# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATION-REPORTED SELF-ESTEEM AND BURNOUT LEVELS FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

**Mihaela RUS [1], Cristina-Maria PESCARU [2], Andreea-Cristina COMAN [3], Violeta-Elena ȘERBAN[4],**
[1]Professor Ph.D. Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences, Ovidius University of Constanța (Romania), E-mail: psiholog_m@yahoo.com
[2]PhD Assistant Professor, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest, Pitesti University Center, (Romania), E-mail: cristina.pescaru@upb.ro
[3]Psychologist, (Romania), E-mail: andreeacoman81@yahoo.com
[4]Psychologist (Romania), E-mail: cizmasu_v@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** *This research aimed to identify the existence of a correlation between self-esteem (reported to the organization) and the level of burnout of urban women employees. The two instruments used were: the Organization-Reported Self-Esteem Scale, with a number of 10 items, and the Maslach Burnout Inventory, with a number of 16 items. The two instruments were applied to a number of 33 urban women, employees of either the public or private system.*

**Keywords.** Self-esteem, burnout, employed women, job satisfaction, exhaustion, cynicism, professional inefficiency

### 1.Introduction

"Saying, following some successes, that we are good is also an irrational cognitive structure of global evaluation. The implications are huge! Self-esteem development programs are a psychological medicine (a "psychological pill") that does more harm than good. By developing self-esteem, we only teach the client to promote global evaluation. Just as, starting from successes, he will evaluate himself positively (and will have positive self-esteem), following a failure he will be trained to evaluate himself negatively. The alternative is for him to learn to unconditionally accept himself as a person, to evaluate his behaviors and performances, and when necessary, not to accept them, but to try to modify them. This approach is similar to the biblical text, which says that we should not punish the sinner, but the sin." (David, 2006: 81)

The results of Bleidorn et. all (2015) suggest that gender and age differences in self-esteem are not a Western idiosyncrasy, but can be observed in different cultures around the world. In general, men tend to have higher self-esteem than women, and both sexes show a gradual increase in self-esteem during aging from late adolescence to mid-adulthood. However, cultures differ in the level of self-esteem according to the sex and age of the individual, and these differences are systematically related to socio-economic, socio-demographic, gender equality and indicators of cultural value. The considerable degree of cross-culturality suggests that normative gender and age differences in self-esteem are partly determined by universal mechanisms. These could reflect both universal biological processes and socio-cultural influences. However, universal influences do not tell the whole story. Systematic cultural differences in the size and shape of gender and age differences in self-esteem provide evidence for contextual influences on the development of self-esteem in men and women. (after Bleidorn et all., 2016)

However, research by Erol et al. (2011) using converging evidence on gender similarity in self-esteem is important because false beliefs about gender differences in self-esteem can have substantial costs. For example, parents, teachers and counselors may overlook self-esteem issues in adolescents and young men due to the widespread belief that men have higher self-esteem than women. (after Erol et all, 2011)

Burnout syndrome most often originates in professional work, but anyone who feels overworked and undervalued is at risk of burnout - from the employee who does not receive vacation days, to the overworked mother who struggles to care for children, a marriage or an elderly parent. Professional burnout is a state of emotional, mental and physical overwork caused by excessive stress to which the employee is exposed for a long period of time. This professional syndrome manifests itself when the employee feels overwhelmed, emotionally drained and unable to meet constant demands. While the stress is in a continuous form, the employee begins to become devoid of interest and motivation, which led him

to start his activity in the organization he is a part of. As a result, professional "burnout" leads to a decrease in work productivity and a gradual decrease in energy, the employee feeling increasingly helpless, hopeless, cynical and with a great deal of resentment. Finally, he loses his self-confidence, believes that he has nothing more to offer and that he is not able to cope with the demands of the position he occupies. (according to Lazariuc, 2017)

### 2. Organization-Related Self-Esteem

Organization-Related Self-Esteem refers to an individual's perception of their own worth and competence in the context of their workplace and professional relationships. Positive self-esteem is associated with confidence in their personal abilities, a proactive attitude, and a more effective adaptation to the demands and pressures of work. Burnout, on the other hand, is a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion caused by chronic stress at work. It is often the result of constant pressure, excessive workloads, and a lack of resources to cope with these demands.

