

Job Satisfaction and Burnout Risk Among American and Turkish Counselor Educators¹

Dean W. OWEN² and Ayhan DEMİR³

Abstract: The roles required of university teaching faculty have evolved quite dramatically over the past half century. With this evolution in role and function has come increasing demands for productivity, efficiency, learning new delivery platforms and responding to the ever changing demands of higher education. This study compared a sample Turkish (n = 91) counselor education faculty members with a sample of their U.S. counterparts (n = 90) with regard to job satisfaction and burnout risk. Data were collected through the use of an online survey and results revealed significant differences between the samples. Results indicated significant differences between samples in job satisfaction levels as well as a negative relationship between burnout risk and satisfaction. Discussion of findings and implications for further research were presented.

Keywords: faculty job satisfaction, faculty burn out, counselor educators

Türk ve Amerikan Psikolojik Danışman Eğitimcilerinde Tükenmişlik Riski ve İş Doymu

Öz: Son elli yılda, üniversitelerde çalışan akademisyenlerin rolleri ciddi biçimde evrilmiştir. Rol ve işlevlerdeki bu evrim ile etkililik, verimlilik, yeni ders verme yolları istenmesinde artış olmuş ve yükseköğretimin değişen isteklerine tepki verme gereği doğmuştur. Bu çalışmada Türk (n = 91) ve Amerikan (n = 90) psikolojik danışmanlar iş doymu ve tükenmişlik riski açısından karşılaştırılmıştır. (n = 90). Online olarak yayınlanan bir ölçme aracıyla toplanan verilerle yapılan analizler iki grup arasında bazı farkların olduğunu göstermiştir. Bulgular, iki grup arasında iş doymu açısından anlamlı farkların olduğu ve iş doymu ile tükenmişlik arasında olumsuz ilişki olduğu doğrultusundadır. Bulgular tartışılarak, gelecek çalışmalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: akademisyenlerde iş doymu, akademisyenlerde tükenmişlik, psikolojik danışman eğitimcisi

The roles required of university teaching faculty have evolved quite dramatically over the past half century. With this evolution in role and function has come increasing demands for productivity, efficiency, learning new delivery platforms and the requirement to increasingly integrate computers and other media and information technology into the work of a university faculty member. If one were to consider only a few of the many other variables that impinge on job satisfaction and job stress such as decreasing funding for

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² Prof. Dr., METU NCC, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, e-mail: dean@metu.edu.tr

³ Prof. Dr. METU, Faculty of Education, Ankara, Turkey, e-mail: aydemir@metu.edu.tr

higher education and seemingly constant pressure to increase retention it is little wonder that many counselor educators in The U.S. now experience high levels of job stress and reduced levels of job satisfaction. The rapid creation of new institutions of higher learning throughout Turkey has created a nearly constant shortage of qualified academics in many fields including counseling. In addition to a highly competitive promotion system that places a high priority on research and publication; such faculty members are expected to accept very heavy teaching loads. This investigation was conceived to further investigate a number of issues affecting counselor educators in the U.S. and in Turkey particularly in the area of job satisfaction and burnout risk.

The concept of job satisfaction is one that emerged in the early part of the last century when corporations began to employ large numbers of workers. Together with the increasing popularity of anonymous surveys the study of job or employee satisfaction arose as an area of serious study (Latham & Budworth, 2007). From a historical perspective this interest in job satisfaction and the variables which influence it have come rather recently (Hoppock, 1935). The concept of work has been with humans since the beginning of our evolution for the expenditure of energy in some goal directed activity is the basis for survival, not only for humans but for all creatures. For humans work was the essential activity of life, the effort expended to seek and obtain food, shelter, protection and, indeed, the continuation of the species. The association has nearly always been that of physical discomfort, effort, pain, and toil. Perhaps one of the earliest references to job satisfaction has been to Confucius to whom the following is attributed: "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life."

Even today throughout a large part of the under developed world, much of what is produced for basic survival comes only with extreme difficulty, and with the expenditure of long and difficult hours of labor in unpleasant working conditions. Indeed, in most western and developed regions of the world where the industrial revolution provided machines that did the work of many and gave rise to the production based economy (Ford & Crowther, 1922), even that has been supplanted by the idea of a service economy (de Vries, 1994). The concept of work is no longer defined by physical labor, sweat, and pain but by the manipulation of ideas. Now that survival no longer depends upon being strong but upon being smart the stresses have changed from physical stressors to psychological ones and the immediate threat of starvation has been replaced by a multitude of fears and anxieties about one's personal competence to compete and to hold a job.

