

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH BURNOUT
AMONG SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

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MASTER OF ARTS

by
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B.S., Iowa State University, 2001

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FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH BURNOUT
AMONG SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

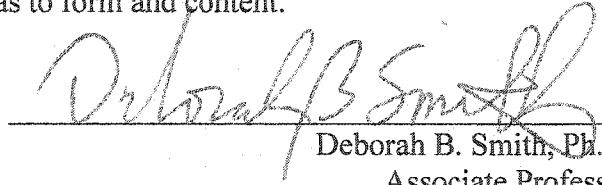
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ABSTRACT

Previous literature has shown that factors within the domains of demographics, personal characteristics and the work environment are related to burnout in social service work. The purpose of this study is to determine what factors within these categories are related to burnout. This study includes a conceptual model consisting of measures derived from a proposed burnout theory.

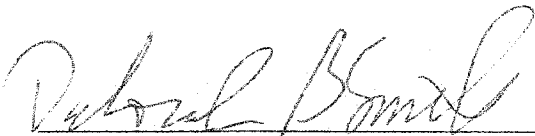
Bivariate and multivariate analysis of data collected from 170 social service workers in Missouri finds support that factors from two of these domains are indeed related to feelings of burnout. Workers who show high levels of uncertainty about the future, low levels of professional self-esteem and low mastery are more likely to suffer from burnout while workers who have positive experiences with their coworkers, flexibility in their job, adequate promotion opportunities as well as low levels of unnecessary paperwork are less likely to report high levels of burnout.

This abstract of 145 words is approved as to form and content.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah B. Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

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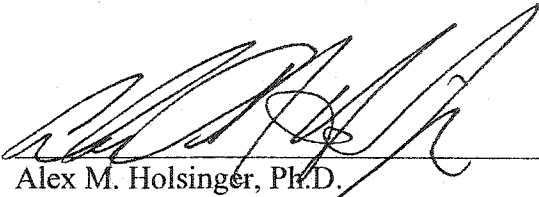
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences,
have examined a thesis titled "Factors Associated with Burnout Among Social Service
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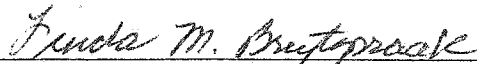
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The term burnout has become a catchword for manifestations of stress, certain personal deficiencies, and different maladies that permeate work life (Powell, 1994). Burnout is generally defined as a complex of attitudinal and behavioral symptoms that are interpreted as the precursors or indicators of dysfunctional job performance (Gilbar, 1998).

Employees in “people work” jobs experience more burnout than employees in other occupational groups (Brotheridge, 2002). The demands on a social service worker are many. They may be at risk of burnout due to the emotional management that is required of them (Zunz, 1998; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). For social service workers, burnout is a syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion, involving the development of negative self-concept, negative job attitudes and a loss of concern and feelings for clients (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Employees in people work jobs report higher interpersonal demands and lower personal control over emotions than employees in other occupational groups. Social service workers report greater frequency, duration, intensity and variety of interactions with clients than other occupations and social service workers reported being required to show positive emotions to a much greater extent than other employees (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). M. Soderfeldt and

B. Soderfeldt (1995) maintain that social service workers are more prone to burnout than other occupations because this type of work is strongly client related, practitioners are involved in complex social situations, and role conflicts are abundant.

Why it Matters

Burnout has been shown to have negative effects directly on employees, the clients the workers serve, and the agencies for which the employees work. Shapiro, Burkey, Dorman, and Welker (1996) list some consequences of burnout on employees as insomnia, drug and alcohol abuse, physical symptoms and interpersonal problems. Burnout may erode the social service workers' morale and job satisfaction (Koeske & Kirk, 1995b) and can lead to deteriorating global life satisfaction and intention to quit (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a).

Many studies have discovered links between physical illness and burnout (Powell, 1994; Rohland, 2000; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Job strain was found to be associated with elevated risks of emotional exhaustion, psychosomatic health complaints, physical health symptoms and job dissatisfaction (de Jonge, Bosma, Peter, & Siegrist, 2000). Specifically, somatic symptoms such as gastrointestinal problems, recurrent headaches, fatigue, and insomnia were found to be linked to burnout (Powell, 1994). The perceived requirement to express positive emotions and hide negative emotions was related positively to physical symptoms for employees in one organization (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Burnout among social service workers is an important issue because a stressed workforce can reduce the efficacy of services provided to clients (Collings & Murray, 1996). Clients simply cannot get what they need if workers are burned out (Arches, 1997). The higher the burnout, the greater the chances of that worker quitting which in turn can lead to a loss of continuity of services to families (Winefield & Barlow, 1994).

Burnout of workers is not cost efficient for agencies (Arches, 1997). Departure of stressed staff represents a loss to the agency of that person's training and experience, and consequent time and money spent training a replacement (Winefield & Barlow, 1994). Acker (2003) also found that burnout and its consequences can bring about a disruption of agency performance and incur financial costs. Low productivity, hiring costs, orientation and training costs contribute to the high price tag of burnout (Acker, 2003). Other costs of burnout on agencies include diminished organizational commitment, turnover and absenteeism (Rohland, 2000). Shapiro et al., (1996) found that burnout decreased work effectiveness and Gilbar (1998) found that burnout was a major cause of turnover and absenteeism among health workers.

The body of literature on the topic of burnout continues to grow. This thesis adds to the body of literature by examining factors that influence social service worker burnout.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Burnout of social service workers results in negative consequences for the workers themselves, the clients they serve and the agencies for which they work. This chapter will define exactly what burnout is and outline what factors are related to it. This chapter will also describe three proposed theories of burnout. One of these theories will be used to guide the construction of the conceptual model. The conceptual model will be explained as well as the research questions used to conduct this study.

Definition of Burnout

Maslach and Jackson (1986) define burnout as a syndrome that is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion.

Emotional exhaustion is a sense that one's emotional responses are so depleted that there is little left to give (Zunz, 1998). Those suffering from emotional exhaustion have feelings of being emotionally overextended and fatigued by their work (Gilbar, 1998). Emotional exhaustion has been linked to tension, anxiety, physical fatigue and insomnia (Rafferty, Friend, & Landsbergis, 2001). A direct relationship between emotional exhaustion and substance use was observed in a study by Rohland (2000).

Workers experiencing high job demands and low skill discretion suffered from high levels of emotional exhaustion (Rafferty et al., 2001). Emotional exhaustion has also been found to be positively correlated with somatic complaints (Rohland, 2000; Greenglass, Burke, & Fiksenbaum, 2001) and is often perceived as the first step toward burnout, which leads subsequently to depersonalization and to reduced feelings of personal accomplishment (Acker, 2003).

Depersonalization.

Depersonalization is characterized by a negative and detached response to clients (Rafferty et al., 2001). Zunz (1998) writes that depersonalization is typified by a cynical, callous, dehumanized view of one's work. Gilbar (1998) defines it as an unfeeling, impersonal response to recipients of one's service, care, treatment or instruction. Hochschild (1979) argues that throughout life, including time at your workplace, acting inauthentic over time may result in feeling detached not only from one's true feelings, but also from other people's feelings. As with emotional exhaustion, Rohland (2000) observed a direct relationship between depersonalization and substance use. Greenglass et al., (2001) found that nurses who were emotionally drained by their jobs tended to distance themselves from their patients. In addition, a person's frequency of interactions with clients and coworkers and the extent to which they hide emotions were found to have significant relationships with depersonalization (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Reduced personal accomplishment.

Reduced personal accomplishment is a low level of perceived competence and successful achievement in work (Rafferty et al., 2001). Those with reduced personal accomplishment have feelings of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with what they can successfully do in their job (Zunz, 1998). Conversely, those with high levels of personal accomplishment have feelings of capability and achievement in their work with people (Gilbar, 1998). Reduced personal accomplishment has been consistently associated with lower control, lower skill discretion, being younger, and having less education (Rafferty et al., 2001). Diminished personal accomplishment may also occur if the employee believes that their emotional displays were not satisfactory or were met with annoyance by others (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Showing positive emotions is related positively to personal accomplishment and hiding negative emotions is related negatively to personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Factors Related to Burnout

It is important to identify modifiable factors that contribute to burnout in order to prevent or alleviate their adverse consequences for individuals, clients and organizations (Rohland, 2000). Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) believe that demands are inherent in employee-client interactions. It is also thought that resources are present in both the occupation and within the worker themselves. Demands and resources interact with individuals in different ways to impact worker burnout. Even though these factors

related to burnout are organized into categories, Zunz (2002) reminds us that these attributes overlap and influence each other.

Demographics, personal characteristics and work characteristics are all known to be important variables in determining burnout. Demographics shown to have relationships with burnout are education level, age, marital status, gender, socioeconomic status and job tenure. Personal characteristics can include the workers coping mechanisms, psychological well being, level of commitment and feelings of control. An employee's work environment includes organizational factors such as management and supervision, relationships with fellow workers, flexibility in scheduling and promotion opportunities. Social support is also an aspect of work that has significant effects on burnout.

Demographics.

Many studies have tested to determine if certain demographics have an influence on workers' tendency to burnout (Acker, 2003; Collings & Murray, 1996; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2001; Rafferty et al., 2001). Variables such as age, gender, marital status, level of education, years of experience and socioeconomic status are evaluated to see if they have an effect on levels of burnout.

A worker's marital status has been shown to have a relationship with burnout. Married workers have higher levels of feelings of personal accomplishment than unmarried workers (Acker, 2003). Also, workers who are divorced, separated or widowed are especially vulnerable to burnout (Collings & Murray, 1996).

Studies have also shown differences among gender and burnout. In Acker's (2003) study, women were found to be less depersonalized and they received less support from family and friends. Acker (2003) suggests that because women are traditionally socialized to be caregivers of family members, when they choose to become a professional who works outside the home they may perceive that their family does not support them. In Lambert et al.'s (2001) study, they found that males on average reported lower job satisfaction. They hypothesized that this may also be because of the way men and women are socialized. Males have been socialized to view themselves as the primary breadwinner; because of this, males are more likely to remain in an unsatisfying job. Thus, males report a lower rate of job satisfaction. In contrast, women have been socialized to see family and children as their primary responsibility. Therefore, if women enter into an unsatisfying job, they are more likely to simply quit (Lambert et al., 2001).

Some studies have shown levels of education to have relationships with burnout. Schulz, Greenley, and Brown (1995) found in their study that education had direct and indirect effects on burnout. They found that higher levels of burnout were associated with higher education (Schulz et al., 1995). Acker (2003) found that social service workers who attained higher levels of education received less support from their supervisor, were more emotionally exhausted, more depersonalized, and less involved with clients. Collings and Murray (1996) also found that higher grade levels completed appeared to be strongly related to worker stress.

A worker's age may also be related to levels of burnout but the effect is unclear. Older workers were found to be more burned out in one study (Collings & Murray 1996); yet older workers were found to have higher morale scores in another study (Koeske & Kelly, 1995). Lambert et al. (2001) also found age to have significant positive effects on job satisfaction.

Socioeconomic status has been studied to better understand its relationship with workers, their jobs and burnout. In a research project studying the effects of characteristics of human service workers on moral and turnover, it was found that workers from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds were more likely to quit their jobs than those from lower socioeconomic statuses, yet those with higher starting salaries were less likely to quit (Koeske & Kirk, 1995b).

Job tenure has also been shown to have relationships with burnout (Schulz et al., 1995; Acker, 2003; Lambert et al., 2001). Schulz et al. (1995) found higher levels of burnout to be associated with longer tenure on the job. Acker (2003) found that length of employment had statistically significant positive relationship with a feeling of personal accomplishment, while Lambert et al. (2001) found that as tenure increases, job satisfaction decreases.

Personal characteristics.

Individual social service workers bring their own personal characteristics to the job, which may contribute to effects leading to burnout (Schulz et al., 1995). Many studies have tested to see if the personal characteristics of a worker have an influence on

their tendency to burnout (Acker, 2003; Collings & Murray, 1996; Lambert et al., 2001; Rafferty et al., 2001). Characteristics such as psychological well being, overcommitment, coping mechanisms, locus of control and self-esteem are evaluated to see if they have an effect on levels of burnout.

