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Addressing Workplaces Burnout

Fadillah Ismail^{1*}, Nesreen Ibrahim Owaida²

¹Faculty of Technology Management and Business
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, MALAYSIA

²Talent Management Section
Telecommunication & Digital Government Regulatory Authority, UAE

* Corresponding Author

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Abstract: Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. Burnout can affect someone's mental health and it can cause depression if they do not seek professional help. There are a lot of factors that can lead someone to burnout, especially in the workplace. Heavy workload, negative work environment, and lack of social support are the main factors that cause burnout. However, this problem can be prevented by the manager or the company. The ways to reduce burnout at the workplace are by creating a manageable workload, creating a fun and positive work environment, and encouraging social support. This action will create a new environment for the employees. Furthermore, the employees themselves should know how to control themselves. The employee also can try to connect with nature, try to identify their stressor, and get enough sleep. Burnout at the workplace can be prevented if the employer takes care of the employees' welfare.

Keywords: Workplaces, Burnout, Workplaces Burnout

1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), burnout can be defined as a syndrome caused by long-term workplace stress that has not been successfully implemented. Burnout is not a common occurrence these days, particularly in the workplace. Workplace environment and working conditions are vital in every organization since burnout is not a new issue that arises from time to time. Different jobs provide different work experiences, and any individual can experience burnout at the workplace due to work-related stress and occupational stress. In order to prevent employee burnout, leaders or managers must effectively manage the time for upcoming tasks that will be assigned to employees. Any employee in an organization could experience a variety of issues because workplace burnout is unexpected. Individuals who must interact regularly with others at work are more likely to experience burnout due to the huge responsibilities to others.

Burnout is also becoming quite strongly associated with depression [8]. The reason for this occurrence is burnout is a condition in which an individual experiences ongoing work-related stress, which results in physical, emotional, and mental stress. Burnout is an illness that affects people in the workplace that can be characterized by three dimensions which are exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy [27]. Exhaustion is a feeling caused by the depletion of emotional resources as a consequence of coping with the current workplace environment. Cynicism, on the other hand, is a person's distanced attitude toward the job. Last but not least, inefficacy results in less personal achievement. According to [20], burnout has a negative impact on companies or employees and is positively correlated with workplace inappropriate behavior. Therefore, employee commitment to the job may start to decline and they may lose satisfaction when they are stressed or burned out.

During the Covid-19 outbreak pandemic that was declared by WHO in 2020, it has caused 58 percent of employees in Malaysia suffered burnout [15]. Burnout at the workplace makes people more likely to start arguments with their colleagues, act hostile toward them, and show a lack of concern [19]. Besides, the issue that will arise as a result of employee burnout is a lack of productivity [7]. Employee productivity is the key to a successful business. Overworked employees will undoubtedly become exhausted and unable to complete their tasks. As a result, if employee productivity is low, investors will lose faith and withdraw their invested shares. As a result, if these issues continue and are not acknowledged from the start, the company will face bankruptcy and human capital loss in terms of lowered performance, absenteeism, turnover, and replacement and retraining.

Burnout comes in 5 phases which are the honeymoon phase, onset of stress phase, chronic stress phase, burnout phase and habitual burnout phase [13]. The honeymoon phase begins when the employees feel energetic and optimistic. Starting a new task leads the employees to become productive and enthusiastic and accomplish the task very well. In the second phase, when the honeymoon period is over, employees will start to feel stressed. While trying to complete the task, they will start to lose focus or become less productive. Hence, it makes them feel fatigued and unable to sleep well to rest their mind and body. In the third phase, the pressure that keeps increasing is likely to affect their work with stress. Employees will be unable to finish the work by the deadlines, which will cause them to be late for work or procrastinate while at work. In the fourth phase, employees will not be able to finish their tasks as usual. They will start to feel numb from problems at work and experience persistent headaches, stomachaches, stress, irritability, and frustration. Lastly, burnout can become a part of everyone's daily life especially employees and cause depression if not addressed quickly. As a result, they will be unable to work efficiently.

