and to classify these burnout levels according to certain variables. In other words, the research aims to reveal the differences in the burnout levels of graduates and non-graduates. In the study, the “Maslach Burnout Scale” was used to measure burnout levels. Findings show that those who continue to undergraduate education have higher burnout levels than graduates. The results also indicate that there is generally no difference between graduated and non-graduated students' burnout levels according to gender and employment status, but there are differences in the sub-dimensions of burnout.

Keywords – Burnout, Handle with the Stress, University Student, Student's Burnout, Maslach Burnout Scale.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of burnout, first put forward by Freudenberger in the 1970s and increasingly concerned with researchers since that date, is described as “emotional exhaustion”, meaning that people become unable to fulfill their jobs as a result of overworking [1]-[2]. According to another definition, burnout is a three-dimensional syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion, desensitization and low personal achievement and is usually seen in people who are close and frequent related to people [3]. [4] Defined burnout as a negative, psychological condition that reduces the professional activity and that is caused by emotional exhaustion and work-related stress. An exhausted individual lives this situation in his/her inner world in the form of emotional exhaustion, desensitization, and reduced achievement motivation. Each one of them affects the daily life, activity and motivation of the individual to a great extent. It also negatively affects the individual's desire, strength, effort, positive feelings and behaviors for work life, education life, family responsibilities, personal obligations and other pursuits he/she has, and causes the individual to feel insufficient.

The phenomenon of burnout, which is expressed as a problem with mostly working individuals in the early periods, has begun to be used for students in the following years. After 12 years of compulsory education in our

country, individuals begin their education life in various parts of universities. The possibility that the individuals may be affected emotionally and behaviorally in this intensive process has also shown that the concept of burnout may also apply to students. In addition, similar to vocational exhaustion, different researchers have suggested that students who have future anxieties or are exposed to family stress may also experience burnout [5]. At the same time, there is considerable research in the literature on the measurement of burnout levels of students in vocational high schools and faculties. When some of these are examined; [6] found that the burnout levels of Vocational School students, especially “emotional exhaustion” levels were higher and the burnout levels of female students were higher than male students. [7] Noted that high levels of stress and burnout lead to reductions in life satisfaction, and that as a result of this cycle, reductions in performance and loyalty may occur. [8] Alleged that the multi-enrollment program being used in Taiwan caused students to be exhausted and had an adverse effect on their academic achievement. [9] Stated that the exhaustion levels of university students were not very high and that the most important factor causing the exhaustion was examination stress.

The literature on student exhaustion, which includes the above experimental studies, presents us with a wide range of burnout of students at different levels, classes and levels of education. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the number of researches on burnout on individuals who have completed faculty education but have not yet taken part in working life, leaving behind a long education process, is remarkably low. For this reason, in this study, it was aimed to measure the burnout levels of the students who graduated from the faculty and those who continue their faculty education, and to reveal the burnout differences of the two groups if they were. Determining whether there is a difference in terms of graduates and non-graduates in the sub-dimensions of burnout constitutes the secondary objective of the research.

II. METHOD

Under this heading, we have mentioned the problem expressions of the study, research hypotheses, the universe and the sample, the tools used to collect data, and the statistics used to analyze the data.

2.1. The Problem of Research and Hypotheses

For the purpose of the research, the following questions about the burnout dimensions of the students who are currently undergraduate education and those who have

graduated from the bachelor's degree were searched and the hypotheses related to these questions were edited as follows.

2.1.1. Main Problems

1. What is the level of burnout in general for graduates and undergraduates?
2. Is there a difference between the burnout levels of those who are graduate and those who are undergraduate with regard to the sub-dimensions of burnout?

2.1.2. Subsidiary Problems

1. Is there a general difference in burnout levels among participants in terms of gender variable?
2. Is there a difference in terms of gender variable (women and men) between those who are graduate and those who are undergraduate?
3. Is there a difference in the levels of burnout between graduated female and undergraduate female?
4. Is there a difference in the levels of burnout between graduated male and undergraduate male?
5. Is there a difference in terms of burnout levels among working graduates and working students?
6. Is there a difference in the levels of burnout between students who are not working and graduates who are not working?