Psychological well being has been shown to be a very important resource for the worker (Koeske & Kelly, 1995). An individual's psychological well being can predict job stress, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction (Koeske & Kelly, 1995). Poor psychological and emotional symptoms include difficulty in interpersonal relationships and intimacy, compulsivity about rules and schedules, a tendency to blame others for difficulties, poor self-esteem, and a tendency to withdraw (Powell, 1994). The most consistent and largest relationships found in Koeske and Kelly's (1995) study involved the general psychological well being of the worker when they were hired. Psychological well being was measured by combining separate common measures of depression, self-esteem, physical symptoms and life satisfaction. They found that psychological well being contributed to a higher sense of personal accomplishment and lowered depersonalization. The better adjusted the worker was at the start of the job, the better the later work outcomes.

It was found that psychological demands were the strongest predictors of emotional exhaustion, psychosomatic complaints and physical symptoms related to burnout in de Jonge et al.'s (2000) study. In a study by Brotheridge and Grandey, (2002) perceived work demands, including frequency, duration, variety, and intensity of employee-client interactions, related positively to burnout. They found that the

expectation of social service workers to hide negative emotions correlated significantly with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Brotheridge & Grandey 2002).

Another predictor of mental stress is the social service workers perceptions of their image in society (Collings & Murray, 1996). An awareness of society's expectations of social service workers seemed significantly predictive of measured stress level (Collings & Murray, 1996).

Several studies have shown overcommitment to both a worker's job and clients to be a large demand on the social service worker (de Jonge et al., 2000; Koeske & Kirk, 1995b; Acker, 2003; Barber & Iwai, 1996). Overcommitment is a personal characteristic that refers to an excessive striving to meet job demands in combination with a strong desire of being approved or esteemed (de Jonge et al., 2000). Social service workers characterized by overcommitment had higher risks of poor well being because the demands of their job did not match the rewards of their job (de Jonge et al., 2000). Stav, Florian, and Shurka (1986) also discovered higher levels of burnout for those workers who became overinvolved in their clients problems. Barber and Iwai (1996) found that the level of emotional closeness a worker has with their clients is related to burnout. Social service workers show an erosion of job satisfaction and job morale due to the burnout arising from excessive involvement with clients (Koeske & Kirk, 1995b).

Control is another personal characteristic that has been studied when attempting to explain burnout (de Jonge et al., 2000; Dyer & Quine, 1998; Rafferty et al., 2001; Collings & Murray, 1996; Koeske & Kirk, 1995a). Two aspects of control are skill discretion and decision authority. Skill discretion refers to the worker's ability to control

his or her own activities and skill usage (Rafferty et al., 2001). Decision authority refers to the worker's feelings of freedom to make their own decisions. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) define control as the perception that one has autonomy over one's emotional expression at work. When workers cannot contribute to the decisions that affect their professional lives, they may feel that they do not have control (Acker, 2003). A large part of a social service workers' professional life is helping their clients. When they feel like they have no answers to clients' problems, it can increase their own level of stress (Collings & Murray 1996). Freedom in decisions and involvement in decisions were found to be important buffers against burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998).

An internal locus of control is a generalized expectation that events occurring to an individual are due to his or her own behavior or attributes or to external factors not under the control of the actor, such as luck or environmental constraints (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a). An internal locus of control was significantly associated with less burnout, higher job satisfaction and less perceived conflict in the job and better psychological well being (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a). An internal locus of control consistently buffered the impact of emotional exhaustion and negative job attitudes on intention to quit the job and overall life satisfaction (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a). It is regarded as healthier and more adaptive, because a sense of mastery, effectance, self-worth, and personal power develops with the habit of attributing successes to effort and skill (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a).

Good coping skills and good problem solving skills can be an invaluable resource for social service workers. Zunz (1998) stresses the importance of good problems

solving skills and good coping skills in her study. Um and Harrison (1998) found the more coping strategies were used, the less job dissatisfaction was experienced.

Coping skills involve several aspects. The COPE inventory (Carver, 1989) assessed coping skills that were classified as “adaptive” which included active coping, planning, use of instrumental support, use of emotional support, religion, positive reframing, acceptance, and humor. It also assessed coping skills that were classified as “maladaptive” which included venting, behavioral disengagement, mental disengagement, self-blame, substance abuse, and denial. It was found that these mainly negative coping mechanisms- self-blame, substance use, venting, denial, humor, and behavioral disengagement- were related to burnout (Rohland, 2000).

Optimism, control, self-esteem, and hardiness are personality dispositions that have been studied as possible buffers against burnout (Rohland, 2000). Active coping and planning are positively associated with these personality dispositions whereas denial and behavioral disinhibition are negatively correlated with these traits (Rohland, 2000).

Other personal resources include having a sense of self-efficacy or task mastery. Self-efficacy can be defined as an aspect of self-perception that reflects one’s capacity to get things done (Zunz, 1998). An inverse relationship between workload and professional efficacy was found in Greenglass et al.’s (2001) study. They also found that professional efficacy was negatively related to somatic complaints (Greenglass et al., 2001).

Another resource Zunz (1998) studies is a sense of professional or personal purpose or mission. This includes a sense of meaning to one’s efforts, a commitment to a

shared goal and responsibility to others (Zunz, 1998). Onyett et al. (1997) found that clear service goals foster personal role clarity and a positive sense of belonging to the service. Congruence between what the staff member perceives the organization is pursuing and what he or she prefers the organization to pursue helps to achieve clarity of job objectives and relationships to achieve agreed-upon goals (Schulz et al., 1995). Zunz (1998) explains that organizations that stay connected to their missions and continually communicate their values to their staff can provide their employees with a resiliency-enhancing tool to combat burnout.

Dyer and Quine (1998) found several personal factors to be beneficial and satisfying and buffered the effects of burnout. The greatest satisfaction felt from social service workers came from their own achievements (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Observable results of work, challenge provided and providing an essential service are also buffers against burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Much of the reward social service workers feel from their job comes from feeling effective in improving conditions for children (Winefield & Barlow, 1994).

Resiliency is an invaluable personal resource for a social service worker to possess. Resiliency is the ability to cope satisfactorily in the face of challenges and adversity (Zunz, 2002). The goal of resiliency is enhanced functioning in the face of the inevitable adversities that can inhibit an individual, family, organization, or community from reaching its potential (Zunz, 2002). The fewer the resiliency factors, the higher the risk of burnout (Zunz, 1998). Other resources such as reassurance, social support, recognition, positive feedback, belonging to a community, shared concerns, recognition

of talent/skill and renewing professional mission, can all be used to fight burnout (Zunz, 1998).

Work environment factors.

Attributes of the worker have commonly been cited as the cause of their burnout (Arches, 1997). Yet recently there is more recognition concerning organizational factors' contribution to burnout (Arches, 1997). Zunz (1995; 1997) found that organizational features such as lack of needed resources, the rapid pace of change, and lack of systems' coordination were better predictors of burnout than issues surrounding individual functioning. Many other studies have also been discovering environmental factors to be better predictors of burnout than individual factors (Lambert et al., 2001; Collings & Murray, 1996; M. Soderfeldt & B. Soderfeldt, 1995; Acker, 2003). Organizational structure, culture, and management processes are important factors related to work environment, job satisfaction, and subsequently to burnout (Schulz et al., 1995). Barber & Iwai (1996) also found that worker burnout can be attributed more to work environment factors than to personal characteristics, workload, degree of involvement with clients, or amount of social support.

Role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload are three demands of the work environment that have been assessed for their potential effect on social service worker burnout (Acker, 2003; Barber & Iwai, 1996; Dyer & Quine, 1998; Um & Harrison, 1998). A role is a patterned behavior expected of and enacted by those who occupy roles (Um & Harrison, 1998). Role clarity refers to the extent to which employees are aware

of what is required of them by the organization (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Role conflict refers to the extent to which employees are experiencing contradictory demands, either because the organization asks them to comply with two or more incompatible requests, or because it requires them to carry out activities with which they personally disagree (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Role ambiguity occurs when the expectations for adequate role performance for a given position are unclear or incomplete (Um & Harrison, 1998).

Chronic role conflict and role ambiguity are demoralizing and tension provoking and often result in lowered self-esteem and increased feelings of futility and powerlessness (Barber & Iwai, 1996). Many studies have shown relationships between role stressors and burnout. Both role conflict and role ambiguity had positive correlations with emotional exhaustion and with depersonalization while role ambiguity had statistically significant negative correlations with feelings of personal accomplishment (Acker, 2003). Um and Harrison (1998) also found burnout increased when role conflict increased. Lambert et al. (2001) found that role conflict has a negative impact on job satisfaction.

When social service workers know their responsibilities and relationship to others, they are more likely to have autonomy within those boundaries; consequently, job clarity is thought to contribute to feelings of autonomy as well as work satisfaction (Schulz et al., 1995). Because of the inherent stressors of social work, role stressors such as role conflict and role ambiguity appear to have a greater impact on job strain in social service workers than in other occupations (Um & Harrison, 1998). Social service

workers were found to be less clear than other disciplines about their own role and the role of the team as a whole (Onyett et al., 1997).

Another organizational factor that may possibly contribute to burnout is management and supervision (Dyer & Quine, 1998). They have been found to be both a source of social service worker support as well as a potent source of a social service worker stress (Collings & Murray, 1996). Lack of care giving between hierarchical superiors and subordinates results in feelings of alienation, emotional withdrawal and emotional exhaustion (Acker, 2003). Dyer and Quine's (1998) study found that workers felt the greatest amount of dissatisfaction with poor management and supervision from senior staff. An aspect of supervision that was a significant predictor of high levels of stress in another study was, 'perceiving that one's supervision is primarily geared to protecting supervisors' (Collings & Murray, 1996). In Winefield and Barlow's (1994) study, workers also expressed dissatisfaction with the internal arrangements at the agency and the item about which most dissatisfaction was expressed with their job was 'the way your organization is managed.' Finally, Acker (2003) found that role conflict and role ambiguity would significantly lessen when social support from the supervisor was high.

When work demands are high, a useful resource can be support from coworkers. Since work occupies a significant part of a person's life, it is no surprise that enjoyable relations among coworker's effects job satisfaction (Lambert et al., 2001). Social support from coworkers has positive correlations with feelings of personal accomplishment (Acker, 2003). Role conflict and role ambiguity rose significantly when social support from coworkers was weak (Acker, 2003). Emotional exhaustion produced a greater

degree of job dissatisfaction when coworker support was low (Um & Harrison, 1998). Finally, it has been proposed that a team structure may allow staff to share responsibility for clients, leading to lower rates of burnout (Schulz et al., 1995).

Receiving recognition for a talent or skill can be a resource against burnout (Zunz, 1998). Dyer and Quine's (1998) study found that workers felt the greatest amount of dissatisfaction from a lack of recognition received from others for their good work. de Jonge et al. (2000) found that unmet reward expectations following high efforts are most likely to provoke poor well being.

Another work environment factor that may possibly contribute to burnout is rate of pay. Winefield and Barlow (1994) and Dyer and Quine (1998) found that social service workers' greatest dissatisfaction with their job was pay and promotion opportunities. Lambert et al.'s (2001) study found financial rewards to have significant positive effects on job satisfaction.

A lack of resources within the social service work field may also contribute to burnout. Adequacy and availability of information was expressed as necessary for effective work (Collings & Murray, 1996). Social service workers commented that the inadequacy of resources can be frustrating (Winefield & Barlow, 1994). A specific significant item that predicted overall stress in one study was working with inadequate information (Collings & Murray 1996).

Workers appear to be more satisfied with jobs that allow them variety rather than repetition (Lambert et al., 2001). Dyer and Quine (1998) also found that having a variety of tasks was an area of satisfaction for the social service workers asked. Having the

capacity to use a range of skills on the job was more strongly and consistently negatively related to burnout than the degree of authority given to worker to make their own decisions at work (Rafferty et al., 2001).