Recent and continuing study into job satisfaction has identified many significant factors including opportunities for personal and professional growth, high pay, opportunities for promotion and professional development but these may be generally be grouped into extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Randolph (2005) found that among rehabilitation professionals intrinsic factors like personal growth and having the opportunity to work in a field consistent with personal values were more important in determining job satisfaction than extrinsic factors such as pay. In the educational setting, a number of studies have

suggested that intrinsic factors seem far more related to job satisfaction than do extrinsic factors (Iiacqua, Shumacher, & Li, 1995; Kalleberg, 1977; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979; Seybolt, 1976; Tuch & Martin, 1991). If one were to consider the stereotypic university professor an image would arise of a hard working but underpaid introverted scientist who labors long hours for little pay. While not necessarily an accurate portrayal of contemporary university faculty life, there seems to be substantial evidence that many faculty choose to remain in higher education in spite of chronically low pay, long hours, heavy teaching loads and increasingly less and less job security (Bentley & Kyvik, 2011). These intrinsic motivators were found to be significant factors among Turkish educators as well. While investigating factors associated with job satisfaction among Turkish university educators using Herzberg's (1972) two-factor model (intrinsic/extrinsic) Bilge, Akman and Kelecioğlu (2007) reported intrinsic motivators as being significant to academics' job satisfaction.

Burnout and Burnout Risk Factors

The term burnout has emerged during the past few decades as a distinct psychological phenomenon that is typically associated with chronic, unremitting fatigue and loss of interest in performing one's usual work. It has long been associated with exposure to chronic occupational stress. Although not recognized as a distinct psychological diagnosis in the DSM-5 (Kraft, 2006) it is acknowledged listed in the International Classification of Diseases-10 (World Health Organization, 2011) because of its similarity to depression. Most recent evidence suggests that burnout is both widespread and it emerges as a response to multiple events over a prolonged period of time and that its cause is multidimensional. The factors that have been shown to be most closely associated with occupational burnout can be generally grouped into three major categories; Job characteristics, pre-existing personality traits and the absence of coping mechanisms.

The symptoms of burnout are similar to those of clinical depression and in one recent study of more than 5500 school teachers some 90% of them were identified as both burned out and meeting the diagnostic criteria for depression (Bianchi, Schonfeld, & Laurent, 2014). A number of recent studies have suggested that what is commonly referred to as burnout is more accurately described as a depressive syndrome (Alarcon, Eschleman, & Bowling, 2009; Hintsal, Elovainio, Jokelal, Ahola, & Pirkola, 2014; Pulkki-Råback et al, 2015), however the term is now in general use throughout psychological and organizational literature is unlikely to change.

Perhaps the most frequently used instrument for assessing burnout is the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) which assesses three components of burnout; exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy. Each of these three components has been theorized to manifest themselves in a wide variety of health related conditions thought to arise from prolonged exposure to occupational stress and burnout. Both cardiovascular disease and mental health problems are reported to most clearly related to burnout with elevated stress hormone levels, hypertension and reductions in memory and even attention

being reported (Sandström, Rhodin, Lundberg, Olsson, & Nyberg, 2005). Maslach and Leiter (1997) went on to describe the qualities associated with the absence of burnout which they termed engagement. Engagement was thought to be characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy all of which have been associated with the term wellness.

The work of counselors and teachers has been described as stressful and the two occupations, along with many others that involve teaching, caring, and nurturing, have been viewed as having a particularly high burnout and attrition rate. The term “compassion fatigue” is now quite commonly used in relation to burnout and describes what care givers experience. The incidence of burnout among U.S. and Turkish educators and counselors has been the topic of several recent studies (Gündüz, 2012; İkiz, 2010; Seçer, 2011; Sprang, Clark, & Woosley, 2007). Although the results of these studies seem to suggest that burnout affects individuals regardless of age, gender or job setting, personal traits and social support seem to be negatively related to burnout. Additionally, a number of recent investigations have linked both burnout and for a variety of occupations including teachers (Cheung, Tang and Tang, 2011; Kinman, Wray, & Strange, 2011), physicians (Vltmer, Rosta, Siegrist & Aasland, 2012), lawyers (Platsidou & Salman, 2012), nurses (Hayes, Douglas, & Bonner, 2013), school counselors (Bryant, 2006) but no studies with counselor educators.