2.1.3. Hypotheses

Hypotheses based on the problem expressions of the research are as follows;

- H₁:** Burnout levels of undergraduates are higher than bachelors.
- H₂:** There is no difference in burnout levels between male and female participants.
- H₃:** The burnout level of female students is higher than that of graduated women.
- H₄:** The burnout level of male students is higher than that of graduated men.
- H₅:** The burnout level of working students is higher than that of working graduates.
- H₆:** The burnout level of students who are not working is higher than that of graduates who are not working.

2.2. Population and Sample

The students who continue their education in the International Trade and Logistics Departments of the universities in Turkey and the individuals graduated from the same department constitute the population of the research. The senior students who continue their education in the Department of International Trade and Logistics of Akdeniz University and the individuals who graduated from the same department of different universities constitute the sample of the research. In this context, 75 questionnaires returned from the questionnaire distributed to a total of 89 students and graduates in the August-December 2016 period were considered valid and worthy of exploration. The number of participants is one of the limitations of the research. However, it is one of the reasons why only senior students are evaluated within the scope of the sample and about the same number of graduates from the department.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In the study, a Personal Information Survey was used to determine participant demographic variables. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was used to measure participants'

burnout levels, which was the main theme of the study. This scale was developed by Maslach and Jackson in 1981 [10]. While there are 20 expressions in total, 8 of these expressions relate to Emotional Exhaustion, 5 to Desensitization and 7 to Low Personal Achievement dimensions. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the burnout values of the Maslach Burnout Scale.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory was used in previous studies by [11], [3], [12], [13], [14] and [15] and in these studies, reliability and validity analyzes and Factor Analysis were performed on the scale and subscales of the scale. Maslach Burnout Inventory is one of the most commonly used burnout scales in burnout research.

2.4. Statistics

The data obtained by the questionnaire were analyzed with "SPSS 17" Statistical Program and demographic analyzes, reliability analysis, T-Test were used in the study. In many studies on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, reliability analysis of subscales of the scale as well as demographic analyzes and T-Test analysis of independent groups were performed. [1], [16], [17] and [18] used demographic analysis, reliability analysis and T-Test in burnout studies. The Independent Sample T-Test, used to determine the differences between the two groups that are independent from each other, is a parametric test and the results of this test show whether there is a statistically significant difference between the groups. According to these Test results, sig. (2-tailed) value is greater than 0.05, there is no significant difference between the groups. In the case that this value is smaller than 0.05, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the groups [19]. In this study, the T-Test was chosen as the most appropriate statistical analysis in the analysis of the number of participants and the differences among the groups.

III. FINDINGS

In this section, the findings of participants' demographics, the findings of reliability analysis, and the burnout levels of participants' were discussed.

3.1. Findings Related to Demographic Data

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the characteristics of participants' gender, education and employment status.

Table 3.1 Findings Related to Gender Variable

Gender	Valid		Cumulative	
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Female	39	52	52	52
Male	36	48	48	100
Total	75	100	100	

The gender of participants is given in Table 3.1 When the table was examined, it was determined that 52% of the participants were female and 48% were male. It was understood that the data on the gender of participants were very close to each other. It is considered that the results of the gender variable of this distribution are important in terms of coverage validity.

Table 3.2 Findings Related to Educational Status

Educational Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undergraduate	37	49,3	49,3	49,3
Bachelor's Degree	38	50,7	50,7	100,0
Total	75	100,0	100,0	

The educational status of participants is given in Table 3.2 When the Table 3.2 was examined, it was determined that 49.3% of the participants were Undergraduate and 50.7% of them were Bachelor's Degree. In this respect, it can be argued that the research evaluated the graduated and non-graduated students in a close number, and that this research provides coverage validity.

Table 3.3. Findings Related to Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employee	30	40	40	40
Unemployed	45	60	60	100
Total	75	100	100	

Table 3.3 presents data on the employment status of the participants. When the table is examined, it is understood that 60% of the participants are currently not employed in any job and 40% are currently employed.