Some studies have shown that workload has emerged as one of the most consistent stressors among employees (Greenglass et al., 2001). Increased work demands have a negative effect on job satisfaction and burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Greenglass et al. (2001) found not only that work overload is a significant predictor of negative mental health outcomes, less job satisfaction and burnout but that simply one's perceptions of increased workload has a direct effect on emotional exhaustion. A specific workload item that emerged as a significant predictor of overall stress was having too much administrative paper work (Collings & Murray, 1996). Factors protecting the worker against burnout are reasonable job demands or reasonable workload pressures (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Koeske & Kelly (1995) found that having a greatly increased workload seemed to place the worker at risk for job stress. Workers with higher caseloads tended to have lower job satisfaction (Winefield & Barlow, 1994). Barber and Iwai (1996) also found that the number of clients a worker has and the amount of time a worker spends with clients are positively related to worker burnout.

Another demand that may possibly contribute to burnout is a worker's amount of responsibility (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Collings and Murray (1996) found that the most powerful predictor of stress was pressure involved in planning and reaching work targets.

In a study by Powell (1994) it was found that alienation is closely related to burnout. He argued that a lack of power over the conditions of one's social work practice

and a sense of isolation was strongly linked to burnout. It is suggested that the human needs to ascribe meaning to life and when work starts to lose meaning for a person, burnout becomes more likely (Powell, 1994). Winefield and Barlow (1994) found that workers expressed a sense of professional isolation in the social service occupation. Arches (1997) agrees that increasing organizational, technical and economic regulations in the social service workers workplace are contributing to a loss of autonomy and increased alienation.

The number of hours worked and the flexibility of those hours are also potential variables influencing burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998).

Many have studied the effects of social support and social integration on burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998; Zunz, 1998; Rafferty et al., 2001; de Jonge et al., 2000; Barber & Iwai, 1996). Social support is assistance that enables an individual to feel affection, esteem, and part of a network (Zunz, 1998). Um and Harrison (1998) describes social support as the extent to which people around the individual worker provide support by being good listeners or by being people the worker can rely on when help is needed. Many maintain that a lack of social integration or a sense of belonging to a group with shared interests and concerns can lead to increasing levels of burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998; Zunz, 1998; Rafferty et al., 2001; de Jonge et al., 2000; Barber & Iwai, 1996).

When demands are high, social support can be an invaluable resource. Zunz (2002) explains that one can build this resource by learning to seek out and build supportive communities at any life stage. She does mention that being raised in a functional family can be a helpful resiliency factor against burnout, but many social

service workers, like their clients, do not come from these families. However, workers are able to get this social support from many other sources (Zunz, 2002). Support can come from; team leaders, colleagues, other professionals, training, spouse/family, friends, or management (Dyer & Quine, 1998).

Many studies have found that higher levels of social support reduce all the burnout dimensions (Dyer & Quine, 1998; Rafferty et al., 2001; Koeske & Kirk, 1995a; Um & Harrison, 1998; Acker, 2003). Social support may be a more effective resource against high job demands when the type of support matches the demands of the job (Rafferty et al., 2001). Staff tended to consider other staff as a source of support, although 'lack of general morale' was identified as a constraint for many workers (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Winefield and Barlow (1994) also found that others valued the support from members of their own group. Having support from one's supervisor was significantly associated with having higher control and lower job demands (Rafferty et al., 2001). It was also associated with reduced emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Rafferty et al., 2001). To sum social supports' relationship with burnout, as Acker (2003, p.77) expressed, "Workers who feel like they are cared for have the capacity to care for the clients."

Review of Theory

Payne's (1979) interactional model, Maslach et al.'s, (1996) structural model and Karasek's (1990) Job Demand-Control Model all propose possible causes of occupational

stress, which in turn leads to burnout, by explaining the role of demands and resources embedded within occupations.

Payne (1979) held the theory that occupational stress was a function of the interaction between demands, supports, and constraints. He defined demand as the degree to which aspects of the environment command the individual's attention (mentally or physically) and require an appropriate response. Support was defined as the degree to which aspects of the environment (including social, intellectual, and physical aspects) assist the individual in meeting their demands. Finally, constraint was defined as the degree to which aspects of the environment (including social, intellectual, and physical aspects) impede the individual from meeting their demands.

Guided by this theory, Dyer and Quine (1998) conducted a cross-sectional questionnaire study of 80 participants working as direct care staff in the learning disability service of a local community trust. They hypothesized that job satisfaction and burnout would vary according to levels of occupational demands and support. The aim of their study was to identify which characteristics of work were demanding and to examine the relationships between demands, supports and constraints. Three types of demands were highlighted in this study; resident characteristics, non-participation in decision-making and role overload. These increased work demands had a negative effect on job satisfaction and burnout. They also found that support promoted job satisfaction and reduced burnout. They concluded that their study of direct care staff supported Payne's model.

Karasek (1978) also used a similar model when analyzing data from two large surveys. He also found that it was a combination of demands and constraints, rather than either alone, which predicted a wide range of phenomena associated with burnout. He demonstrated many examples which explained previous contrary findings because either demands or constraints were left out of the predictive equation.

In the structural model outlined by Maslach et al., (1996) burnout is caused by a lack of resources in the context of increased demands. Some of these resources are coping skills, feelings of control, social support, autonomy, and decision involvement. Some of the demands include work overload and personal conflict. Work overload includes both external work conditions and emotional pressures. Sustained emotional pressure, which is associated with intensive, long-range involvement with people who are suffering, often results in the burnout of the social service worker (Gilbar, 1998).

Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) also found that emotional demands are high and emotional autonomy is low for social service work, suggesting that these workers exist in an environment that may provoke more burnout. Role conflict and role ambiguity have shown to place a great deal of demands on workers (Um & Harrison, 1998; Onyett, Pillinger, & Muijen, 1997; Barber & Iwai, 1996; Acker, 2003). In Barber and Iwai's (1996) study, they found that role conflict and role ambiguity accounted for the greatest amount of variance in measures of burnout.

Karasek's (1998) Job Demand-Control Model (JDC) predicts that adverse psychological and physiological reactions are affected by high demand and low control.

The JDC postulates that the primary sources of job stress lie within the characteristics of the job itself, including psychological job demands and job decision latitude. Examples of psychological job demands are high pressure of time, high working pace, or difficult and mentally exacting work. Job decision latitude or “job control” refers to the worker’s ability to control their own activities and skill usage.

The major predictions of the JDC model are that the strongest adverse reactions will occur when job demands are high and worker control is low and that work motivation, learning and growth will occur in situations where both job demands and worker control are high.

Using the JDC in their study, Rafferty et al., (2001) found that job demands, control, and social support interacted in explaining burnout. They found that jobs with high levels of demand where the workers had little control experienced higher burnout than those with higher control (Rafferty et al., 2001). Powell’s (1994) study also found that a lack of power or control over the conditions of one’s social work practice is strongly linked to burnout.

Use of Theory

Social service workers are more than aware of the many demands placed upon them. They need to meet both the emotional and physical needs of their clients while also maintaining positive relationships with their coworkers and supervisors.

Payne’s (1979), Maslach et al., (1996) and Karasek’s (1990) models all focused on the demands of the work environment. Maslach et al.’s (1996) model had an

additional focus of a lack of resources within a job and Karasek's (1990) additional focus was a lack of control. Payne's (1979) additional foci were those of supports and constraints. This model focused on the support within the worker and job as well as the constraints a worker feels and how these affect a worker's ability to manage their work demands in turn affecting their burnout levels.

Payne's interactional model of burnout proposes that a job places demands on a worker. At the same time, a worker has sources of support within themselves and the job. These supports aid the workers in meeting their demands. Payne also explains that there are constraints found within a job and a worker. These constraints may inhibit the worker from meeting the demands. Payne proposes that it is a balance or combination of these supports, constraints and demands that best explain levels of stress and burnout. If a worker has inadequate supports, and overwhelming constraints, this makes it difficult to meet the demands placed upon them. These overwhelming demands then affect a worker's burnout level.

Payne also reminds us that certain factors can be either a constraint or a support depending on the person and the situation. A support for one person may be a constraint for another. For example, if a worker's experience with their supervision is satisfactory, it is likely that their supervisor will be a support for them. On the other hand, if a worker suffers poor experiences with their supervisor, the supervisor may act as a constraint against meeting their work demands.

Many of the factors described earlier in this chapter can display this curvilinear tendency. Factors such as self-esteem, mastery, flexibility, variety etc... can all be

supports if a worker maintains healthy levels yet can be constraints if a worker suffers from damaging levels. Because of this, few concepts can be defined as either a support or a constraint. Thus, the term support/constraint will be used to refer to these interchangeable factors. This study uses these concepts of demands and support/constraints to build the conceptual model.

Conceptual Model

All studies recognize that a combination of variables interact and influence each other to best explain levels of social service worker burnout. This is parallel to Payne's explanation of the way in which demands and supports/constraints interact with each other to influence burnout.

The review of literature reveals three categories of importance which impact burnout; (1) demographics, (2) personal characteristics and (3) work environment factors. The conceptual model is divided into these same three categories because previous studies and theory suggest that supports/constraints and demands within these three domains affects burnout and also because previous studies have used similar conceptual models to measure burnout (Barber & Iwai, 1996; Um & Harrison, 1998). See Figure 1 for an illustration of this model.

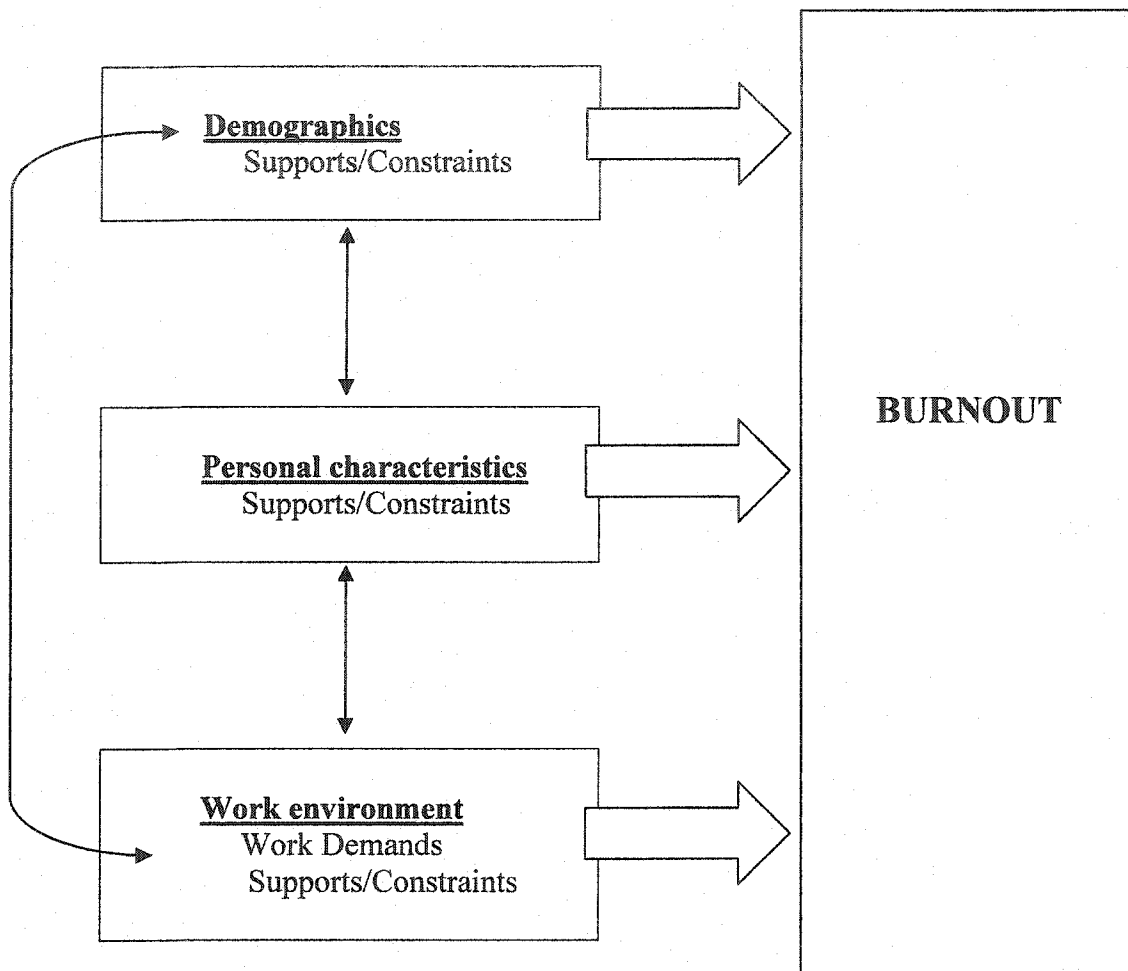


Figure 1. Conceptual Model Illustrating Three Categories of Factors Influencing Burnout

Research Questions

Based on the review of theory, factors found to be related to burnout and the conceptual model, this thesis investigates these research questions:

- R1. Are a social service worker's demographics related to his or her burnout levels?
- R2. Are the personal characteristics of a worker related to his or her burnout levels?
- R3. Is an employee's work environment related to his or her burnout levels?
- R4. Do demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors interact to influence social service worker's levels of burnout?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe the sample and the survey instrument used for this study. The dependent variable of burnout and the independent variables will be described including explanation of how they were measured. Finally, the analytic strategy will be explained.