Factors that influence the relationship between Self-Esteem and Burnout for urban female employees:

a. Organizational Culture:

An organizational culture that promotes gender equality, support, and recognition of women's efforts can contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem and reduce the risk of burnout.

b. Family and Professional Responsibilities:

Urban female employees may be exposed to additional pressure due to family and professional responsibilities. Managing the balance between these two dimensions can influence the level of stress and exhaustion.

c. Social support and interpersonal relationships:

Social support from colleagues, family and friends can play an important role in maintaining healthy self-esteem and in managing stress and professional pressures.

Thus, the relationship between self-esteem reported to the organization and the level of burnout for urban women employees is influenced by a number of factors, including cultural context, multiple responsibilities and available social support. By promoting a healthy work environment, supporting the balance between personal and professional life and developing stress management and relationship skills, one can contribute to reducing the risk of burnout and improving self-esteem for urban women employees.

### 3. The employed woman

A woman who is actively involved in the labor market, having a paid job or performing a remunerated activity in an organization or business (for more details see Otovescu,Otovescu, 2016). She contributes to the economy and society from a professional, social and economic point of view.

In recent decades, the role of women in the workplace has changed significantly, and many women now occupy leadership positions and develop successful careers in various fields. However, despite progress, there are still challenges and inequalities that employed women face, such as gender pay gaps, access to leadership positions and work-life balance.

Some of the issues regarding women in the working class relate to:

Gender equality: Gender equality means ensuring equal access to opportunities and resources for women and men in all aspects of life, including employment and career development. This includes eliminating gender pay gaps and discrimination in the recruitment process and in the workplace.

Diversity and inclusion: Promoting diversity and inclusion in organizations brings significant benefits, from increased creativity and innovation to improved performance and financial results. Creating a work environment that encourages gender diversity and promotes inclusion is essential for the success of the organization and the well-being of employees.

Career development: Women employees need support and professional development opportunities to reach their full potential in their careers. This can include access to mentoring and coaching programs, participation in training and specialization courses, as well as promotion into management and leadership positions.

Work-life balance: Work-life balance is crucial for the health and well-being of employees, including women employees who may have additional responsibilities in caring for children or other family members. Flexible work policies, such as remote work or paid parental leave programs, can help facilitate this balance.

Representation in leadership positions: Encouraging and promoting women in leadership and management positions is important for diversity and gender balance in organizations. Building an organizational culture that recognizes and values the contributions of women at all hierarchical levels is essential for the long-term progress and success of the organization.

Mentoring and coaching: Mentoring and coaching programs can be extremely beneficial for female employees, providing them with support and guidance in their career development. Organizations should encourage and support such programs to help develop women's skills and confidence in their own capabilities.

Promoting a culture of recognition and appreciation: It is important for organizations to recognize and appreciate women's contributions in the workplace in a fair and transparent manner. Recognizing and rewarding meritorious performance and efforts helps motivate and engage women within the organization.

Anti-discrimination and anti-stereotyping training: Organizations should provide training and awareness sessions to combat discrimination and gender stereotypes in the workplace. Promoting an organizational culture based on respect, equality and diversity can contribute to creating a more inclusive and equitable work environment.

Work-life balance policies and programs: Offering flexible policies and programs, such as flexible working hours, remote work, paid leave for childcare or family members, are important to support work-life balance for female employees.

Building a support network: Encouraging women to build and participate in professional support networks can be particularly helpful. These networks provide opportunities for networking, sharing experiences and mutual support in career development and managing specific challenges.

Transparency and Equity in Recruitment and Promotion Processes: Ensuring transparency and equity in recruitment, evaluation, and promotion processes is essential to providing equal opportunities to all employees, regardless of gender or other personal characteristics.

Implementing these strategies and practices can significantly contribute to creating a more inclusive, equitable, and motivating work environment for female employees and all employees in general. Promoting gender diversity and equality brings significant benefits not only to organizations but also to society as a whole.

Harber's (1991) goal was to examine the relationships between gender role preference, self-esteem, and employment category (full-time, part-time, homemaker), while controlling for the effects of income and religion. Data were collected from 79 married white women using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and a gender role preference scale developed by the author. The results indicated that (a) there were significant differences in gender role preference across job categories, with full-time workers having more modern views, (b) employment category did not influence self-esteem, and (c) women with mixed gender role preferences had lower self-esteem than those with modern gender role preferences. The strength of the relationship between self-esteem and gender role preference varied by employment category. Gender role preference was a significant predictor of self-esteem (above and beyond the effects of income and religion) only for full-time workers. (after Haber, 1991)