3.2. Findings Related to Reliability Analysis

Reliability refers to the consistency between the responses of the participants to the test items. The correlation, calculated as the confidence coefficient of the test, is used to interpret the extent to which the individual differences have been calculated correctly and incorrectly in relation to the test scores [20]. If this coefficient is 0.70 or above, the scale used is considered to be reliable [21]. The Reliability Analysis was used to measure the consistency of the responses of the participants with respect to the sub-dimensions of the Burnout Scale, and the analysis results are given in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Cronbach's Alpha Values of Sub-dimensions of Burnout Scale

Test Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Emotional Exhaustion	0,841
Desensitization	0,704
Low Personal Achievement	0,682

When the table was examined, it was determined that the reliability coefficients for emotional exhaustion and desensitization dimensions were adequate ($p > 0.70$), but the reliability value of the Low Personal Achievement dimension was partially below the normal accepted value ($p < 0.70$).

3.3. Findings Related to Burnout Levels

Under this heading, analyzes are made on the test of the research's main and subsidiary problems, and the results and interpretations of these analyzes are given.

Table 3.5 Participants' Overall Burnout Levels

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Bachelor's Degree (A.M)	Undergraduate (A.M)	Overall (A.M)
Emotional Exhaustion	1,95	2,47	2,207
Desensitization	1,51	1,85	1,667
Low Personal Achievement	3,58	3,49	3,539
Overall Burnout Level	2,35	2,60	2,471

Table 3.5 shows burnout levels for participants with general and burnout sub-dimension, and burnout levels for undergraduate and bachelor's degree. When the table is examined, it is seen that the general burnout levels of the participants are just below the middle. In this way, all of the participants have a moderate burnout perception.

However, it is observed that undergraduate have a relatively higher level of general burnout than bachelor's degree. It has been understood that participants regard themselves as partially adequate in relation to the Low Personal Achievement dimension. Participants were also found to have a very low level of Desensitization and a low level of Emotional Exhaustion. However, undergraduate were found to have higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Desensitization than bachelor's degree. Regarding the Low Personal Achievement dimension, bachelor's degree see themselves more successful than undergraduate.

The next section of the study included the results of the T-Test used to determine the difference between two independent groups. The T-Test shows whether there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups obtained from different mainstream groups.

Table 3.6 Burnout Levels According to Educational Status

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Educational Status	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Bachelor's Degree	38	0,707	1,95	-3,364	0,001
	Undergraduate	37	0,630	2,47		
Desensitization	Bachelor's Degree	38	0,652	1,51	-2,214	0,030
	Undergraduate	37	0,671	1,85		
Low Personal Achievement	Bachelor's Degree	38	0,307	3,58	0,997	0,322
	Undergraduate	37	0,450	3,49		

A T-Test was conducted to investigate whether there is a meaningful difference between the undergraduate and bachelor's degree regarding the dimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement, and the findings are given in Table 3.6. The results of the T-Test on the sub-dimensions of burnout (Emotional Exhaustion (Sig. = 0,001), Desensitization (Sig. = 0,030), Low Personal Achievement (Sig. = 0,322)) indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups. Thus, H_1 hypothesis has been accepted.

When the table values were examined separately on the basis of sub-dimensions, it was determined that undergraduate and bachelor's degree had different burnout levels in terms of Emotional Exhaustion and Desensitization dimensions and in terms of Low Personal Achievement dimension, both groups had burnout

perceptions close to each other. As a result of the T test; there was a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in terms of Emotional Exhaustion and Desensitization sub-dimensions between undergraduates and bachelor's degrees and there was no statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the two groups regarding the Low Personal Achievement sub-dimension. However, undergraduates have higher levels of emotional exhaustion and desensitization than bachelor's degrees.

Table 3.7 Burnout Levels According to Gender Variable

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Gender	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Female	39	0,712	2,23	-0,262	0,794
	Male	36	0,729	2,18		
Desensitization	Female	39	0,729	1,75	-1,017	0,313
	Male	36	0,619	1,59		
Low Personal Achievement	Female	39	0,384	3,48	1,398	0,166
	Male	36	0,379	3,60		

Table 3.8 Burnout Levels According to Gender (Female) Variable and Educational Status

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Gender	Educational Status	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Female	Bachelor's Degree	23	0,684	2,09	-1,442	0,158
		Undergraduate	16	0,727	2,42		
Desensitization	Female	Bachelor's Degree	23	0,733	1,68	-0,772	0,445
		Undergraduate	16	0,733	1,86		
Low Personal Achievement	Female	Bachelor's Degree	23	0,304	3,58	2,117	0,041
		Undergraduate	16	0,445	3,33		