Sample Description

The dataset used for these analyses is part of a larger research project evaluating a training program using a curriculum focusing on capacity building for frontline family workers. The research project is a pre-test, post-test quasi-experimental design which surveyed social service workers going through the training as well as a control group of similar social service workers not going through the training. The participants were all identified through their participation in this training program or were recruited using snowball and volunteer sampling techniques to participate as controls for the evaluation. Data were collected between October 2002 and March 2004. The survey went through four different versions during the data collection period. The original sample size was 232. All participants work for non-profit, for-profit or government social service agencies such as domestic violence shelters, Missouri's welfare government agency and

Head Start. All workers have direct contact with clients as part of their regular job duties.

Three adjustments were made to this original sample to arrive at the final subsample used for this study. First, only participants working for non-profit agencies and state or federal government agencies were included in these analyses. As the occupation of social service worker is the primary focus of this study, any respondent indicating they worked for a for-profit agency was excluded from these analyses. Second, only the pre-test data were used providing this cross-sectional analysis with the largest group of respondents to work with. Finally, the first version of the survey did not contain the Human Services Job Satisfaction Questionnaire which contained critical variables necessary for completion of this study. Because of this, none of the cases using the first version of the survey were included in the analyses. These adjustments resulted in a final subsample size of 170. This subsample was used in all analyses.

The 170 participants in the final subsample are residents of Missouri or Kansas. The average age of the participants is 43 years. Females compose 87 percent of the sample reflecting the gendered nature of the social service sector. The majority of the participants work for non profit agencies (69.2 percent), and 30.8 percent work for state or federal government agencies. In this sample, 57.8% identified themselves as white, 36.1% as African American, 4.2% as Native American, 2.4% as Hispanic/Latino/Chicano, 2.4% as other and 0.6% as Asian/Asian American. See Table 3 for complete demographic information.

Survey Instrument

The survey used for the original data collection was divided into four sections measuring work status, work experience and job satisfaction, time use and family demographics. The Human Services Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (HSJSQ) was included in the work experience and job satisfaction section of the survey. Shapiro, Burkey, Dorman & Welker (1996) published the HSJSQ designed to measure job satisfaction and burnout among human service professionals. Candidate items for the scale came from a literature review, focus groups and personal experience. The HSJSQ is used in this study as it efficiently captures workers' perceptions on a variety of working conditions. The scale includes five subscales; self-actualization, affect, working conditions, professional self-esteem and futility/avoidance. These measure several different aspects of the social service workers' work experience. The response categories are a five-point, Likert-type scale with scores ranging from zero to four with these numbers signifying strongly disagree, disagree, unsure, agree and strongly agree. See Appendix 2 for this scale.

The Self-Actualization subscale contains nineteen items measuring experiences of intellectual stimulation, professional development, creativity, and helping-oriented emotional connection with other people through work. The Affect subscale contains seven statements measuring the emotional experience of work. The Working Conditions subscale contains nine items measuring several aspects of the working environment including agency environment, work requirements, amount of paperwork, and vacation time. The Professional Self-Esteem subscale contains four statements measuring the

respondent's feelings surrounding their ability to effectively do their job as well as feelings of respect from their coworkers. The Futility/Avoidance subscale contains six items measuring the extent to which the respondents avoided work, felt like they did not accomplish anything, had trouble concentrating and felt they had to do things that they did not feel were right.

There were four remaining items which were not included in any of the subscales. These items were; feelings toward being paid fairly, putting in extra hours at work, thinking about work during free time because they found it interesting and feeling miserable because of the amount of human suffering they come into contact with.

Dependent Variable: Burnout

Burnout.

In this study, the Futility/Avoidance and Affect subscales from the HSJSQ are combined to create the dependent variable of 'burnout'. The Affect subscale contains seven statements measuring the emotional experience of work. Some of these statements include, "I am often upset and depressed by my clients' problems," "My workday is exhausting to me," and "Worries about work often bother me in my free time." The Futility/Avoidance subscale contains six items that measure the extent to which the respondents avoid work and have feelings of futility about their work. Typical questionnaire items are: "I sometimes call in sick because I just need a break from work," and "I sometimes feel there is nothing I can do to help my clients."

As previously explained, burnout is a syndrome that is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. The subscales combined to create the burnout scale included items from each of these domains.

Of the thirteen questions used to create this new scale, the appropriate questions were reverse coded so that for all individual questions 0 represented low burnout and 4 represented high burnout. Cases with more than forty percent of the responses missing were not included in any analyses. This scale was dichotomized using its median (1.38) as a division point to be able to use it in any analyses requiring a dichotomized dependent variable. Low burnout is coded 0 and high burnout is coded as 1. See Tables 1 and 2 for the descriptive statistics and frequencies for both dependent variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the continuous dependent variable of burnout

Dependent Variable	N	M	SD	Max	Min
Burnout scale (Possible range of scores, 0-4 Low burnout=0, high burnout=4)	169	1.49	.65	3.54	.08

Table 2. Frequency of the dichotomized dependent variable of burnout

Variable	N	Valid Percent
Dichotomized burnout scale		
Low burnout (0)	80	47.3
High burnout (1)	89	52.7
Total	169	100

Independent Variables: Demographics, Personal characteristics, Work environment

The independent variables I use in this study were found to be important to the well being of social service workers in previous studies.

Demographics.

The demographic factors marital status, gender, educational attainment, age, and time at job have been found to influence burnout levels and are analyzed in this study.

All demographics included fall under the supports/constraints category.

Marital status is included in these analyses. The original marital status variable has five response categories and it is also collapsed into a dichotomous variable, married (coded 1) and not married (coded 0).

A worker's gender has effects on depersonalization, job satisfaction and support from friends and family. The workers' gender is included in these analyses. Females were coded 0 and males coded 1.

Education level may be related to social support, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and involvement with clients. In this study, respondents are asked what was the highest grade or year in school that they had completed. There are six answer categories ranging from some high school to graduate/professional school graduate. The education variable is also dichotomized in this study. Zero indicated having some college or less and 1 indicated a college degree or more schooling.

Age has also been found by some to have a relationship with the social service workers' work experience, though the relationship has been somewhat contradictory in the literature. Some have found that older workers have higher morale and job satisfaction scores while others have found older workers to be more burned out. The relationship between age and burnout is measured in three different ways. First, age is kept as a continuous variable to conduct an analysis of variance (ANOVA), and then it is categorized into four categories using its quartiles as division points to conduct a crosstabulation. The original age category is also dichotomized using its median as the division point. This is done to see if workers of different age groups are affected differently by burnout.

There have also been conflicting studies showing the impact of job tenure or length of employment on burnout. Some have found that the longer an employee is employed at an agency, the higher the feelings of personal accomplishment, while others have found that as tenure increases, job satisfaction decreases. Two questions are asked regarding job tenure; "When did you start doing this particular job?" and "How long have you been in this line of work?" Both of these questions are used in bivariate analysis to

determine their relationship with workers' burnout levels. See Table 3 for complete information on all demographic variables.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the independent demographic variables

Variable	Value Labels	N(%)	M	SD	Max	Min
Marital Status	Married	81(47.6)				
	Separated	6(3.5)				
	Divorced	31(18.2)				
	Widowed	4(2.4)				
	Never been married	43(25.3)				
Race	White	96(57.8)				
	African American	60(36.1)				
	Native American	7(4.2)				
	Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	4(2.4)				
	Other	4(2.4)				
	Asian/Asian American	1(0.6)				
Gender	Male	22(13.2)				
	Female	145(86.8)				
Age	Age	157	42.8	11.5	80	21
Education Level	Some high school	2(1.2)				
	High school graduate	9(5.4)				
	Some College	35(20.6)				
	College Graduate	62(36.9)				
	Some graduate education	26(15.3)				
	Graduate or Professional School Degree	34(20.2)				
Years at Job	Years at job	168	5.0	5.00	27	1

Table Continues

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the independent demographic variables (continued).

Variable	Value Labels	N(%)	M	SD	Max	Min
Years in Type of Work	Years in type of work	168	10.9	8.82	36	1
Agency Type	Non profit agency	114(67.7)				
	State or federal agency	55(31.6)				

Table 4. Frequencies of the constructed, independent demographic variables

Constructed Variable	N	Valid %
Categorical age		
21-32	39	24.8
33-42	41	26.1
43-51	37	23.6
52-80	40	25.5
Total	157	100
Dichotomized age		
21-42	80	51
43-80	77	49
Total	157	100
Dichotomized marital status		
Not married (0)	80	47.3
Married (1)	89	52.7
Total	169	100
Dichotomized education level		
Some college or less (0)	46	27.4
College degree or more (1)	122	72.6
Total	168	100

Personal characteristics.

Personal characteristics are defined as those attitudes which the individual would possess regardless of a specific employment situation. All personal characteristics included are considered supports/constraints according to Payne's model.

A worker's personal psychological well being has been shown to be related to burnout. Psychological well being is measured in two ways. The respondent's global self-esteem is measured using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Typical questionnaire items include, "I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others," and "I take a positive attitude toward myself." A respondent's level of uncertainty about the future is measured by asking how much uncertainty or anxiety they felt about the future on a scale of 0 to 100.

Many studies agree that feelings of control are strongly related to burnout. Control includes the worker's level of involvement in decision making including freedom in decisions, the capacity to use a range or their skills on the job, autonomy over one's emotional expressions and empowerment to solve client's problems. Pearlin's (1978) task mastery scale is used to measure the respondents' feelings of mastery or control. Typical questionnaire items include, "I have little control over the things that happen to me," and "I can do just about anything I really set my mind to."

Another characteristic specific to the individual studied was the respondent's sense of professional self-esteem. This includes confidence that you are effective at your job and feelings that you know what you are doing in your work. Professional self-esteem is measured using the professional self-esteem subscale from the HSJSQ. Typical

questionnaire items include, “I am confident in my ability to effectively serve my clients,” and “I feel secure about the soundness of my professional decisions.”

Social support in a worker’s personal life may help buffer the effects of burnout. Some have found that social support promotes job satisfaction and reduced levels of burnout. Social support is measured using three questions assessing how often the respondent saw or visited with their relatives, neighbors and friends. There were seven answer categories ranging from ‘never’ to ‘almost always.’ The scores are added together and their means taken. See Table 5 for more detailed statistics of all personal characteristics used as independent variables in this study.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for the independent personal characteristics variables

Personal Characteristics Variable	N	M	SD	Max	Min
Self-esteem (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	168	3.41	.46	4	1.9
Level of uncertainty (Possible range of scores, 0-100)	164	48.63	27.52	100	0
Mastery (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	168	3.18	.48	4	1.29
Social Integration (Possible range of scores, 0-21)	164	14.76	2.96	21	6
Professional Self-esteem (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	163	2.92	.57	4	.75

Work environment factors.