The study by Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel (1970, 1972) and using scales from the Bern Sex Role Inventory, examined attitudes toward men, women, and "people" in the current workforce. Characteristics perceived as important for masculine and feminine jobs (i.e., computer programmer and nurse) and for jobs in general were also examined. In contrast to the results of Broverman et al., characteristics were not rated differentially for men, women, or "people." Both masculine and feminine jobs were considered to require stereotypical masculine and feminine characteristics, i.e., "appropriate." However, masculine characteristics were generally perceived more positively in terms of overall importance. (after Page, S., Meretsky, S, 1998)

"The main factors influencing access to the labor market and which were identified as a result of field research are:
   • training, studies;
   • experience;
   • work in management/sales;
   • integration into a new team;
   • working in a team predominantly of women;
   • work schedule;
   • physical appearance;
   • access to a job based on relationships.

However, they should be viewed with caution since men may also face similar difficulties when looking for a job. However, the vast majority of respondents believe that currently, women find it more difficult than men to find a job. The economic opportunities open to women like those included in the study are generally limited (e.g. bartender, saleswoman, pastry chef, dressmaker, etc.) and unattractive: salaries are low, working conditions are precarious, and failure to respect employee rights is a frequent practice of those who offer these positions." (Marinescu and Pricopie, 2003, pp. 59-60)

In conclusion, supporting women employees in terms of gender equality, professional development, work-life balance and access to leadership positions are essential aspects to create fair, inclusive and prosperous work environments for all employees.

## 4. About organizational self-esteem and burnout

Self-esteem is a fundamental component of an individual's mental health and psychological well-being. It represents the perception and assessment that a person has of their own value, skills and ability to cope with the demands and challenges of life. When we talk about organizational self-esteem, we refer to how individuals perceive and evaluate their own value and skills in the context of the work environment and professional relationships.

Burnout is a term used to describe a state of physical, mental and emotional exhaustion that is caused by chronic stress or overload in daily activities. It can affect anyone, regardless of age or occupation, and it is important to be aware of its signs and symptoms in order to manage the situation as effectively as possible.

### 4.1. Organization-related self-esteem

The relationship between organizational-related self-esteem and burnout levels for urban female employees is a complex topic that involves multiple psychological, social, and professional aspects.

"Nathaniel Branden described self-esteem as having two separate but interconnected components (1995). The first is self-efficacy, which refers to the confidence you have when facing life's challenges. The second is self-respect, which is the feeling of being worthy of happiness. In other words, self-esteem is a combination of your opinion about your competence to face life's basic challenges and your self-view that you are worthy of experiencing happiness and joy." (Salazar, M. R., 2006: 30)

A high level of work involvement is considered central to the burnout process. However, research investigating how high work engagement and psychosocial stressors relate to burnout is scarce. High performance-based self-esteem (PBSE) refers to individuals' efforts to validate their self-worth through accomplishments, a disposition linked to poor health. The aim of this study was to longitudinally examine PBSE in relation to burnout, also accounting for work and personal stressors. Results showed that performance-based self-esteem partially mediated the relationship between stressors and burnout. Performance-based self-esteem was the strongest predictor of burnout over time, followed by personal stressors. Women experienced more work stress than men. Men had stronger associations between work stressors and burnout, while women had stronger associations between performance-based self-esteem and burnout. Thus, individual characteristics, together with private life and professional stressors, are important predictors of burnout. The factors associated with burnout differ somewhat between women and men. (after Blom, 2021)

Organizational self-esteem refers to an individual's assessment of their own competence, worth, and capabilities within the work environment and professional relationships. It involves the individual's perception of their abilities to perform work tasks, interact with colleagues and superiors, and cope with demands and changes within the organization. Self-esteem at work can influence the level of satisfaction, commitment, and performance of employees.

#### 4.1.1. Factors that can influence organizational self-esteem are:

Feedback and recognition. The way employees receive feedback and recognition for their work can significantly influence self-esteem at work. Positive feedback and recognition of efforts contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem and increase motivation and commitment.

Organizational culture. Organizational culture, values, and work norms can influence employees' perceptions of their own value and contribution to the organization. A culture that encourages collaboration, trust, and personal growth can support positive self-esteem.

Responsibilities and opportunities. The level of responsibility and the level of opportunities for development and career advancement can affect employees' self-esteem. Opportunities for learning and professional growth help build healthy self-esteem and long-term commitment to the organization.