2. Discussion

Factors that lead to burnout at the workplace

Receiving overwhelming workloads can contribute to feelings of emotional exhaustion especially when the works occur with time pressure. According to Picincu (2019), a survey that has been made in 2017 stated that 60 percent of employees agreed that the pressure of work has increased over the past five years. Excessive workload is the primary cause of burnout as the employees are struggling to finish the given task on a tight deadline while at the same time, they want to balance their work and personal life. The integration of work and an individual's personal life is essential for well-being [24]. increasing demands on employees' time, people may have insufficient time for both family and work obligations.

Employees who experience work overload in the longer term may endure a significant negative impact on their mental health and productivity [6]. Some employees take on various tasks due to job insecurity and competitiveness in the job market to ensure they got a place in the organization. Hence, without realizing these employees may put themselves at risk when they need to give more commitment at their workplace by working long hours or staying at the office until late at night to finish the task.

Focusing too much on the job can change someone's mood and behavior, especially their health. The employees may have joint pain and changes in their eating patterns. This negative effect will reduce the employee's attention, motivation, and accuracy of their work performance, which then leads to an increase in work errors as they will feel difficult to concentrate on their work [39].

Employees who work in a toxic environment will feel agitated, anxious, and defensive. The toxic workplace environment contributed to a bad work environment. The dynamic between workers and the workplace is referred to as a toxic workplace environment. A toxic workplace is one where bullying, harassment, and exclusion are commonplace [26]. Bullying at work is generally defined as repeated and continuous activities, processes, and behaviour that have a negative impact on the victim. A toxic workplace environment frequently exhibits a physical and mental imbalance, which is concerning given the environment's underlying causes of high levels of stress and burnout and its impact on employees' mental health. This can result in poor productivity, a lack of motivation and morale, poor communication, and the emergence of office gossip and small talk. An unhealthy workplace necessitates immediate action.

According to [23], bullying among employees in the workplace is also related to workplace burnout. Workplace bullying is defined as harassing, offending, socially excluding, or negatively affecting someone's ability to perform their job duties when the behavior occurs frequently [34]. While, harassment can be categorized into sexual violence and workplace violence. Workplace bullying refers to any situation in which a person is mistreated, including cyberbullying and harming co-workers and stakeholders. Employees who are bullied and do not know how to handle it increase the number of those who suffer in silence. Colleagues and managers who threaten and treat staff poorly are considered to be engaging in workplace harassment.

The provision of social support is the best way to support an employee to tolerate the unavoidable stressors at the workplace adequately [32]. Through a variety of channels, such as practical, educational, and emotional social support, social support enables interaction with family, friends, classmates, and many other individuals [31]. Social support is the feeling of being cherished, fostered, and respected by those who are closest to the person. This support can come from a variety of people, including one's family, friends, supervisors, employers, higher management, co-workers, communities, or a social group to which they belong. Previous studies have suggested that burnout is a predictor of employees' social support [38][35]. For instance, a person with more social support demonstrates higher psychological well-being than someone with less social support when both parties are under stress.

Social support is a highly communicative transaction between individuals who want support and those who provide it. While supervisor support has undeniable beneficial effects on relieving employee stress, it also has the potential to make matters worse when such support comes from the same source as the stressor. The constant social interactions in a person's job make social support an important factor in the work environment. Simply it is the assistance or support one person can receive to achieve the tasks through his or her interaction with supervisor, co-workers, family members or society. Co-workers can serve many purposes for individuals such as serve confidants, help lighten workloads, and make difficult work environments more palatable [25]

The lack of work-group support has been considered a precursor to burnout. The absence of a support group can lead to exhaustion at work. An effective support group includes people who provide emotional comfort, confront the individual in a friendly way when his or her behavior is inappropriate, provide technical support in work-related areas, propose technical challenges that foster individual growth, serve as active listeners, and share similar values, beliefs, and perceptions of reality. Burnout may be a result of the high work demands and the level of social support received by the worker. The relationships between social support and burnout have also been of interest considering the three-dimensionality of burnout. Having conversations among co-workers about any work-related or non-

work-related matters may reduce the feeling of tiredness, boringness, and other negative feelings at the workplace due to high job demands.