Many have found that organizational and management processes have direct impact on the work environment and staff work satisfaction which, in turn, influence staff burnout. Factors related to work organization such as relations with supervisors, team support, or work pressure influence burnout. The number of hours worked and feelings of unnecessary paperwork are included as demands of a job while experiences with supervisors and coworkers, flexibility, promotion opportunities, variety and fairness of pay are measured as supports/constraints.

The number of hours worked and the flexibility of those hours are demands that can potentially influence burnout. Respondents are asked how many hours a week they usually worked.

A specific workload item that emerged from the literature review as an important predictor of stress was having too much administrative paper work. Respondents are asked one item about their amount of paperwork: "There is a great deal of unnecessary paperwork at my job" with five response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Supervision, a major source of social service worker support, seems also to be a potent source of social service worker stress. Having support from one's supervisor was found to be associated with having higher control and lower job demands. It was also associated with reduced emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Respondents' experience with their supervisor is measured by a constructed variable using three items from the HSJSQ. These statements were, "I get clear feedback from my supervisor about

my work,” “My supervisor is knowledgeable, skillful, and helpful to me in my work,” and “My supervisor’s expectations of me are clear.” The new variable has a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.89. The answer categories range from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (4). Those with higher scores have more positive experiences with their supervisors.

Staff tends to consider other staff as a main source of support or stress. Workers are also likely to value the support from members of their own group. Respondents’ experience with coworkers is measured by constructing a variable using four items from the HSJSQ; “I get a lot of social support and social enjoyment from my colleagues at work,” “I like most of the people I work with,” “The office environment at my agency is pleasant,” and “My coworkers respect me professionally.” This new variable has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.74.

A lack of flexibility in ones’ job can be a constraint against being an effective worker. A variable is constructed to measure the amount of flexibility in the job. Two statements from the working conditions subscale are combined: “My job provides adequate flexibility in time scheduling,” and “My job provides adequate vacation time.” This new variable has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.71.

A lack of opportunities for promotion can be an area of dissatisfaction among social service workers. The participants are asked to respond about their feelings of opportunities for advancement. The questionnaire item is: “There are opportunities for advancement at my job.”

Studies have found that having a variety of tasks is an area of satisfaction and support for social service workers. Variety in a worker's job is measured by including the questionnaire item: "There is a lot of variety in my job."

A worker's feelings towards the fairness of their pay have also been shown to have relationships with burnout. It has been shown that poor financial rewards have positive relationships with worker dissatisfaction. A worker's feelings about their rate of pay are measured by inclusion of the item: "I am fairly paid for my work." See Table 6 for more detailed statistics on all work environment factors used as independent variables in this study.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for all independent work environment variables

Work environment variable	N	M	SD	Max	Min
Number of hours worked	168	41.35	9.35	90	7
Unnecessary paperwork (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	168	2.04	1.2	4	0
Experience with supervisors (Possible range of scores, 0-12)	123	8.07	3.47	12	0
Experience with coworkers (Possible range of scores, 0-16)	154	12.32	2.5	16	4
Flexibility in job (Possible range of scores, 0-8)	167	5.96	1.71	8	0
Promotion opportunities (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	168	2.01	1.2	4	0
Variety in job (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	167	3.16	1	4	0
Fairness of pay (Possible range of scores, 0-4)	168	1.88	1.24	4	0

Analysis

This study's conceptual model measures three broad categories of variables that all contribute to burnout. It measures demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors that have previously been shown to influence burnout levels. Work demands and supports/constraints are included in these domains. These demands and supports/constraints will be examined to determine their relationship to burnout.

This study includes several measures to assess the amount of demands and supports/constraints a worker encounters. Demands are analyzed by measuring the number of hours a respondent works and how much unnecessary paperwork they feel they have. A worker's supports/constraints are measured by analyzing their levels of self-esteem, mastery, feelings of uncertainty about the future, levels of social support in their personal life, professional self-esteem, relationships with supervisors and coworkers, flexibility within the job, promotion opportunities, variety in their job and rates of pay.

First, bivariate correlations are done to determine any relationships that exist between each other and also the independent variables and the dependent variable. A dichotomized burnout scale is constructed using the median of the sample to conduct crosstabulations and analyses of variance. Low burnout is coded as 0 and higher burnout is coded as 1. Crosstabulations and analyses of variance (ANOVAs) are used to measure the strength of the relationships between the independent variables and burnout. Finally, based on previous literature, theory, analyses, and the conceptual model, a variety of multivariate models are constructed. The purpose of conducting multivariate analyses is

to test the strength of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables while controlling for extraneous relationships. Building multivariate models allows for testing of variation in the dependent variable as well as building and testing theory. Based on the preliminary bivariate correlations (see Appendix A), crosstabulations, analyses of variance and review of the literature, ten variables were chosen to be included in the full multivariate model. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression is used to test what effect the independent variables have on the dependent variable while controlling for the other independent variables.

The findings from seven regression models will be presented; (1) demographic factors only, (2) personal characteristics only, (3) work environment factors only (4) demographic and personal characteristics, (5) demographic and work environment factors, (6) personal characteristics and work environment factors and (7) a full model of demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors.

The variables chosen to be used in the multivariate models draw from the three categories found in the conceptual model. Variables from each domain are incorporated including the demographics age (continuous) and marital status (dichotomized), the personal characteristics uncertainty, mastery and professional self-esteem and the work environment factors of experience with coworkers, flexibility, unnecessary paperwork, promotion opportunities and fairness of pay. The results from the multivariate models are analyzed to see how well they predict levels of social service worker burnout.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will illustrate first the results of the descriptive statistics of the sample. Next, the results from the bivariate analyses will be presented. Finally, the results of the multivariate models will be shown.

Descriptive Statistics

Personal characteristics.

On average, the respondents report having high levels of self-esteem. The mean self-esteem score is a 3.41 on a scale of 0 to 4 with 4 being high self-esteem. The respondents also show high levels of mastery. The mean score is 3.18 on a scale of 0 to 4 with 4 signifying the highest feelings of mastery. A mean score of 48.63 on a scale of 0 to 100 (with 0 signifying no uncertainty) shows that the participants feel slightly more uncertain about the future than certain. A mean score of 14.8 for the social integration measure on a scale of 0 to 21 signifies that this group visits with their relatives, friends and/or neighbors a few times a month. The respondents report slightly lower levels of professional self-esteem than they do personal self-esteem. The average professional self-esteem score is 2.92 verses an average personal self-esteem score of 3.41. The professional self-esteem measure is also on a scale of 0 to 4 with 4 signifying higher levels of professional self-esteem.

Work environment factors.

The respondents in this study work an average of 41.35 hours per week. On a scale of 0 to 4 with 4 signifying higher levels, the participants have a mean score of 2.04 for the measure of unnecessary paperwork. According to a mean score of 8.07 (on a scale of 0 to 12 with 12 signifying more positive experiences) the respondents report more positive experiences with their supervisors than negative. However, the participants report having even better experiences with their coworkers. On a scale of 0 to 16 with 16 signifying more positive experiences, their mean score is 12.32. On average, most workers agree that their job is adequately flexible. Their mean score of flexibility in their job is 5.96 on a scale of 0 to 8 with 8 signifying more flexibility. An intermediate mean of 2.01 on a scale of 0 to 4 shows that the respondents have average feelings about their opportunities for advancement at work. They do however, have more positive feelings towards the amount of variety they have in their job. A mean score of 3.16 on a scale of 0 to 4 with 4 signifying more variety shows that the participants agree that there is a lot of variety in their job. Finally, the lowest mean of all work environment variables belongs to the measure for fairness of pay. On average, the workers disagree that they are fairly paid for their work. This is signified by a mean score of 1.88 on a scale of 0 to 4 with 0 signifying disagreement with the statement that they are fairly paid for their work.

Bivariate Analyses; ANOVAs and Crosstabulations

Crosstabulations are conducted to test for statistically significant relationships between the dependent and categorical independent variables. Measures of association were used to analyze these relationships. ANOVAs are conducted to test for statistical significance between the dichotomized burnout variable and the continuous independent variables.

Demographics.

When conducting a crosstabulation for burnout and the categorized age variable, a statistically significant relationship resulted ($\chi^2=10.02$, $df=3$, $p<.05$). When the results were examined further, it was discovered that there was no relationship between either increasing or decreasing age and burnout. Table 7 presents these findings. The crosstabulation conducted between the dichotomized age variable and burnout did not produce a significant relationship ($\chi^2=.23$, $df=1$, $p<.4$). See Table 8. The analysis of variance for the original continuous age variable and burnout was also not significant, $F=2.4$, $df=1$, $p<.2$. See Table 9.

Table 7. Categorized age variable by burnout level

Age*	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
21-32	14	18.4%	24	30%	38	24.4%
33-42	23	30.3%	18	22.5%	41	26.3%
43-51	13	17.1%	24	30.0%	37	23.7%
52+	26	34.2%	14	17.5%	40	25.6%

Chi-Square = 10.02, $df=3$, $*p<.05$.

Table 8. Dichotomized age variable by burnout level

Dichotomized Age	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
21-42	37	23.7%	42	26.9%	79	50.6%
43-oldest	39	25.0%	38	24.4%	77	49.4%

Chi-Square=.23, $df=1$, $p<.4$

Table 9. Comparison between mean age and burnout level

	N	Mean Age	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low	76	43.33	11.705
High	80	40.49	11.220

$F=2.40, df=1, p<.2$

A workers' marital status is not significantly related to his or her burnout level

($\chi^2=.10, df=1, p<.4$). See Table 10.

Table 10. Marital status by burnout level

Marital Status	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Married	37	23%	44	27%	81	49%
Not married	40	24%	43	26%	83	51%

Chi-Square=.10, $df=1, p<.4$

The crosstabulation for gender and burnout did not result in a significant relationship ($\chi^2=.02$, $df=1$, $p<.5$). Table 11 summarizes this finding.

Table 11. Gender by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender						
Male	10	6.0%	12	7.2%	22	13.3%
Female	68	41.0%	76	45.8%	144	86.7%

Chi-Square=.02, $df=1$, $p<.5$

The crosstabulation and ANOVA show that there is not a significant relationship between education and burnout. The results for the crosstabulation for the dichotomized education variable and burnout is $\chi^2=.06$, $df=3$, $p<.5$ and the results for the ANOVA for the original education variable and burnout is $F=.6$, $df=5$, $p<.7$. See Tables 12 and 13.

Table 12. Dichotomized education variable by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dichotomized Education						
Some college or less	22	13.2%	57	34.1%	79	47.3%
College graduate or more	23	13.8%	65	38.9%	88	52.7%

Chi-Square=.06, $df=1$, $p<.5$

Table 13. Comparison of mean education level and burnout level

	N	Mean education level	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	79	4.28	1.29
High burnout	88	4.16	1.13

$F=.6$, $df=5$, $p<.7$

The ANOVA for how long a worker had been in their current position and burnout do not have a statistically significant relationship, $F=.17$, $df=1$, $p<.7$. See Table 14. Finally, the ANOVA for how long a worker had been working in the social service sector and burnout levels do not have a statistically significant relationship, $F=.21$, $df=1$, $p<.6$. Table 15 presents this finding.

Table 14. Comparison between mean number of years in current position and burnout level

	N	Mean number of years in current position	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	4.86	5.78
High burnout	87	5.18	4.21

$F=.17, df=1, p<.7$

Table 15. Comparison between mean number of years in social service sector and burnout level

	N	Mean number of years in social service sector	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	79	11.2	9.35
High burnout	89	10.57	8.37

$F=.21, df=1, p<.6$

With the exception of the categorized age variable, none of the demographics analyzed have a statistically significant relationship with burnout.

Personal characteristics.

An ANOVA of self-esteem and burnout shows a significant, negative relationship, $F=36.95$, $df=1$, $p < .0001$. This relationship shows that workers with high self-esteem levels have lower burnout levels. The score for self-esteem could range from 1 to 4 with 4 being higher self-esteem. See Table 16.

Table 16. Comparison between mean self-esteem score and burnout level

	N	Mean self-esteem score ****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	3.61	0.40
High burnout	87	3.22	0.43

$F=36.95$, $df=1$, **** $p < .0001$.

