



# Burnout and its Influence on Chinese Independent Secondary School Teachers Job Satisfaction

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the influence of burnout on job satisfaction among Chinese Independent Secondary Schools (CISS) teachers. The respondents for this study consist of 175 teachers selected randomly from five CISS from one of Northern State of Peninsular Malaysia. Data from respondents was collected using a translated version of questionnaire consisting of 3 parts, namely demographic, Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI - ES), and finally Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The results show that the level of teacher burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion, and personal accomplishment are moderate. Whereas the burnout dimension of depersonalization was at low level. Meanwhile multiple regression analysis shows that only teacher burnout dimensions emotional exhaustion have a significant negative influence on CISS teacher job satisfaction. Findings suggest that the CISS organizations should pay more attention on teachers' psychological aspect such as teacher burnout in the workplace in order to generate better quality of teachers' job satisfaction and performance.

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## Introduction

Historically since early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese Independent Secondary Schools (CISS) were established by the Chinese Ethnic in Malaysia to provide education in Chinese for Chinese workers. Since then, the number of CISS has increased and currently there are 60 CISS in Malaysia and it is open to all nationalities and backgrounds, including students from abroad. Nevertheless most of the students enrolled in the CISS are Malaysian Chinese due to its intermediate language used is Mandarin [1]. According to the Federation of Chinese School Management Board, the education system in the CISS is approximately equal to the education system in countries such as the United States, Japan, China, Taiwan and Scotland [2].

According to Ng [3] and Aeria [4], factors such as workload, time allocation, lack of support among administration and colleagues, teaching materials, facilities and curriculum implementation are factors that significantly correlated with the degree of burnout. The results showed that the main cause of dissatisfaction towards the increasing workload resulting in burnout among teachers. This phenomenon was also experienced by teachers in Malaysia. Teachers no recognition and reward, work atmosphere is not systematic, in terms of social work too hard without rest, no time to socialize, given the enormous task without assistance, lack of opportunities to participate in decision-making, the role conflict is high, lack of autonomy, lack of sleep and lack of support are significant contributor to burnout among educators [5,6]. Meanwhile, these studies can be supported by Chang [7], Crosmer [8] and Schwab [9] in the study of organizational factors contributing to burnout among teachers. Thus, teachers' turnover is high and found to have a plan to stop the teaching profession is reported to have low levels of job satisfaction and have a negative perception of their career [10]. Their findings are in line with the statement Tickle [11]

which states that the pay is low and causes dissatisfaction in their work. Job satisfaction has a very close relationship with the quality of teachers, organizational commitment and organizational performance that has to do with the school academic achievement, student behavior, school environment, student satisfaction and performance of school administration [10].

A burnout is "someone in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward that are commensurate with his or her efforts." [12]. According to Maslach [13], educators are more prone to burnout because the teacher profession is physically exhausting and emotional exhaustion and also states that when compared with other human services occupations, educators reported the highest emotional exhaustion. While Jepson [14] reported that 41% of teachers encountered working pressure compare to other professions. Symptoms of burnout among teachers were found to be similar to individuals working in other professions [15]. The reform of school regulations and challenges related to cultural diversity will increase the pressure on teachers and students problems also contribute to burnout among teachers [16].

Skaalvik [17] reported that pressure for educators including student interrupt, problems with peer or parent-teacher relationships, and stress resulting from school reform. Job dissatisfaction, lack of support, accountability increased and the increase in paperwork are the factors that have been considered as contributing to teacher burnout [18]. According to Friedman [19] and Maslach [20] main component of burnout among teachers are exhaustion, a sense of lacking of work fulfillment, and an attitude of depersonalization that is expressed by teachers blaming the student. Talmor [15] identifies the regular expression teacher burnout as boredom, anger, cynicism, fatigue, anxiety, guilt, depression,

psychosomatic reactions, and emotional breakdown. Teachers often feel emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and began to be doubtful about their choice as a profession. Teachers can start to feel as if they are sensitive and responsive to students once before [21]. Additional pressure control and maintain certain negative emotions from time to time is another problem associated with burnout cycle [21]. Results from [22-25] shows that level of burnout are high among teachers and significantly difference between demographic variables such as age, teaching experience, marital status, educational background and income with burnout. Moreover, burnout also affects the health and ability of teachers to solve social problems.