### 4.1.2. The impact of self-esteem on performance and well-being

High self-esteem is associated with better performance at work and increased motivation to accomplish professional tasks and goals. Employees with positive self-esteem are more likely to take responsibility and express their ideas and solutions within the organization.

Self-esteem also influences the quality of interpersonal relationships at work. Employees with high self-esteem tend to be more open in communication, less defensive, and collaborate more effectively with colleagues and work teams.

Positive self-esteem contributes to better psychological well-being and greater job satisfaction. Employees who feel valued and confident in their abilities are less prone to stress and burnout and have a more optimistic perspective on their professional future.

### 4.1.3. Strategies for building self-esteem at work

Constructive feedback and recognition. Providing constructive and regular feedback and recognizing employees' efforts and achievements are important for developing healthy self-esteem.

Continuous development and learning. Providing opportunities for professional development, training and continuous learning supports the growth of skills and the strengthening of self-esteem in the workplace.

Empathetic and supportive organizational culture. Creating an organizational culture that promotes empathy, support and collaboration can help increase employee confidence and self-esteem.

Inspirational leadership and coaching. Inspiring and engaged leadership that provides support, guidance and coaching to employees can be a determining factor in developing positive self-esteem and a healthy organizational culture.

Self-esteem in relation to the organization is a crucial aspect of well-being and performance in the workplace. By promoting an organizational culture that encourages trust, recognition of efforts, and personal and professional development of employees, organizations can significantly contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem and to increasing individual and organizational commitment and performance.

### 4.1.4. Self-esteem of employed women

The study conducted by Rehman, et all. shows that occupation has a great impact on the self-esteem of young women. The result shows that factory workers have a low level of self-esteem compared to doctors and teachers because factory workers have more work tasks, thus they are less satisfied with their work. They worked to secure their income and to fulfill the needs of the family. Another factor that decreased self-esteem is that they did not have a respectful occupation. It was hypothesized that young working women have high self-esteem compared to women who were not employed. The results support the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the self-esteem of working and non-working women. Work and self-esteem have a strong reciprocal relationship. Being employed has a major impact on young employed and unemployed women. This study indicates that employment has a significant impact on self-esteem, but not all occupations play a significant role in this regard. Appreciation from society and cooperation from the family are necessary to increase women's self-esteem. (after Rehman, et all., 2021)

## 4. 2. Burnout

Psychologists accept the following definition of occupational stress: "occupational stress is a negatively perceived quality that is the result of inadequate coping mechanisms with sources of stress with negative consequences on mental and physical health".

Baum defines stress as "a process in which environmental events or external forces, called stressors, threaten the existence of the organism and the well-being of a person" when a person is unable to cope with a situation, he may experience a decrease in well-being.

More recently, the phenomenon has been attributed different definitions: emotional exhaustion reaction to job tasks perceived as excessive; decreased interest by the person with whom one works in response to occupational stress; psychological withdrawal from occupational tasks in response to excessive stress or dissatisfaction, with loss of enthusiasm, interest and personal motivation; dissatisfaction with the occupation characterized by disillusionment, impatience, a feeling of failure.

In recent years, many researchers have attributed different meanings to the syndrome, which can nevertheless be summarized in a single definition: occupational stress syndrome/burnout is a set of symptoms that demonstrate the possibility of a behavioral pathology and is typical of all professions with a strong relational involvement. Nurses, psychologists, social workers, home care assistants, doctors, but also teachers, police officers, judges (hereinafter referred to as service providers/medical assistants) can fall victim to this emotional unrest that inevitably leads to a decrease in professional capacity (Candura SM, 1997).

The syndrome is caused, in conclusion, mainly by continuous contact with people in suffering, whether physical or social. Stress derives precisely from the social interaction between the provider of help and the recipient.

Specialists who have addressed the topic of burnout

Christina Maslach: She is a psychologist and researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. She is known for developing the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and has made significant contributions to the understanding and study of burnout.

Herbert Freudenberger: The German-American psychologist is known for his research on burnout and for introducing the term into the literature with his book "Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement", published in 1980.

Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter: These two authors collaborated to develop the concept of the "Burnout Structural Model", adding dimensions such as "Lack of Resources" and "Personal Values" to the Maslach Model.

Gary Cooper and Susan Cartwright: Their research and writings have made significant contributions to the field of workplace stress and burnout, highlighting the organizational impact on the mental and emotional health of employees.