A T-Test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences between the undergraduate female and bachelor's degree female regarding the dimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement, and the results are shown in Table 3.8. When the table values are considered, it has been determined that female participants who are undergraduates and female participants with bachelor's degrees have similar burnout perceptions about Emotional Exhaustion and Desensitization dimensions. Regarding the Low Personal Achievement dimension, it was understood that female participants as undergraduates and female participants with bachelor's degrees had different burnout levels. There was no statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in terms of Emotional Exhaustion (Sig. = 0,158) and Desensitization (Sig. = 0,445) sub-dimensions between

Table 3.7 presents the results of the T-Test, which was conducted to investigate whether there is a significant difference between participants in terms of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement according to the gender variable. When the table values were examined, it was found that male and female participants had close burnout perceptions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement dimensions. The T-Test revealed that there was no statistically significant ($p > 0,05$) difference in emotional exhaustion (Sig.= 0,794), desensitization (Sig.= 0,313) and low personal achievement (Sig.= 0,166) sub-dimensions between male and female participants. Thus, H₂ hypothesis has been accepted. However, female participants were found to have higher levels of Emotional Exhaustion and Desensitization than male participants.

undergraduates and bachelor's degrees. A statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) was found between the two groups regarding the Low Personal Achievement (Sig. = 0,041) sub-dimension. Despite this significant difference, H₃ hypothesis has been rejected because it was understood that there was no significant difference between the two groups regarding all burnout sub-dimensions. Emotional exhaustion and desensitization levels of female undergraduate are partially higher than those of female bachelor's degree, although there is no significant difference in emotional exhaustion and desensitization sub-dimensions. At the same time, it was understood that female participants with a bachelor's degree had a lower personal achievement level than female participants who are now undergraduates.

Table 3.9 Burnout Levels According to Gender (Male) Variable and Educational Status

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Gender	Educational Status	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	Bachelor's Degree	15	0,708	1,73	-3,670	0,001
		Undergraduate	21	0,562	2,51		
Desensitization	Male	Bachelor's Degree	15	0,403	1,25	-3,127	0,002
		Undergraduate	21	0,638	1,84		
Low Personal Achievement	Male	Bachelor's Degree	15	0,322	3,58	-0,293	0,771
		Undergraduate	21	0,422	3,62		

A T-Test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences between the undergraduate male and bachelor's degree male regarding the dimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement, and the results are shown in Table 3.9. When the table values were examined, it was understood that there

was a difference between male participants who are undergraduates and male participants with bachelor's degrees regarding the levels of emotional exhaustion and desensitization. Regarding the Low Personal Achievement dimension, it has been understood that male participants as undergraduates and male participants with bachelor's

degrees have similar burnout perceptions. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in terms of emotional exhaustion (Sig. = 0, 001) and desensitization (Sig. = 0, 002) sub-dimensions between undergraduates male and bachelor's degrees male. There was no statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the two groups as to the sub-dimension of Low Personal

Achievement (Sig = 0, 771). Hence, H_4 hypothesis has been rejected. No statistically significant difference was found between the two groups regarding all burnout sub-dimensions. However, emotional exhaustion and desensitization levels of male undergraduate are partially higher than those of male bachelor's degree.

Table 3.10 Burnout Levels According to Employment and Educational Status (1)

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Employment	Educational Status	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Employee	Bachelor's Degree	17	0, 639	1, 77	-3, 451	0, 002
		Undergraduate	13	0, 642	2, 59		
Desensitization	Employee	Bachelor's Degree	17	0, 588	1, 51	-2, 444	0, 021
		Undergraduate	13	0, 576	2, 03		
Low Personal Achievement	Employee	Bachelor's Degree	17	0, 366	3, 56	1, 118	0, 273
		Undergraduate	13	0, 561	3, 37		