Time management problems, whether time constraints during work act as a challenge or can be a trigger for employee burnout [5] Long working hours (Wong, Chan, & Ngan, 2019) and high productivity demands [18] are associated with low health well-being [11] These time constraints can result in psychological and physical effects which in turn give burnout [9] Next, [12] made a study related to time constraints after the organization reduced the number of employees and its effect on employee burnout. Results the study found that the relationship between time constraints and work pressure has a significant relationship. Reducing the number of employees or removing employees will have a direct impact on employees who continue to remain in the organization. Employees are forced to do a lot of work with limited time and resources. Therefore, the remaining employees tend to have burnout due to time constraints.

Personality type plays an important role in determining an employee's likelihood of burnout. [11] that personality type bias has a strong influence on burnout, especially when they are in a social environment because it has a negative impact on their performance. In addition, due to personal differences between people, their response to stress will also be different, so if work pressure is not managed properly and until prolonged, it will trigger burnout.

The personality type that plays a role in determining the possibility of employee burnout is one of them introverted personality type [2]. The results of data analysis found that the introverted personality type variable had a significant positive correlation with burnout. This means that the higher the employee's score on the introverted personality type, the greater the likelihood of job burnout. This reveals the research hypothesis that there is a real positive relationship between the introverted personality type variable and employee burnout [3] Emotional burnout in introverted employees can cause a loss of work enthusiasm, so they will try to keep their distance and minimize their commitment to work. In addition, the interaction between depersonalization and emotional burnout makes introverted workers ineffective.

Ways to reduce burnout at workplace

High burnout, one of which is caused by workload. This can be known from the research of [4] and [14] which show that workload can affect burnout. [33] stated workload as the employee's perception of a group of activities that must be completed within a certain time limit, both in the form of physical and psychological workload. Excessive workload can include working hours, responsibilities that must be shouldered, routine and non-routine work, and other administrative work that exceeds the individual's capacity and ability. In addition, excessive workload can include a quantitative aspect in the form of the amount of work and a qualitative aspect that is the level of difficulty of the work that must be dealt with (Almaududi, 2019). Therefore, it is important for organizations to organize a series of job descriptions with departments and competencies so as not to trigger the occurrence of workload which can then have an impact on the occurrence of work stress and burnout.

Burnout reduction can be done by creating a manageable workload. The manager should take the responsibility to make sure all the tasks or work given are not burdened by their employees. The company or the manager itself should know how to manage the workload. Burnout tends to happen when employees do not get enough time to finish their tasks. Therefore, leaders or managers should consider the scope and timing of tasks given to the employees [22]

Furthermore, creating a manageable workload will help the employees to do their work on time. For example, the manager or leaders of the company needs to prioritize work based on importance and urgency. With this, the employees will know which task or work and their responsibilities on what they

have to finish first before the upcoming project. A good manager is someone who takes good care of their employees. Creating a manageable workload, will help the employees to be more relaxed, focus and calm when it comes to working [33]

Managers or leaders must play a role in developing and protecting a positive culture in order to reduce negative workplace environments. It is critical that they recognize and resolve any problems that arise. To improve the work environment in the office, managers or leaders should give their staff members the room and privacy they need to finish their tasks. This will also make the office more comfortable and improve communication. Managers or leaders must remind their employees to practice open communication [10]

According to research conducted by [25] trust is a very important thing in organizing to develop a healthy work environment. Trust between staff, supervisors and management in a work environment is proven to reduce the level of burnout syndrome. Burnout syndrome is quite difficult to prevent, emphasis on teamwork and providing positive psychological input is important for an employee to be able to feel satisfied in his job [21] Changing positions and responsibilities of employees periodically can keep a person's interest and enthusiasm in work. However, this change of position and change of job responsibilities should not be too frequent and should pay attention to the qualifications of the employee [16]

Furthermore, when it comes to reporting inappropriate behavior among employees, such as harassment or bullying, open communication is important. Employees who have been victim of harassment or bullying should speak with their managers or leaders so that appropriate action can be taken. By addressing this issue, a safer workplace can be created and employees' confidence in their abilities can be preserved.