Michael Leiter and Christina Maslach: Through their work "The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What to Do About It", these authors highlight the close relationship between organizational characteristics and the risk of employee burnout.

Cary Cherniss: The organizational psychologist has contributed to research and writing on the management of workplace stress and burnout, being the author or co-author of several relevant books and articles in the field.

These authors and researchers have significantly influenced the understanding and approach to the phenomenon of burnout in different contexts, from the work environment to individual and organizational aspects. Their works can be a valuable resource for those interested in the study and management of burnout.

### 4.2.1. Symptoms of Burnout

Symptoms of burnout can include constant exhaustion or extreme tiredness, lack of motivation or interest in activities that are normally enjoyed, increased irritability, concentration problems, and decreased performance at work or in other areas of your life.

To prevent or manage burnout, it is important to make time for rest and relaxation, set clear priorities, and set healthy boundaries regarding work and other responsibilities. Also, open discussions with those around you about the stress and pressures you are facing and asking for help are important for reducing burnout.

Healthy relationships and connecting with others can be very helpful in managing daily stress and pressures.

### 4.2.2. Characteristics of burnout

Among the characteristics of burnout we mention:

Emotional exhaustion: This component involves feelings of exhaustion and depletion of emotional resources. Emotional exhaustion is a phenomenon that affects health professionals, and not

only, with negative consequences on job satisfaction, and the specialized literature has highlighted that job demands could be a cause of this chronic stress. However, the relationship between job demands, job engagement and exhaustion has produced results that do not always converge. (after Panari et all., 2019)

Depersonalization/Cynicism: The manifestation of negative, cynical attitudes towards the work performed, clients or colleagues. Cynicism, as a personality trait, has adverse effects on health. The question has been raised whether cynical attitudes that develop due to work-related stress correlate with stress levels and whether this has a negative influence on health. Cynicism, as reflected by the Maslach Burnout Inventory, increases with increasing stress levels and could contribute to the decline in health reported for burnout. (after Viljoen & Claassen, 2017)

O a doua dimensiune a burnout-ului este depersonalizarea ca „dezvoltarea unor atitudini negative, cinice față de destinatarii serviciilor sau față de muncă în general". Se observă că individul începe să manifeste un astfel de comportament neobișnuit atunci când nu este capabil să gestioneze cealaltă problemă într-o manieră amiabilă. În cele din urmă, oamenii depersonalizați păstrează o distanță cu ei și îi consideră ca pe un obiect și în cele din urmă dezvoltă caracteristici rigide. Persoana care suferă de neglijență în depersonalizare manifestă o atitudine apatică, lipsă de dorință de a ajuta, lipsă de interes, neprietenie și sentiment de oboseală față de ceilalți. Dintre cele trei dimensiuni ale burnout-ului, depersonalizarea este considerată cea mai problematică. (după Allam et all., 2021)

Decreased personal achievement: It involves a feeling of ineffectiveness and lack of achievement in terms of work or other areas of life.

Reduced personal achievement is seen as a negative self-evaluation and a feeling of failed performance at work. Several studies have indicated that burnout affects physical and mental health and has a negative impact on employee performance and job satisfaction.

Recent studies have shown that individual factors are closely related to burnout and that these should be examined in future studies. Several authors consider that the dimension of personal achievement has a separate role from both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and, therefore, represents a perceived professional efficacy. That is, personal achievement would reflect the personal characteristics of workers and not their reactions to stressful situations, so it can be considered not a dimension of burnout, but an individual resource that develops largely independently of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. However, few studies have considered personal achievements to cope with burnout and improve the conceptual framework regarding workplace stress and behavioral/health outcomes. (after López-Núñez et all., 2020)

### 4.2.3. Factors contributing to burnout

Chronic stress. Constant, unresolved pressures at work or in personal life can lead to exhaustion and burnout.

Lack of control: Lack of autonomy and control over tasks or the work environment can contribute to the development of burnout.

Imbalance between demands and resources: When work demands exceed available resources (such as time, skills), burnout can occur.

Lack of social and organizational support: The absence of support from colleagues or management can worsen burnout.

### 4.2.4. Physical and emotional manifestations

Physical exhaustion: Chronic fatigue, sleep disorders, physical pain.

Concentration and memory problems: Difficulty focusing attention and maintaining information in memory.