The significance test registers a positive finding for the ANOVA conducted between a worker's level of uncertainty about the future and burnout, $F=23.98$, $df=1$, $p < .0001$ with higher levels of uncertainty signifying high burnout. This measure ranges from 0 to 100 with 100 signifying the highest levels of uncertainty. Table 17 presents these findings.

Table 17. Comparison between mean level of uncertainty about the future and burnout level

	N	Mean level of uncertainty****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	76	38.16	25.91
High burnout	87	57.99	25.69

F=23.98, *df*=1, *****p*<.0001

An ANOVA of the mastery measure produces a statistically significant, negative relationship with burnout as well, $F=23.5$, $df=1$, $p<.0001$. The measure for mastery ranged from 1 to 4 with 4 being higher feelings of mastery. These statistics show that those with higher feelings of mastery tend to have lower burnout scores. See Table 18.

Table 18. Comparison between mean mastery score and burnout level

	N	Mean mastery score ****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	3.39	0.5
High burnout	87	3.02	0.41

F=23.5, *df*=1, *****p*<.0001

The significance test for the ANOVA conducted between the measure of social support and burnout does not register a statistically significant relationship, $F=1.81$, $df=1$, $p<.2$. The range of possible scores varied from 0 to 21 for the social integration measure with 21 signifying the highest levels of social integration. Table 19 presents these findings.

Table 19. Comparison between mean social integration score and burnout level

	N	Mean social integration score	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	77	15.08	2.92
High burnout	86	14.45	2.99

$F=1.81$, $df=1$, $p<.2$

An ANOVA conducted of the professional self-esteem subscale found a statistically significant, negative relationship with burnout, $F=26.62$, $df=1$, $p<.0001$. The range of scores for the professional self esteem measure ranges from 0 to 4 with 4 signifying higher feelings of professional self esteem. These results demonstrate that those workers with higher feelings of professional self-esteem tend to have lower burnout levels. Table 20 summarizes these findings.

Table 20. Comparison between mean professional self-esteem score and burnout level

	N	Mean professional self-esteem score ****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	76	3.15	0.47
High burnout	87	2.72	0.56

F=26.623, df=1, ****p<.0001

The ANOVA conducted of social integration and burnout failed to reveal a significant finding. The analyses conducted between self-esteem, uncertainty, mastery, professional self-esteem and burnout did reveal significant findings.

Work environment factors.

The significance test for the ANOVA conducted between the number of hours an employee works a week and burnout does not register a statistically significant relationship, F=0.46, df=1, p<.5. See Table 21.

Table 21. Comparison between mean number of hours worked and burnout level

	N	Mean number of hours worked	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	41.86	10.63
High burnout	87	40.89	8.1

$F=0.46, df=1, p<.5$

An ANOVA was conducted of the measure for unnecessary paperwork with burnout. The significance test registered a statistically significant, positive relationship, $F=26.52, df=1, p<.0001$. The range of possible scores for this variable is 0 to 4 with 0 signifying strong disagreement with the statement, "There is a great deal of unnecessary paperwork at my job." The crosstabulation of the measure for unnecessary paperwork and burnout results in a significant relationship ($\chi^2=20.2, df=4, p<.0001$). These results illustrate that those with higher burnout levels tended to agree that they have a great deal of unnecessary paperwork. Tables 22 and 23 present these findings.

Table 22. Comparison between amount of unnecessary paperwork and burnout level

	N	Mean unnecessary paperwork level****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	1.63	1.1
High burnout	88	2.42	1.16

$F=26.52, df=1, ****p<.0001$

Table 23. Unnecessary paperwork by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Feelings of unnecessary paperwork****						
Strongly disagree	9	11.3%	2	2.3%%	11	6.5%
Disagree	37	46.3%	26	29.5%	63	37.5%
Unsure	13	16.3%	9	10.2%	22	13.1%
Agree	17	21.3%	35	39.8%	52	31.0%
Strongly Agree	4	5.0%	16	18.2%	20	11.9%

$\chi^2=20.2, df=4, ****p<.0001$

When an ANOVA was conducted to compare the means between the new supervisor experience variable and a worker's burnout level, it produced a significant negative relationship, $F=9.18$, $df=1$, $p<.01$. These statistics show that those with more positive experiences with their supervisors tended to have lower levels of burnout. The range of possible scores on this variable ranges from 0 to 12 with higher scores signifying better experiences with supervisors. See Table 24.

Table 24. Comparison between mean supervisor experience score and burnout level

	N	Mean supervisor experience score**	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	57	9.05	3.25
High burnout	66	7.21	3.45

$F=9.18$, $df=1$, $**p<.01$

The significance test for the ANOVA conducted between the measure for coworker experience and burnout registers a statistically significant negative relationship, $F=12.8$, $df=1$, $p<.0001$. The range of scores possible on this variable ranges from 0 to 16 with higher scores signifying better experiences with coworkers. These results illustrate that those with better experiences with their coworkers tend to have lower burnout levels. See Table 25.

Table 25. Comparison between mean coworker experience score and burnout level

	N	Mean coworker experience score ****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	77	13.01	2.08
High burnout	77	11.62	2.70

F=12.8, *df*=1, *****p*<.0001

The significance test registers a score of $F=10.59$, $df=1$, $p<.001$ for the ANOVA conducted between the amount of flexibility one feels they have in their job and their burnout level. The range of possible scores for this variable is 0 to 8 with 8 being high flexibility. This relationship signifies that as flexibility within the job increases, workers burnout levels decrease. Table 26 presents these findings.

Table 26. Comparison between mean flexibility in job score and burnout level

	N	Mean flexibility score***	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	6.40	1.29
High burnout	87	5.56	1.94

F=10.59, *df*=1, ****p*<.001

The significance test for the ANOVA conducted between the measure for opportunities for advancement and burnout registered a significant, positive relationship, $F=24.501$, $df=1$, $p<.0001$. The range of scores is 0 to 4 with 4 signifying greater feelings of opportunities for advancement. When conducting a crosstabulation for burnout and opportunities for advancement, a statistically significant relationship results, ($\chi^2=23.79$, $df=4$, $p<.0001$). These analyses reveal that the better workers feel about his or her opportunities for advancement, the lower their burnout levels tend to be. Tables 27 and 28 present these findings.

Table 27. Comparison between mean feelings of opportunities for advancement and burnout level

	N	Mean opportunities for advancement score****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	2.41	1.06
High burnout	88	1.65	1.20

$F=24.51$, $df=1$, **** $p<.0001$

Table 28. Opportunities for advancement by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Opportunities for advancement****						
Strongly disagree	3	3.8%	18	20.5%	21	12.5%
Disagree	12	15.0%	26	29.5%	38	22.6%
Unsure	28	35.0%	17	19.3%	45	26.8%
Agree	23	28.8%	23	26.1%	46	27.4%
Strongly Agree	14	17.5%	4	4.5%	18	10.7%

$\chi^2=23.79, df=4, ****p<.0001$

When an ANOVA was conducted to compare the means between the measure for how much variety one felt they had in their job and their burnout level, it produced a significant, negative relationship, $F=5.58, df=1, p<.05$. The range of scores for this variable is 0 to 4 with 4 signifying more feelings of variety in one's job. This relationship signifies that the more variety a worker feels in his or her job, the lower his or her burnout levels tend to be. See Table 29. The crosstabulation between variety in job and burnout does not produce a significant result ($\chi^2=5.95, df=4, p<.2$). See Table 30.

Table 29. Comparison between feelings of variety in one's job and burnout level

	N	Mean variety in job score*	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	80	3.35	0.86
High burnout	87	2.99	1.09

$F=5.58, df=1, *p<.05$

Table 30. Variety in one's job by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Variety in one's job						
Strongly disagree	0	0%	2	2.3%	2	1.2%
Disagree	5	6.3%	11	12.6%	16	9.6%
Unsure	5	6.3%	7	8.0%	12	7.2%
Agree	27	33.8%	33	37.9%	60	35.9%
Strongly Agree	43	53.8%	34	39.1%	77	46.1%

$\chi^2=5.95, df=4, p<.2$

An ANOVA of the fairness of pay measure produces a statistically significant, negative relationship with burnout, $F=15.70$, $df=1$, $p<.0001$. The score for fairness of pay ranges from 0 to 4 with 4 being higher feelings of fairness. See Table 31. Table 32 presents the findings of the crosstabulation conducted between feelings of fairness of pay and burnout levels. This also has significant results ($\chi^2=18.48$, $df=4$, $p<.001$). These results illustrate that as a worker's feelings of the fairness of their pay decline, his or her burnout levels will tend to increase.

Table 31. Comparison between mean fairness of pay score and burnout level

	N	Mean fairness of pay score ****	Std. Deviation
Burnout level			
Low burnout	79	2.27	1.08
High burnout	89	1.54	1.27

$F=15.70$, $df=1$, **** $p<.0001$

Table 32. Feelings of fairness of pay by burnout level

	Low burnout		High burnout		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Feelings of fairness of pay***						
Strongly disagree	3	3.8%	23	25.8%	26	15.5%
Disagree	21	26.6%	27	30.3%	48	28.6%
Unsure	15	19.0%	12	13.5%	27	16.1%
Agree	32	40.5%	22	24.7%	54	32.1%
Strongly Agree	8	10.1%	5	5.6%	13	7.7%

$\chi^2=18.48, df=4, ***p<.001$

The ANOVA conducted comparing the mean number of hours worked for low burnout versus high burnout did not differ significantly. The bivariate analyses conducted of experiences with supervisors and coworkers, flexibility, feelings of unnecessary paperwork, opportunities for advancement, variety and fairness of pay did reveal statistically significant relationships with burnout.

Multivariate Analyses

The model containing only demographics explains a small amount of the variance in the levels of burnout. The regression results show that this model as a whole is significant ($F=3.55, df=2, p<.05$), yet the $R^2 = .045$ and adjusted $R^2=.033$ show that this model only explains three to four percent of the variance in the levels of worker burnout.

Neither the covariates of age nor marital status were found to be significant. See Table 33 for further statistics.

Table 33. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of demographic factors on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Demographics			
Age	-0.11	.01	-2.36
Marital Status	.17	.10	1.62
Constant	1.84	.20	9.40****

$R^2=.045$, adjusted $R^2=.033$, $df=2$, 150

N=153

**** $p<.0001$.

The model of only personal characteristics explains more of the variance in burnout levels than did the regression with only demographics. The regression results show that this model as a whole was significant, $F=38.18$, $df=3$, $p<.0001$. The $R^2 = .43$ and adjusted $R^2=.42$ show that this model explains 42 to 43 percent of the variance in the chances that burnout will occur. All three independent variables are significantly related to burnout. Higher feelings of uncertainty or anxiety about the future are positively related to burnout, $p<.0001$. Mastery and professional self-esteem are negatively related to feelings of burnout, $p<.05$ and $p<.0001$, respectively. See Table 34.

Table 34. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of personal characteristics on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Personal Characteristics			
Uncertainty	.01	.00	3.68****
Mastery	-.18	.09	-1.96*
Professional self-esteem	-.55	.08	-7.21****
Constant	3.40	.35	9.76****

$R^2=.43$, adjusted $R^2=.42$, $df=3, 151$

N=155

* $p<.05$. **** $p<.0001$.

The OLS regression conducted of work environment factors on burnout also yielded several significant findings. The regression results show that this model as a whole is significant ($F=17.2$, $df=5$, $p<.0001$), explaining 35 to 37 percent of the variance in burnout levels according to the R^2 of .374 and the adjusted R^2 of .352. In addition, four of the five independent variables included are significantly related to burnout. Feelings of unnecessary paperwork are positively related to feelings of burnout. The relationship between experience with coworkers and burnout tends towards significance $p<.10$ and burnout is negatively related to flexibility and opportunities for advancement, $p<.05$ and $p<.05$ respectively. Table 35 presents the findings for this regression.

Table 35. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of work environment factors on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Work Environment			
Unnecessary paperwork	.21	.04	5.45****
Coworker experience	-.04	.02	-1.75†
Flexibility	-.06	.03	-2.06*
Opportunities for advancement	-.10	.04	-2.25*
Fairness of pay	-.00	.04	-.11
Constant	2.03	.27	7.67****

$R^2=.37$, adjusted $R^2=.352$, $df=5, 144$

$N=150$

† $p<.10$, * $p<.05$. **** $p<.0001$.