A T-Test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences between the undergraduate employees and bachelor's degree employees regarding the dimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement, and the results are shown in Table 3.10. When the table values were examined, it was determined that there was a difference in terms of the levels of emotional exhaustion and desensitization dimensions among the undergraduate and bachelor's degree employees. With regard to the low personal achievement dimension, undergraduate employees and bachelor's degree employees have close perceptions. There was a statistically

significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in terms of emotional exhaustion (Sig. = 0, 002) and desensitization (Sig. = 0, 021) sub-dimensions between undergraduate employees and bachelor's degree employees. There was no statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the two groups as to the sub-dimension of Low Personal Achievement (Sig = 0, 273). Thus, H_5 hypothesis has been rejected. No statistically significant difference was found between the two groups regarding all burnout sub-dimensions. However, emotional exhaustion and desensitization levels of undergraduate employees are partially higher than those of bachelor's degree employees.

Table 3.11 Burnout Levels According to Employment and Educational Status (2)

Sub-dimension of Burnout	Employment	Educational Status	N	SD	AM	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Unemployed	Bachelor's Degree	21	0, 741	2, 09	-1, 539	0, 131
		Undergraduate	24	0, 629	2, 41		
Desensitization	Unemployed	Bachelor's Degree	21	0, 714	1, 51	-1, 109	0, 273
		Undergraduate	24	0, 708	1, 75		
Low Personal Achievement	Unemployed	Bachelor's Degree	21	0, 258	3, 60	0, 402	0, 689
		Undergraduate	24	0, 374	3, 56		

A T-Test was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences between the undergraduate unemployed and bachelor's degree unemployed regarding the dimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Desensitization and Low Personal Achievement, and the results are shown in Table 3.11. When the table values were examined, it was understood that the undergraduate unemployed and bachelor's degree unemployed had close perceptions of all burnout sub-dimensions. There was no statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in terms of Emotional Exhaustion (Sig. = 0, 131), Desensitization (Sig. = 0, 273) and Low Personal Achievement (Sig. = 0, 689) sub-dimensions between the undergraduate unemployed and bachelor's degree unemployed. The H_6 hypothesis has been rejected. No statistically significant difference was found between the two groups regarding all burnout sub-dimensions. Although there was no significant difference in all burnout sub-dimensions, emotional exhaustion and desensitization levels of undergraduate unemployed are

partially higher than those of bachelor's degree unemployed.

The findings in Table 3.5 are similar to those found in the study by [9], who measured the burnout levels of the students at Celal Bayar University. The findings in Table 3.7 are in line with the findings of [6] studying the burnout levels of Vocational School students. In addition, the findings in Table 3.11 correspond to the findings of [22] in their study of the burnout levels of senior students attending their Applied Science Faculty. On the other hand, the findings of our study are in contrast to the research findings of [23], which show that the burnout scores of university students differ according to gender, social support, place of birth, faculty, class level and weekly course load variables.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study are as follows: overall burnout levels of the students who undergraduate from Applied

Science Faculties and the individuals who graduated from these faculties, and the burnout levels of those were examined in terms of both sub-dimensions and gender and employment status variables.

- The level of burnout of undergraduates is higher than the level of burnout of newly graduated individuals.
- The burnout level of students who non-graduates and graduate also varies in the sub-dimensions of burnout. The source of diversity is the "Emotional Exhaustion" and "Desensitization" sub-dimensions.
- There was no difference between general burnout levels among graduates and non-graduates by gender variable.
- According to the employment status, there was no difference between the general burnout levels among graduates and non-graduates.
- When the variables of gender and employment status in terms of sub-dimensions of burnout were examined, it was understood that there were differences in burnout perceptions and this difference was caused by "Low Personal Achievement" sub-dimension.

These results are the same as the results of Hernesniemi at al. [24] and Lyndon's [25] studies in 2017, but they are contrasting in terms of sub-dimensions findings with the study of Tamara and others [25] in 2017.

In the future studies on the burnout levels of students, researchers can use these variables in their analyzes, taking into account the students' teaching style, grade average and age. They can also make use of the Regression Analysis to determine the positive or negative effect of the burnout phenomenon on performance related to work or student. Investigations on the burnout of university students can be longitudinalized to analyze the burnout levels of universities in different geographies. Burnout perceptions of newly graduated and pedagogical formation trainees from a faculty-trained special education group can be assessed by gender and employment status variables.

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