It has been hypothesized that the two main stress response systems, the autonomic nervous system and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, are involved in the pathogenesis of burnout. A common hypothesis is that in the early stages of chronic stress, the HPA axis and sympathetic ANS activity tend to be higher, while this will decrease with a longer duration of chronic stress to eventually reach a state of hypoactivity in clinical burnout. Current research in this area shows many contradictory results. Thus, there is no clear evidence of ANS or HPA dysfunction in burnout. However, there is partial support for the hypothesis of HPA and sympathetic hyperactivity in the early stages and HPA hyporeactivity and

low vagal activity in cases of more severe burnout, but high-quality studies investigating causal links are still lacking. (after Dahlam, et all., 2021)

Immune system and inflammation. Chronic stress associated with burnout can affect the immune system, creating an inflammatory environment in the body that can contribute to various conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and autoimmune disorders.

Emotional exhaustion: Intense feelings of sadness, anxiety, or depression.

Reduced performance: Decreased efficiency and productivity at work or in other areas of life.

### 4.2.5. Management and prevention strategies

Self-care: Paying attention to rest, nutrition, exercise, and relaxation activities.

Stress management: Relaxation techniques, mindfulness, meditation.

Time and priority management: Setting realistic goals, delegating tasks, managing time effectively.

Social and professional support: Seeking support and counseling from colleagues, supervisors, or a mental health professional.

By understanding these aspects and applying effective strategies, it is possible to prevent and manage burnout to keep us healthy and productive in our professional and personal activities.

### 4.2.6. Standardized Burnout Assessment Tools

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI): A widely recognized measure that assesses the three main dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, cynicism, diminished personal accomplishment).

Other questionnaires and scales, such as the OLBI (Oldenburg Burnout Inventory) and the CBI (Copenhagen Burnout Inventory), are used to assess different aspects of burnout.

### 3.2.7. Therapeutic Approaches and Interventions

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): CBT can be effective in addressing dysfunctional thoughts and behaviors associated with burnout, improving coping and adaptability to stress.

Stress management and relaxation interventions: Techniques such as biofeedback, mindfulness meditation, breathing exercises, and progressive muscle relaxation can reduce stress levels and promote well-being.

Organizational interventions: Improving organizational culture, promoting work-life balance, providing social support, and training in stress management can contribute to preventing and managing burnout at the organizational level.

These are just a few relevant scientific aspects and approaches related to the burnout phenomenon, and research continues to bring new understanding and strategies for managing this complex aspect of mental health in the workplace and in other contexts.

## 4. Methodology
### Objectives and hypotheses

This research aims to explore the complexity of the relationship between self-esteem in relation to the organizational environment and the level of burnout in urban women. Given the professional and personal challenges these women face, the study aims to understand how the perception of one's own value in the professional context influences the state of exhaustion and resilience to constant pressures.

Among the main directions of analysis is the impact of education on professional burnout, as a high level of education can imply both increased expectations and more complex and demanding professional roles. At the same time, the paper examines the role of seniority in the workplace and the type of employer on the dimensions of burnout, seeking to identify whether these contextual variables contribute to the feeling of professional inefficiency or whether it is more influenced by individual characteristics. Thus, through these objectives, the study provides a comprehensive perspective on the psychological and contextual factors that can shape the level of burnout in female employees, providing a solid basis for developing effective strategies to support and prevent professional burnout.

*Hypothesis 1:* Job tenure has a weak relationship with perceived professional inefficiency, so that experience accumulated at work does not significantly affect the feeling of inefficiency at work.

*Hypothesis 2:* The type of employer (public vs. private) does not have a significant influence on the level of professional inefficiency, suggesting that this perception is more related to individual factors than to the organizational environment.

*Hypothesis 3:* The level of education is positively correlated with the level of burnout, indicating that women with higher education are more prone to professional burnout, probably due to higher professional expectations and more demanding roles.

*Hypothesis 4:* The existence of a significant relationship between length of service and the level of self-esteem reported to the organization for employees in the analyzed sample.

Semple

**Table 1. Sample repartition according to the Age Category criterion**

| Age category | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Freque ncy | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | 18-25 years | 2 | 6,1 | 6,1 | 6,1 |
| | 26-35 years | 11 | 33,3 | 33,3 | 39,4 |
| | 36-45 years | 9 | 27,3 | 27,3 | 66,7 |
| | 46-55 years | 11 | 33,3 | 33,3 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 33 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

From the age category analysis (Table 1) of the 33 respondents, it is observed that people in the 26-35 age group and those in the 46-55 age range have the same representation, each category having 11 respondents, representing 33.3% of the total. The 36-45 age category is the second largest, with 9 people, representing 27.3% of the sample, while the 18-25 age category is the least represented, with only 2 people, i.e. 6.1% of the total.