The model which includes both demographic and personal characteristics show that, as a whole, this model is significant, $F=18.93$, $df=5$, $p<.0001$. This model explains 39 to 41 percent of the variance in burnout levels according to the R^2 of .409 and the adjusted R^2 of .387. In addition, three out of the five independent variables have statistically significant relationships. Feelings of uncertainty about the future are positively related to feelings of burnout at a significance level of $p<.05$. Mastery tends towards significance, $p<.10$ and professional self-esteem is negatively related to burnout, $p<.0001$. See Table 36.

Table 36. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of demographic and personal characteristics on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Demographics			
Marital status	.09	.09	1.07
Age	-.01	.00	-1.34
Personal characteristics			
Uncertainty	.01	.00	3.23*
Mastery	-.18	.10	-1.81†
Professional self-esteem	-.50	.08	-5.98****
Constant	3.41	.42	8.20****

$R^2=.41$, adjusted $R^2=.387$, $df=5$, 137

N=143

† $p<.10$, * $p<.05$. **** $p<.0001$.

The demographic and work environment factor model shows that as a whole, it is significant, $F=13.89$, $df=7$, $p<.0001$. The $R^2 = .428$ and adjusted $R^2=.397$ showing that this model explains 40 to 43 percent of the variance in the chances that burnout will occur. In addition, five of the seven independent variables included have statistically significant results. A workers age, experience with coworkers, flexibility within the job and opportunities for advancement are negatively related to burnout at significance

levels of $p < .01$, $p < .05$, $p < .05$, and $p < .05$ respectively. The amount of unnecessary paperwork a worker feels they have is positively related to burnout at a significance level of $p < .0001$. See Table 37.

Table 37. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of demographic and work environment factors on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Demographics			
Marital status	.01	.09	.14
Age	-.01	.00	-2.43†
Work environment			
Unnecessary paperwork	.22	.04	5.38****
Experience with coworkers	-.04	.02	-2.10*
Opportunities for advancement	-.10	.04	-2.21*
Fairness of pay	.02	.04	.46
Constant	2.48	.31	7.96****

$R^2 = .43$, adjusted $R^2 = .397$, $df = 7, 130$

N=138

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$. **** $p < .0001$.

The regression conducted of personal characteristics, work environment factors on burnout reveal several significant results. The statistics show the model, as a whole, is significant, $F=16.90$, $df=8$, $p<.0001$. The R^2 of .508 and adjusted R^2 of .478 shows that this model explains 48 to 51 percent of the variance in the chance that burnout will occur. Of the eight independent variables included, four were statistically significant. Feelings of mastery, professional self-esteem and experience with coworkers were negatively related to feelings of burnout at significance levels of $p<.01$, $p<.10$, and $p<.0001$, respectively. Table 38 summarizes these findings.

Table 38. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of personal characteristics and work environment factors on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Personal characteristics			
Uncertainty	.00	.00	2.60**
Mastery	-.18	.09	-1.91†
Professional self-esteem	-.36	.09	-4.07****
Work environment			
Unnecessary paperwork	.17	.04	4.57****
Experience with coworkers	-.00	.02	-.11
Flexibility	-.03	.03	-1.13
Opportunities for advancement	-.07	.04	-1.59
Fairness of pay	.00	.04	.01
Constant	2.89	.40	7.18****

$R^2=.508$, adjusted R^2 of $.478$, $df=8, 131$

$N=140$

† $p<.10$, ** $p<.01$, **** $p<.0001$.

Table 39 presents the full model regression described in the conceptual model with demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors. This model is statistically significant ($F=12.74$, $df=10$, $p<.001$). The $R^2 = .517$ and adjusted $R^2=.477$ shows that this model explains 48 to 52 percent of the variance in the chances that burnout will occur. Three independent variables were found to be significantly related to burnout. Higher feelings of uncertainty and anxiety about the future and the more the worker felt there was unnecessary paperwork were both positively related to burnout ($p<.05$ and $p<.01$ respectively). Negatively related to burnout at a significance level of $p<.001$ was high levels of professional self-esteem.

Table 39. Ordinary Least Squares Regression of demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors on burnout

Variable	Unstandardized B	Standard Error	t
Demographics			
Age	-.01	.00	-1.61
Marital Status	.01	.09	.09
Personal Characteristics			
Uncertainty	.00	.00	2.40*
Mastery	-.16	.10	-1.58
Professional self-esteem	-.28	.09	-2.99**
Work Environment			
Unnecessary Paperwork	.18	.04	4.66***
Experience with coworkers	-.01	.02	-.62
Flexibility	-.03	.03	-1.08
Promotion opportunities	-.07	.04	-1.65
Fairness of pay	.02	.04	.42
Constant	2.91	.46	6.40****

$R^2=.516$, adjusted $R^2=.477$, $df=10, 119$

N=130

* $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table 40 is included to summarize and condense the information presented from all multivariate models. This is done to being able to more clearly see the order of the models' significance in comparison to one another.

Table 40. Summary of all multivariate models' R^2

Model	R^2	Rank order of amount of variance explained
Demographics only	.045	7
Personal characteristics only	.431	3
Work environment factors only	.374	6
Demographics and personal characteristics	.409	5
Demographics and work environment factors	.428	4
Personal characteristics and work environment factors	.508	2
Full model: Demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors	.516	1

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of demographics, personal characteristics and work environment factors on social service workers' level of burnout. This is done by constructing a conceptual model containing factors from each of these domains. This section will present a discussion of the results, limitations of the study as well as implications of the findings.

Discussion of Results

An aim of this study was to determine what factors are related to burnout. It was discovered that the three most statistically significant factors were; uncertainty about the future, professional self-esteem and unnecessary paperwork. It was revealed that mastery, flexibility, opportunities for advancement and coworker experience were also significantly related to levels of burnout. Age, marital status and fairness of pay were not significant when included in multivariate analyses.

The findings of this study support previous studies on social service worker burnout. Both personal characteristics and work environment factors are highly associated with burnout in this sample while demographic factors have limited relationships with burnout. A possible explanation for the low significance of the demographics could be because of the low variability within the demographic data. The

majority of the respondents were largely similar on the demographics used. Nearly half of the sample is white, middle-aged, married, women with a college degree.

One of the research questions asked if a combination of demographic, personal and work environment factors interacted in explaining burnout levels. From the results of the multivariate analysis, it was found that a combination of factors did explain more of the variance than a model that included only one domain, indicating the complexity of this phenomenon.

This study uses a theory that proposes that the demands of a job and supports/constraints influence one another. This theory was utilized by employing a conceptual model that contained variables measuring demographic, personal and work environment demands, and supports/constraints. The results of this study support Payne's (1979) theory that a combination of supports/constraints and demands explain the largest amount of variance in burnout levels. It was necessary that demographic, personal and work environment supports/constraints were included to measure their effects on how well the workers dealt with the demands placed upon them in turn influencing their burnout levels.

Bivariate Analyses

Bivariate analyses reveal the poor explanatory power of demographics in this sample. With the exception of age, which had tendencies toward significance, none of the demographics included in the bivariate analyses were significant. On the other hand,

almost all personal and work environment characteristics included in the bivariate analyses were significant.

Crosstabulations and ANOVAs reveal that the personal characteristics of self-esteem, uncertainty about the future, mastery and professional self-esteem were significantly related to burnout. Social integration and burnout is the only non-significant finding between a personal characteristic and burnout. Social support was a relatively consistent, significant factor affecting burnout according to the review of the literature. Perhaps a reason the proxy for social support did not yield a significant finding is because social integration was not a close enough concept to social support. The social integration variable used in this study measures how often the participants visit the significant others in their lives. It does not measure if they actually feel supported by them or not.

The work environment factors of experiences with supervisors and coworkers, flexibility, feelings of unnecessary paperwork, opportunities for advancement, variety in the job and fairness of pay all revealed statistically significant relationships with burnout through the crosstabulations and ANOVAs conducted.

The ANOVA conducted comparing the mean number of hours worked for low burnout versus high burnout did not differ significantly. This is an important finding to note. It seems reasonable to believe that the more hours you work, the greater the chances of burning out. This is not the case. It did not matter if a participant worked 30 hours a week or 70. It is variables outside of number of hours worked that are related to social service worker burnout.

The crosstabulations and ANOVAs reveal the direction of the relationship between the significantly related variables. For example, the ANOVA conducted between self-esteem and burnout shows that the higher a worker's self-esteem is, the lower their burnout level is. Conversely, the higher a worker's feelings of uncertainty about the future are, the higher their burnout levels are. The ANOVA between mastery and burnout reveals that the more mastery a worker feels, the less burnout they respond to experiencing. Professional self-esteem is also seen as an important resource for the worker. The ANOVA conducted between professional self-esteem and burnout reveals that less burnout is experienced the higher the worker's feelings of professional self-esteem.

Both the crosstabulation and ANOVA conducted between feelings of unnecessary paperwork and burnout reveal that the more unnecessary paperwork a worker feels they have, the greater his or her feelings of burnout. Bivariate analyses reveal that supervisors and coworkers are viewed as sources of support for the participants. The ANOVAs conducted between experience with supervisors and coworkers reveal that the better experiences a worker has with his or her supervisors and coworkers, the lower his or her levels of burnout. Depending on the agency, position or hours worked, a supervisor could have an integral role in the everyday job of an employee. It is no surprise that the participants' experiences with their supervisors are significantly related to their burnout level.

It was also discovered that the more flexibility a worker feels he or she has in the job, the less likely he or she is to respond with higher levels of burnout. Similarly, the

more opportunities for advancement workers feel they have, the less likely they are to feel burned out.

The ANOVA conducted between feelings of variety in one's job and burnout reveals that the more variety one feels they have in their job, the less likely they are to report feeling burned out. The crosstabulation conducted between these two variables failed to reveal a significant finding. It is easy to see how a repetitive and mundane workday could potentially lead to burnout. Many would agree that a varied and diverse workday could be stimulating, motivating and interesting. Finally, both the crosstabulation and ANOVA conducted between the measure for fairness of pay and burnout reveal that the less fair a worker feels their pay is, the more burned out they report feeling.

Multivariate Analyses

Several interesting findings resulted from the multivariate models. For one, when other factors were controlled for, fairness of pay lost its significance. Perhaps a reason for this is because social service workers are aware that this work does not pay well. They make the choice to enter into the human services field for other reasons only to find unexpected burdens such as burdensome paperwork and poor advancement opportunities.

Also, the three most robust individual variables that remained significant in all combinations of models are unnecessary paperwork, professional self-esteem and uncertainty about the future. It is an unexpected discovery that unnecessary paperwork was one of the strongest predictors of burnout. It may seem like a smaller, more

insignificant part of a job compared to salary or management but it turns out to be extremely relevant when examining burnout. This, again, may connect to the idea that many social service workers enter into the profession with the intention of being a public servant making human connections with others only to be overwhelmed or disillusioned by other factors, in this case, tedious paperwork. Administrative paperwork is an aspect of their job that permeates their every day experiences and appears to have one of the largest affects on their level of burnout.

Professional self-esteem and uncertainty about the future are the remaining two strongest and most consistently significant variables related to burnout. The more confidence and assurance a worker feels in his or her job, the less likely they are to burn out. Knowing this, it makes sense that the more confused, unsure and uncertain one feels about the future, the more burned out they will be. These two opposite measures touch on the same fact; that the more certainty and sureness one feels about themselves and the future, the more protected they are against the threat of burnout. It was discussed earlier that a large part of social service work is coming up with answers to their clients' problems. If workers do not feel confident and sure that they are successfully helping their clients, it is understandable that they would begin to feel burned out over time.

Mastery was also found to be consistently related to burnout. Pearlin's task mastery scale was used to measure the respondents' feelings of control and mastery. Responses to statements such as, "I have little control over the things that happen to me," give insight into the complex relationships between control and burnout. The less control a worker felt they had over the circumstances, the more likely they were to indicate high

levels of burnout. Demands in which workers feel that they have little control over, such as amounts of administrative paperwork, have detrimental effects on their abilities to prevent burnout.