Burnout and job satisfaction have both been extensively investigated but there has been little done to investigate differences and similarities between cultures within the same occupational group particularly with regard to issues of burnout and job satisfaction. While substantial evidence suggests that burnout and job satisfaction are related and that teachers at all levels experience varying levels of job satisfaction and burnout the present study was conceived as an attempt to investigate differences between U.S. Counselor Education faculty and their Turkish colleagues. This cross-cultural study was conducted in recognition of the fact that university teaching is an expression of national and cultural values, economic realities, and traditions.

This study sought to investigate differences between Turkish and American counselor educators by surveying a sample in each country and inquiring into their levels of job satisfaction and perceived burnout risk in three areas. Specifically this survey sought to identify differences in work load, job satisfaction and to identify areas which might suggest potential for burnout. Since Maslach and Leiter (1997) described engagement in terms of concepts long associated with wellness, job satisfaction was hypothesized to be negatively correlated with burnout risk factors. The present study sought to survey burnout risk and job satisfaction in both a U.S. and a Turkish samples of university counselor education faculty and to test the null hypotheses that no significant differences would exist between samples in terms of job satisfaction and risk burnout. It was further hypothesized that a negative correlation would exist between job satisfaction and risk of burnout and its components.

Method

Respondents

The respondents in this investigation were a total of 181 (91 Turkish and 90 American) university faculty members who responded to invitations to complete an online job satisfaction survey form. The Turkish sample was contacted via a nation-wide email list (160) of counselor education faculty who were members of the Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association. The resulting response rate for the Turkish sample was 57%. The U.S. sample was generated by first randomly selecting 20 states and then sending invitations to counselor education faculty members at the two largest state universities within each of the selected states and a total of 246 invitations were sent with 90 responding representing a 37% return rate. Table 1 portrays the gender and faculty ranks of the respondents.

Table 1
Composition of the Respondents

	Total Sample	Turkish Sample	U.S. Sample
Gender			
n	181	91	90
% Male	43.3	46.2	40.4
% Female	56.7	53.8	59.6
Faculty Rank			
% Instructor	8.3	8.3	0.0
% Assistant Professor	41.7	51.6	31.5
% Associate Professor	25.0	15.4	34.8
% Full Professor	25.0	16.5	33.7

Data Collection

The data collected in the present investigation were gathered using three forms all of which were developed by the first author. The initial component, consisting of 13 items, was designed to collect demographic information from respondents. These demographic variables included age, gender, typical teaching loads and years of experience. A short series of questions designed to investigate work demands including theses and dissertation supervision loads as well as departmental and university committee responsibilities. This portion of the survey essentially defined the basic parameters of the respondents' faculty duties.

The second component of data collection was the Burnout Risk Assessment (BRA) which was composed of 30 items and was constructed to investigate burnout risk by asking respondents to endorse, on a 5 point Likert-type scale, items designed to assess three areas suggested as being associated with elevated burnout potential. These item areas were selected following conversations with Dr. Jane Myers, a nationally recognized authority in the field of wellness and author of a number of widely utilized assessment programs in wellness (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000). These areas included personal traits like perfectionism and the need for power and control, work setting characteristics and choices related to a healthy life style. The items on the BRA independently reviewed for content validity by six senior counselor education faculty members from three major universities in the U.S., all of which were accredited by the Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The BRA demonstrated acceptable internal consistency reliability in the current study with a Chronbach's alpha of .872 (n=178).

The final component, consisting of five items, sought to elicit information regarding the respondents' level of job satisfaction. Earlier work into job satisfaction (Bilge, Akman & Kelecioğlu, 2007; Iiacqua, Shumacher, & Li, 1995) strongly suggested that among academics, intrinsic factors were the most vital in determining satisfaction and among those five areas were identified as being particularly critical: progress toward promotion or career advancement, current teaching performance, research and publication record, departmental work climate and culture, and current level of productivity as a faculty member. Each of these five areas was presented using five point Likert type items with options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Since these five areas had previously been associated with intrinsic job satisfaction the resulting total was taken to represent current occupational satisfaction. The consensus of the instrument review panel mentioned above was that there was clear evidence for face validity in these five questions. The five questions used to assess job satisfaction in the current academic position were as follows:

1. I am satisfied with my progress toward promotion or career advancement.
2. I am satisfied with my current teaching performance.
3. I am satisfied with my research and publication record.
4. I am satisfied with the working climate or culture within my department.
5. I believe that I am effective and productive in my current faculty position.