**Table 2. Repartition of the sample according to the criterion Last school graduated**

| Last school graduated | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid | High School | 2 | 6,1 |
| | Vocational School | 4 | 12,1 |
| | Short-Term Higher Education | 3 | 9,1 |
| | Long-Term Higher Education | 15 | 45,5 |
| | Master's Degree | 9 | 27,3 |
| | Total | 33 | 100,0 |

In the analyzed group (table 2), consisting of 33 people, the majority have a high level of education, with long-term higher education graduates predominating, representing 45.5% of the total, followed by those with master's degrees, representing 27.3%. Those with short-term higher education constitute 9.1%, while vocational school graduates represent 12.1%, and those who have completed only high school are in the proportion of 6.1%.

**Table 3. Sample repartition according to the criterion Employer type**

| Employer type | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid | Private environment | 12 | 36,4 |
| | Public environment | 21 | 63,6 |
| | Total | 33 | 100,0 |

Interpreting the distribution by employer type (Table 3) shows that of the 33 respondents, the majority work in the public sector, representing 63.6% of the total (21 people), while 36.4% (12 people) are employed in the private sector. This indicates a pronounced orientation towards employment in the public sector within this group.

**Table 4. Sample repartition according to the criterion Seniority at current job**
**Seniority at current job**

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|

| Valid | less than 1 year | 7 | 21,2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1-5 years | 11 | 33,3 |
| | 6-10 years | 6 | 18,2 |
| | 11-20 years | 6 | 18,2 |
| | 21-30 years | 3 | 9,1 |
| | Total | 33 | 100,0 |

The interpretation of seniority at the current job (table 4) shows a diversified distribution of experience among the 33 respondents. The largest category, with 33.3% of the total (11 people), is represented by those who have between 1 and 5 years of seniority at the current job. This is followed by the categories of seniority of less than 1 year, with 21.2% (7 people), and of 6-10 years, respectively 11-20 years, each with 18.2% (6 people each). Finally, only 9.1% of the respondents (3 people) have seniority between 21 and 30 years. This suggests that most respondents have relatively recent experience, up to 5 years, at the current job.

### Instruments

The instruments used are the Organization-Reported Self-Esteem with a number of 10 items, which is part of the Work and Organizational Psychology Domain, Self-Esteem Subdomain. The second instrument is the Maslach Burnout Inventory, from the Work and Organizational Psychology, Burnout Subdomain, with a number of 16 items. The Maslach Inventory consists of three subscales: Exhaustion, Cynicism and Professional Inefficiency (https://researchcentral.ro/).

### Results

**Hypothesis 1:** Job seniority has a weak relationship with perceived professional inefficiency, so that experience gained at work does not significantly affect the feeling of inefficiency at work.

**Table 5. Correlation table between Current Job Seniority and the Professional Inefficiency Subscale**

| | | Length of service at current job | Level of the Professional Inefficiency subscale |
|---|---|---|---|
| Length of service at current job | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -,166 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,356 |
| | N | 33 | 33 |
| Level of the Professional Inefficiency subscale | Pearson Correlation | -,166 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,356 | |
| | N | 33 | 33 |

The Pearson correlation (Table 5) between "seniority in current job" and "level of professional inefficiency subscale" is -0.166, indicating a weak and negative relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as seniority in the job increases, the perceived level of professional inefficiency tends to decrease slightly, but this effect is quite small. The associated p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.356, which exceeds the common significance threshold (0.05), indicating that this correlation is not statistically significant. In other words, we cannot conclude that there is a real link between seniority in the job and professional inefficiency in this sample.

This weak negative correlation may suggest that, for some employees, the accumulated experience could be associated with a slightly reduced feeling of professional inefficiency. However, due to the lack of statistical significance, it cannot be stated with certainty that longer tenure has a significant impact on perceived inefficiency. This result may indicate either a large variability in the perception of inefficiency or that other factors (e.g., workplace support, leadership style, or individual characteristics) have a stronger influence on feelings of professional inefficiency than tenure.

**Hypothesis 2:** Employer type (public vs. private) does not have a significant influence on the level of professional inefficiency, suggesting that this perception is more related to individual factors than to the organizational environment.