The most important strategy in preventing burnout syndrome is to reduce stress which generally cannot be achieved with just a single strategy. Flexibility in working, transparency and dialogue between employees and employees with the organization is very much needed. Good interpersonal relationships, a safe work environment and reasonable work targets are things that can be done to prevent burnout syndrome in employees [21]. In other words, organizations can lessen burnout by ensuring that policies, practices, processes, and surroundings support people in addition to connecting people with meaningful work, colleagues, and leaders. One of the most effective job resources is social support, which offers assistance and consolation to others, usually to help them deal with social, psychological, or physical stressors [12]. Giving advice, listening, lending a hand with material things, or just generally making someone feel valued and understood can all be examples of social support. Social support is always needed by workers. Managers should promote sincere and excellent relationships with their employees. Managers must be sympathetic, use perspective-taking to comprehend others' points of view, and cultivate a trusting environment in order to foster these relationships.

While the employees complete the task, managers can provide opportunities for the employees to do some reflection on their work. Firstly, managers must provide ample feedback directly to the employees to ensure they know where is their mistake so they can fix their mistakes. This action causes the employees to feel that their managers are concerned with their employees. Managers or leaders can express how important their team members are by assisting them in finding innovative solutions to problems, and demonstrating care for their welfare [29]. If one employee is burned out, teammates are likely to be similarly burned out. Crises often reveal the importance of close relationships, so managers should encourage and respect the importance of this type of social support, especially in times of crisis.

In addition, managers or leaders can give proper training to their employees to ensure they are familiar with their job scope. Furthermore, providing adequate resources to the employees also can

ensure that employees have sufficient resources in completing their tasks. Creating a supportive social culture makes the employees feel motivated and happy as they will not feel burdened alone.

3.0 Conclusion and recommendation

In conclusion, burnout has now become a common and important problem in health in every workplace which has adverse effects on people's daily life. Burnout leads to serious health problems such as insomnia, depression, headache, and suicide. While in the burnout phase, some of the employees may not show it, but some of them will show how rebellious they are. The company and the manager should take this matter seriously. The manager should listen to their employee's complaints so it is possible to improve. The manager of the company also needs to discuss with the superiors how to take care of the employee welfare. With these matters, the employee will be appreciated and will work harder to raise the name of the company. The good image of a company depends on how the company or employer takes good care of their employees. Good companies and employers will produce quality and productive employees.

There is a way how to prevent burnout from an individual perspective. First and foremost, the employee can try to connect themselves with nature. This is because, when they feel burnout, they are needed to excuse themselves by taking about 5 to 10 minutes to bond with nature. This will help them feel better because nature is full of oxygen. When inhaling oxygen, the levels of oxygen in the brain will be elevated which helps to reduce stress and give energy and when exhaling, it helps release carbon dioxide and it will make the body feel much better.

The importance of deep breathing is it helps calm down our nervous system since it allows our mind to become calm and reduces the concentration of stress hormones in our blood. Deep breathing is very useful and effective if we practice it every day since it helps us calm down immediately and make our mind become more focused on what we are doing.

Secondly, identify your stressors. The employee needs to know what is the main reason that makes them feel stressed and burnout. For instance, an employee that was given a lot of tasks by the manager or leader within a short period of submission dateline causes the employee becomes stressed and feels burdened. Therefore, they are forced to stay at the office until late at night to finish the task. Moreover, having to work in a team and not get good cooperation with the team to complete the task also makes the employee feels burnout. An employee that faces this situation are allowed and have the right to complain about it to their manager or leader so that action can be taken. Hence, this action will lead to a new healthy work environment in the office.

Next, the employee needs to get enough sleep because it improves well-being and protects our health. Adults are advised to get about 8 hours of sleep each night to ensure that their bodies get a good rest. Lack of sleep will result in fatigue, and since we tend to become irritable when we are tired, it will lead to burnout at work, particularly if we have a lot of work to complete. Employees must limit their exposure to electronic devices, especially 30 minutes before bedtime, in order to improve the quality of their sleep. A better night's sleep enhances our health and well-being and gives us more energy the following day.

The employee must also try to involve in regular physical activity because it can ease stress, anxiety, and mild depression. Our blood flow is improved by exercise, such as jogging or a brisk walk, which helps us forget about our work. Numerous physical benefits of exercise have been identified, including the maintenance of mental health, reduction of fatigue, and improvement of general cognitive function. Regular exercise is crucial because it helps to strengthen our bones and muscles after a long day at work.

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