Procedure

All of the data for this investigation were collected during a six week period during the April and May of 2010 and were collected through the use of an online survey website on which the instrument was published. Participants in this study responded to emailed invitations that were sent to faculty members serving at both public and private universities throughout Turkey and from 25 randomly selected states in the U.S.

Data Analysis

Data were tabulated and analyzed by using SPSS 13. Analysis included t test, ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Analysis.

Results

The results of this study will be presented in the material below and will include a description of the sample characteristics and demographics. The findings related to burnout risk, job satisfaction levels of the two samples and the observed relationship between job satisfaction and burnout will be presented.

The Turkish and U.S. samples were remarkably well balanced on a number of demographic variables including teaching experience where both samples were virtually the same. The average number of years of experience for the Turkish sample was 15.36 and for the U.S. sample the mean was 14.11 ($t = .90, p > .366$). The overwhelming majority of respondents reported working in public universities with only 16 (9%) working in private universities. Among the remaining demographic variables a number of them demonstrated significant differences between Turkish and U.S. respondents. The U.S. sample was significantly older with a mean age of 51.6 years versus 43.6 years for the Turkish sample, ($t = 5.47, p < .000$). In terms of work load this was assessed by comparing groups in terms of typical semester teaching load, the number of master's theses/doctoral dissertations being supervised and on the number of departmental and university committees the faculty member was supervising. Highly significant differences were observed between groups with U.S. faculty members reporting far higher work load responsibilities in the areas of committee work, ($t(179) = 9.48, p < .000$), and thesis and dissertation supervision numbers, ($t(179) = 4.95, p < .000$; $t(179) = 8.20, p < .000$). In these areas the U.S. sample reported far higher numbers than did their Turkish counterparts. The situation was reversed when teaching loads were examined with Turkish faculty members teaching far more classes than in the U.S. The typical semester teaching load for Turkish faculty was more than three times the typical load of a U.S. faculty member, with means of 25.98 (SD=8.25) and 8.02, (SD = 2.55) respectively, ($t(176) = 19.62, p < .000$).

Burn out Risk

Burnout risk in this study was assessed using the BRA the design of which yielded three component scores and a total score. The component scores reflected risk in three areas; personal traits, work setting traits and lifestyle factors associated with effective stress coping. Although no significant difference was observed between groups on the 30 item total Burnout Risk assessment, significant differences were observed on each of the components: personal traits, ($t(179) = 2.47, p = .014$), work related factors ($t(179) = 6.904, p < .000$) and in lifestyle factors ($t(179) = 2.986, p = .003$). When burnout risk was investigated by gender no significant differences were observed between male and female respondents in the Turkish

sample however among the U.S. respondents significant differences were detected between males and females on total burnout risk scores, ($t(89) = 2.86, p < .05$), and on lifestyle risk factors, ($t(89) = 2.33, p < .05$). In both cases U.S. male respondents produced higher risk scores than did their female colleagues. No differences in risk levels were detected among faculty ranks of either sample.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction in this study was assessed using a five item Likert-type scale on which respondents could report their level of satisfaction in five areas: progress toward promotion/career advancement, current teaching performance, research/publication record, department working climate/culture, and overall effectiveness and productivity. The Turkish and U.S. means were examined for significant difference using an independent t-test. The Turkish sample reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than did the U.S. sample, ($t(179) = 7.03, p < .000$). When the Turkish and U.S. samples were examined for differences by gender no significant difference could be detected between male and female faculty members while the U.S. sample demonstrated significant differences with females reporting higher job satisfaction than males, ($t(89) = 2.07, p < .05$). When job satisfaction was examined by faculty rank no significant differences were observed by country but when the total sample of both countries were combined, there were clear differences in job satisfaction level by rank with decreasing job satisfaction at each higher level of rank from assistant to full professor as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2
One-way Analysis of Variance of Job Satisfaction by Faculty Rank

Source	SS	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	195.51	4	48.87	3.18	.015
Within Groups	2684.69	175	15.34		
Total	2880.20	179			

The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Burnout

The relationship between job satisfaction scores and total burnout risk scores was determined by computing Pearson's r with a resulting correlation coefficient of $r(179) = -.50, p < .01$. This strong negative correlation was in the expected direction. Additionally, low job satisfaction was also significantly negatively correlated with each of the component burnout risk factors as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3*Correlations among Work Satisfaction and Burnout Risk Total and Factor Variables*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. Work Satisfaction	----				
2. Burnout Risk	-.50**	----			
3. Personal traits	-.21**	.72**	----		
4. Work factors	-.68**	.77**	.37**	----	
5. Life-style factors	-.18*	.79**	.48**	.35**	----