**Table 6. Correlation table between Employer Type and the Professional Inefficiency Subscale**

| | Level of the Professional Inefficiency subscale | Employer Type |
|---|---|---|

| Level of the Professional Inefficiency subscale | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -,088 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,627 |
| | N | 33 | 33 |
| Employer Type | Pearson Correlation | -,088 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,627 | |
| | N | 33 | 33 |

The Pearson correlation between the two variables (table 6) is -0.088, which indicates an extremely weak and negative relationship between the type of employer and the perceived level of professional inefficiency. Basically, this coefficient suggests that the type of employer does not have a significant influence on professional inefficiency. The p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.627, well above the significance threshold of 0.05, confirming that this relationship is not statistically significant. Thus, the result shows that there is no demonstrable relationship between the type of employer (public or private) and the level of perceived professional inefficiency. This result indicates that the perception of professional inefficiency is not influenced by the sector in which the employee works (public or private). This may suggest that perceived professional inefficiency is probably more dependent on individual factors (such as personal motivation, skills) or the specifics of the job, than on the type of employer. At the same time, the perception of workplace efficiency can be influenced by other contextual or psychological factors, not by the employer's sector of activity.

**Hypothesis 3:** Education level is positively correlated with burnout level, indicating that women with higher education are more prone to burnout, probably due to higher professional expectations and more demanding roles.

**Table 7. Correlation table between Last school graduated and Burnout Subscale**

| | | Last school graduated | Exhaustion subscale level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Last school graduated | Pearson Correlation | 1 | ,361* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,039 |
| | N | 33 | 33 |
| Exhaustion subscale level | Pearson Correlation | ,361* | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,039 | |
| | N | 33 | 33 |
| *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). | | | |

The Pearson correlation is 0.361, (table 7) which indicates a moderate positive relationship between the level of education (last school graduated) and the level of perceived burnout. This means that as the level of education increases, there is a tendency for the level of burnout to be higher. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.039, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05, making the relationship statistically significant

This positive relationship between education and burnout suggests that people with a higher level of education tend to experience the feeling of professional burnout more frequently. This can be interpreted as the fact that those with higher education may have higher expectations, are employed in more demanding roles, or may feel greater pressure in the professional environment, which may contribute to an increase in burnout. However, it is important to note that this correlation is moderate and does not explain all the variation, so it should be explored alongside other contextual factors that influence burnout, such as the work environment or the type of tasks assigned.

**Hypothesis 4: T**he existence of a significant relationship between length of service at work and the level of self-esteem reported to the organization for employees in the analyzed sample.

**Table 8.** Correlation table between length of service at work and the level of self-esteem reported to the organization

| | Level of Self-Esteem in relation to the organization | Length of service at current job |
|---|---|---|

| Level of Self-Esteem in relation to the organization | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -,132 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,462 |
| | N | 33 | 33 |
| Length of service at current job | Pearson Correlation | -,132 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ,462 | |
| | N | 33 | 33 |

Interpretation of this table of correlations between "seniority in current job" and "level of self-esteem reported to the organization" indicates a very weak and negative relationship between the two variables, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.132. This result suggests that as seniority in the job increases, there is a non-significant trend of decreasing self-esteem reported to the organization, but this relationship is extremely weak.

The p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.462 exceeds the common significance threshold (0.05), indicating that this correlation is not statistically significant. In other words, there is not enough evidence to support a real relationship between seniority in the job and the level of self-esteem reported to the organization in this sample. Experience gained at work does not seem to significantly influence the perception of self-worth in an organizational context, and other factors, perhaps of a personal nature or related to the organizational environment, could have a greater impact on self-esteem in relation to the organization.

**Conclusions**

The study's findings suggest that the relationship between length of service and organizational self-esteem is extremely weak and statistically insignificant, indicating that experience at work does not directly influence employees' perception of their own worth in an organizational context, and that other factors, such as individual characteristics or specific organizational cultures, may have a greater impact on this perception.

Regarding the type of employer, the analysis also reveals an insignificant link between it and perceived professional inefficiency, suggesting that employment in the public or private sector does not have a direct influence on the perception of professional inefficiency, this feeling being probably more dependent on other contextual variables or individual factors.

Furthermore, the study highlights a moderate and significant positive correlation between education level and burnout, suggesting that people with higher education tend to experience higher levels of burnout, possibly due to higher demands and more demanding roles. These findings highlight the importance of strategies to support and manage burnout among employees with higher levels of education, as well as the need to consider psychological and contextual factors that may influence perceptions of inefficiency and self-esteem at work.

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