Many workers truly value flexibility in their jobs. Being unable to maintain a balance between the work world and the personal world is a source of stress in many workers' lives. It was found in this study that the more flexibility one felt in his or her job, the less likely he or she was to indicate high levels of burnout. This could be because having flexibility with your work schedule allows a worker to more adequately manage their personal life, thus diminishing another potential source of stress. An employee's work life and personal life are intimately intertwined. A rigid work schedule can be a source of stress in the work environment, which, in turn, can spread to stress in the personal life.

It is natural that a worker should want to advance throughout his or her career. It can be frustrating and defeating to work hard in a job with no rewards of promotion. This study found that the more negative a respondent felt toward their opportunities for advancement at their job, the more likely they were to indicate higher levels of burnout.

Many employees have coworkers that they interact with to varying degrees on a regular basis. These coworkers can be a very integral and pervasive part of one's day-to-day functioning in the work setting. They have been shown to be a very important source of social support for the social service worker. It was discovered that the better experiences a worker responded to having with their coworkers, the less likely they were to feel high levels of burnout.

Limitations

This sample was taken only from Missouri and Kansas. It is unclear if these findings can be extrapolated to other areas of the country. Also, the age variable had tendencies towards significance that were not fully examined. Another limitation is that this is a secondary data analysis. Finally, previous studies have suggested that the three components of burnout; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment be examined separately when analyzing worker burnout. This was not done in this study.

Implications

The more we can understand factors associated with burnout, the better it can be prevented. This and other studies have revealed the importance of both personal characteristics and work environment factors affects on worker burnout. Agency managers and supervisory staff have reason to believe that personal troubles may become agency problems and that organizational design and development can address structural and procedural impediments that reduce agency efficiency and limit workers' ability (Koeske & Kelly, 1995).

This study revealed the importance of professional self-esteem on a worker's burnout levels. Agencies would be well served to incorporate practices that increase their staff's levels of professional self-esteem. These autonomous and empowered workers could thus lead to better support of clients and improved agency functioning.

The amount of unnecessary paperwork staff feels they have was also found to be very important in explaining how burned out workers are. The more agencies are aware of this, the more steps could be taken to address this issue. Administrative paperwork is clearly an issue among social service workers. It has become an unwelcome and time-consuming facet of their work life that should be addressed. Eliminating, condensing or sharing of paperwork could be possible ways to lessen this stressful component of the social service workers' workday.

Burnout is significantly related to job satisfaction (Dyer & Quine, 1998) and job satisfaction has a large effect on turnover intent (Lambert et al., 2001). One purpose of organization and management processes is to develop a work environment that enhances job satisfaction (Schulz et al., 1995). One way to do this is to maintain a reasonable level of demands while simultaneously offering support. Unreasonable demands have a damaging effect on job satisfaction and burnout while support can promote job satisfaction and reduce burnout (Dyer & Quine, 1998). Agencies could possibly benefit from lower turnover rates if they make an effort to lower their employees' burnout levels and increase their job satisfaction levels.

Managers and supervisors should create work environments conducive to employee autonomy and personal control (Koeske & Kirk, 1995a). Although programs that provide support for staff may be considered expensive in today's climate, management needs to assess the cost effectiveness of such programs as they have been shown to significantly reduce burnout (Acker, 2003).

At the same time, merely throwing money at a problem will not necessarily solve the problems. As was discovered, fairness of pay lost its significant relationship with burnout when controlling for other variables in the multivariate analyses. Perhaps simply paying workers more is not the solution. It is imperative that their jobs are made better to reduce their levels of burnout. This reduction can lead to more satisfied workers, improved agency functioning and enhanced service to clients.

APPENDIX A

CORRELATION MATRIX OF ALL VARIABLES

Appendix A. Correlation matrix

	Continuos age	Categorica l age	Dichotomi zed age	Marital status	Dichotomi zed marital status	Gender	Education	Dichotomi zed education
Continuous age	1.00	.95**	.85**	-.29**	.18*	-.11	.09	-.08
Categorized age		1.00	.86**	-.29**	.18*	-.11	.11	-.09
Dichotomized age			1.00	-.22**	.13	-.10	.12	-.04
Marital status				1.00	-.89**	.15	.01	.04
Dichotomized marital status					1.00	-.17*	.00	.02
Gender						1.00	-.22**	-.20**
Education							1.00	.76**
Dichotomized education								1.00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Appendix A. Correlation matrix (Continued).

	Time in job	Time in type of work	Self- esteem	Uncertainty	Mastery	Social Integration	Professio nal Self- esteem	Number of hours worked
Continuous age	-.27**	-.59**	.15	-.13	.03	.01	.18*	.13
Categorized age	-.25**	-.54**	.17*	-.12	.04	.03	.17*	.12
Dichotomized age	-.24**	-.48**	.15	-.07	.02	.00	.14	.08
Marital status	.22**	.21**	.08	.16*	-.01	.05	-.00	-.04
Dichotomized marital status	-.22**	-.14	-.09	-.13	-.02	-.08	-.03	.03
Gender	.01	.05	-.05	.02	.09	.03	.00	-.13
Education	-.09	-.18*	.06	.02	.16*	.14	.08	.17*
Dichotomized education	-.06	-.10	.03	.06	.09	.07	-.11	.10

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Appendix A. Correlation matrix (Continued).

	Unneces- sary paperwo- rk	Experie- nce with supervis- or	Experie- nce with coworke- rs	Flexibili- ty in job	Promoti- on opportu- nities	Variety in job	Fairness of pay	Burnout Scale	Dichoto- mized Burnout scale
Continuous age	-.06	.03	-.04	.01	.00	.13	.15	-.19*	-.12
Categorized age	-.05	.05	-.03	-.02	.00	.16*	.15	-.18*	-.14
Dichotomized age	.03	.04	-.06	-.08	-.02	.16*	.08	-.07	-.04
Marital status	-.09	-.02	-.00	.08	.06	-.09	-.09	-.05	-.06
Dichotomized marital status	.11	-.03	-.01	-.12	-.07	.05	.05	.05	.03
Gender	-.18*	.01	.10	.10	.13	.03	.08	-.05	-.01
Education	.04	-.06	.02	-.03	-.03	-.06	-.02	.06	-.05
Dichotomized education	.10	-.27**	-.12	-.13	-.14	-.12	-.02	.14	.02

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Appendix A. Correlation matrix (Continued).

	Time in job	Time in type of work	Self-esteem	Uncertainty	Mastery	Social Integration	Professional Self-esteem	Number of hours worked
Time in job	1.00	.39**	-.02	-.01	-.01	.02	-.04	-.07
Time in type of work		1.00	-.08	.03	-.01	.01	-.06	-.11
Self-esteem			1.00	-.29**	.59**	.12	.40**	.08
Uncertainty				1.00	-.35**	-.05	-.26**	-.21**
Mastery					1.00	.07	.35**	.07
Social integration						1.00	.12	.03
Professional self-esteem							1.00	.09
Number of hours worked								1.00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Appendix A. Correlation matrix (Continued).

	Unneces- sary paperwo- rk	Experie- nce with supervis- or	Experie- nce with coworke- rs	Flexibili- ty in job	Promoti- on opportu- nities	Variety in job	Fairness of pay	Burnout Scale	Dichoto- mized Burnout scale
Time in job	-.08	.09	.04	-.06	.00	.03	-.07	-.03	-.03
Time in type of work	-.04	.16	.05	.05	.22**	.01	-.07	.02	.04
Self-esteem	-.02	.25**	.24**	.15	.29**	.14	.06	-.46**	-.43**
Uncertainty	.11	-.19*	-.14	-.22**	-.17*	-.23**	-.28**	.41**	.36**
Mastery	-.08	.30**	.32**	.20**	.22**	.18*	.11	-.38**	-.35**
Social integration	-.12	.09	.10	.15	.15	.17*	.11	-.18*	-.11
Professional self-esteem	-.29**	.67**	.42**	.36**	.33**	.19*	.18*	-.59**	-.38**
Number of hours worked	.03	-.02	.07	-.01	.13	.08	-.01	-.06	-.05

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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Appendix A. Correlation matrix (Continued).

	Unneces sary paperwo rk	Experie nce with supervis or	Experie nce with coworke rs	Flexibili ty in job	Promoti on opportu nities	Variety in job	Fairness of pay	Burnout Scale	Dichoto mized Burnout scale
Unnecessary paperwork	1.00	-.32**	-.20*	-.18*	-.27**	-.14	-.31**	.48**	.33**
Experience w/ supervisors		1.00	.54**	.47**	.40**	.36**	.18*	-.41**	-.27**
Experience w/ coworkers			1.00	.40**	.50**	.33**	.30**	-.36**	-.28**
Flexibility in job				1.00	.31**	.38**	.33**	-.38**	-.25**
Promotion opportunities					1.00	.27**	.35**	-.39**	-.32**
Variety in job						1.00	.25**	-.24**	-.18*
Fairness of pay							1.00	-.30**	-.29**
Burnout scale								1.00	.80**
Dichotomized burnout scale									1.00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

APPENDIX B

HUMAN SERVICES JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix B. Human Services Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (HSJSQ) (Shapiro, Burkey, Dorman & Welker, 1996)

The answer category for each statement is; strongly disagree (0), disagree (1), unsure (2), agree (3), strongly agree (4).

Self-Actualization subscale

- a. My work is intellectually interesting.
- b. My work involves real creativity.
- c. I have had genuinely moving experiences in my work with clients.
- d. I feel I make an important contribution to people's lives with the work I do.
- e. My job involves continual learning and development of my skills.
- f. My job provides the opportunity to really make use of my abilities.
- g. I feel I am growing professionally and personally through my job.
- h. There is a lot of variety in my job.
- i. Although of course they have problems, my clients have included some of the finest people I have ever met.
- j. The work I do is important for our society.
- k. I sometimes feel I am a true partner with my clients in their efforts to improve their lives.
- l. I get clear feedback from my supervisor about my work.
- m. My supervisor is knowledgeable, skillful, and helpful to me in my work.
- n. My supervisor's expectations of me are clear.
- o. I have sufficient access to expert consultation on matters for which I have professional need.
- p. I have about the right amount of independence in my work.
- q. I get a lot of support and social enjoyment from my colleagues at work.
- r. There are opportunities for advancement at my job.
- s. I like most of the people I work with.

Affect subscale

- t. Worries about work often bother me in my free time.
- u. I am eager to go to work each day.
- v. I want to continue in my present type of work for a long time.
- w. I am often upset and depressed by my clients' problems.
- x. My workday is exhausting to me.
- y. I sometimes regret going into the type of work I do.
- z. I often feel relieved when a client cancels or doesn't show up for an appointment.

Working Conditions subscale

- aa. The office environment at my agency is pleasant.
- bb. The work requirements of my job are reasonable.
- cc. I have generally good working conditions.
- dd. The time I have available to spend with my clients is adequate.
- ee. There are a number of stupid policies and procedures at my job.
- ff. There is a great deal of unnecessary paperwork at my job.
- gg. I am satisfied with my job.
- hh. My job provides adequate flexibility in time scheduling.
- ii. My job provides adequate vacation time.

Professional self-esteem subscale

- jj. I am confident in my ability to effectively serve my clients.
- kk. I sometimes wonder whether I really know what I am doing in my work.
- ll. I feel secure about the soundness of my professional decisions.
- mm. My coworkers respect me professionally.

Futility/avoidance subscale

- nn. I sometimes call in sick because I just need a break from work.
- oo. I sometimes count the hours until I can go home from the work.
- pp. Sometimes it feels like I'm not really accomplishing anything with my work.
- qq. I sometimes feel there is nothing I can do to help my clients.
- rr. I sometimes have to do things in my job that are against what I feel to be right.
- ss. I sometimes have trouble concentrating at work.

Items not included in any subscale

- tt. I am fairly paid for my work.
- uu. I don't mind putting in extra hours of work.
- vv. My work is so interesting to me that I often find myself thinking about it or talking about it with family and friends during my free time.
- ww. The human suffering I come into contact with sometimes makes me feel miserable.

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VITA

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