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$,

Discussion and Suggestions

The purpose of the current investigation was to compare a sample of Turkish and U.S. university faculty members all of whom were teaching in the same discipline. The long history of higher education in both countries mitigates against a precise comparison since issues of governance, common practice, tradition, and a host of cultural, political, and economic realities would suggest that substantial differences would likely be apparent. The findings of this survey suggest that despite a common teaching area and remarkable similarities in some areas such as age and teaching experience, gender distribution, and risk of burnout, substantial differences do exist between the two communities. Perhaps the most remarkable differences were observed in teaching load where Turkish faculty members generally taught far more hours than did their U.S. counterparts. The mean teaching load for Turkish counselor educators was more than three times that of their U.S. counterparts. In spite of this difference the Turkish sample reported significantly higher job satisfaction levels at all levels of employment from assistant professor to full professor. This finding is perhaps consistent with earlier findings suggesting that intrinsic factors more completely account for job satisfaction than do extrinsic factors such as work load or pay.

The finding of substantial differences between Turkish and U.S. counselor educators with regard to job satisfaction is quite interesting and may in part be explained by social and economic realities that currently exist. Turkey is currently experiencing rapid growth in the number of universities (Özer, 2011). It is remarkable that in 2001 Turkey had a total of 76 universities (Günay & Günay, 2011) and by early 2015 that number had risen to 202 (Turkish Council on Higher Education, 2015). This rapid growth has generated a high demand for qualified faculty throughout the country. With demand far exceeding supply there is every reason for faculty members to view themselves in a highly positive and valued career path.

The situation in the U.S. is not nearly as optimistic as funding of higher education becomes more and more limited and a major shift in higher education employment practices is currently underway with tenure track, permanent faculty positions being eliminated in favor of adjunct and part-time positions being used as a money saving alternative. The use

of adjunct and part-time teaching faculty in colleges and universities has become so common that they now represent more than half of all faculty positions in the U.S. (Huber, 2015).

The task of comparing what may be regarded as similar occupations in two different countries is fraught with many difficulties. Despite the fact that faculty members in both the U.S. and Turkey teach a similar discipline with what may be regarded as a similar knowledge and research base, the evolution of the occupation and its expression are highly dependent upon the unique social, cultural and economic realities existing in each country. While Turkish academics are enjoying a period of unprecedented growth and expansion with the opening of many new universities over the past decade, U.S. academics continue to try to cope with limited funding and a fundamental change in administrative policy in which permanent and long term faculty positions are gradually being replaced by part-time and adjunct faculty members. In Turkish academics, particularly in the field of counseling, find themselves in a situation where demand far exceeds supply while in the U.S. the supply far exceeds the demand. The present study demonstrated that even with exceptional workloads Turkish faculty members feel far more intrinsic job satisfaction than do U.S. faculty who are currently facing demands and challenges that have only recently emerged. In spite of all of these differences, the results of this study suggest that, among counselor education faculty in both countries, the risk of burnout would appear to be essentially the same and be the result of individual personality factors, work place factors, and life-style and stress coping factors.

The present investigation did not attempt to address the incidence, chronicity or severity of faculty burnout within the field of counselor education and further study into this is certainly needed as is a more effective means of addressing some of the many uncontrolled variables associated with a survey of this type. It must be recognized that counseling, as a profession, is well and fully established in the U.S. while in Turkey it may be regarded as a profession still in the midst of growth and development. Other than in the public schools, counseling has yet to be fully recognized or regulated by licensure as a separate and unique component of the national mental health care system quite apart from psychology, social work and psychiatry. Additionally, the majority of counselor training in Turkey is conducted at the undergraduate level instead of at the graduate level as it is in the U.S. This fact alone may help explain the differences observed in thesis and dissertation supervision rates between groups.

While the current sought to explore some of the differences and similarities of counselor educators in the U.S. and Turkey it seems obvious that a great deal more can be done to understand the working demands, pressures, stresses and burnout phenomena in both countries. The dramatic rate at which higher education is expanding in Turkey and the unprecedented changes in U.S. higher education administration policy and funding both suggest that the next decade will be one of dramatic change and the need to observe, document, and research the impact of this change is very great indeed.

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