Locke [26] defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of work or working experiences. Others have defined whether he or she satisfied with the job overall or at the different aspects of the job [27]. In addition, Spector [27] has listed 14 common aspects relating to job satisfaction: communication, co-workers, fringe benefits, appreciation, job conditions, nature of the work, organization, personal growth, policies and procedures, recognition, promotion opportunities, supervision and security. According Varunee [28] and Rheajane [29], there is a significant relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among educators and emotional exhaustion appeared to be a most significant predictor of job satisfaction. Similar findings also can be found in Talbot [30] studies. On the other hand, Suneel [31] found that there is an increase in the total burnout among lecturers in Oman, while burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment has a negative relationship with job satisfaction.

At the present study of literature review, there is little to be known about this relationship in CISS especially in Malaysian educational settings. Therefore, this study is an attempt to bridge this gap of literature review in CISS and mainly aimed at enhancing CISS management to pay more attention on teachers' psychological aspect such as teacher burnout in order to generate better quality of teachers' job satisfaction and performance. Therefore, the major concern of this study is to investigate teacher burnout and its influence on job satisfaction among teachers in CISS context.

**Research Objectives**

This study aims to investigate teacher burnout and its influence on job satisfaction among teachers in CISS and specifically to identify:

- a. The level of burnout among CISS teachers.
- b. The influence of burnout on job satisfaction among CISS teachers.

**Methodology**

The respondents for this study were 175 teachers randomly selected from 5 Chinese Independent Secondary Schools in one of the States of Northern Peninsular Malaysia.

Meanwhile the data for this study was gathered by using a set of questionnaire consist of three sections. The first section measures demography of respondents. The second section measures the teacher burnout by using Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES) [32]. The third section of the questionnaires measure teachers job satisfaction by using Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) [33]. The pilot study findings show that this both instrument has a high reliability with Cronbach Alpha values are .82 and .87 respectively.

**Findings**

**Profile of Respondents**

From total of 175 CISS teachers participated in this study, about 33.1% were of males and 66.9 % were females. Most the respondents were aged more than 30 years with teaching more than 10 years. Meanwhile, 63.4% of respondents were holding bachelor's degree, and the others are master's degree either diploma holders.

**The Level of Burnout**

Burnout level in this study was determined based on the categories established by Maslach [32]. Based on the findings from Table 1, the level of teacher burnout for emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment are moderate and depersonalization was at the low level.

**Table 1. Mean score, standard deviation of Burnout**

Sub-scales of Burnout	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Emotional Exhaustion	22.93	10.15	Moderate
Depersonalization	7.74	5.68	Low
Personal Accomplishment	31.26	7.47	Moderate

**The Influence Burnout on Job Satisfaction**

The findings of multiple regression analysis were presented in Table 2 below.

The results of Table 2 show that all the burnout dimensions were contributing approximately of 12% of the variance change in overall job satisfaction among CISS teachers. Meanwhile, it seems on burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion has significant influence on overall job satisfaction ( $\beta = -.34, p < .05$ ). the similar trend of emotional exhaustion influence can be found on teachers' job satisfaction dimensions of pay ( $\beta = -.19; p < .05$ ), promotion ( $\beta = .21; p < .05$ ), supervision ( $\beta = -.24, p < .05$ ), contingent rewards ( $\beta = -.45; p < .05$ ), operating procedures ( $\beta = -.50; p < .05$ ), co-workers ( $\beta = -.20, p < .05$ ), and communication ( $\beta = -.25, p < .05$ ). Thus this results indicate that the higher levels of emotional exhaustion is accounted it would decrease the job satisfaction among CISS teachers in this study.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Unlike previous findings [22, 24], this study found that level of teacher burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment were moderate meanwhile depersonalization dimension was low. On the other hand, this studies consistent with previous studies [23, 34, 35], the

**Table 2. Regression Coefficient of Burnout and Job Satisfaction Analysis**

Predictors	JS	PY	PM	SP	FB	CR	OP	CW	NW	CM
Emotional Exhaustion	-.34**	-.19*	.21*	-.24**	-.14	-.45**	-.50**	-.20*	.15	-.25**
Depersonalization	-.12	-.02	-.12	.03	-.06	.14	.14	-.09	-.02	-.16
Personal Accomplishment	-.03	.00	-.03	-.03	-.05	.10	.04	-.01	-.20	.02
R <sup>2</sup> Value	.12	.02	.03	.05	.03	.16	.18	.07	.06	.13
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> Value	.11	.00	.02	.04	.02	.14	.17	.05	.04	.12
F Value	8.0**	1.0	2.0	3.3*	2.0	10.5**	12.7**	4.1**	3.3*	8.5**

Notes: \* p < .05; \*\* p < .01

JS =Overall Job Satisfaction, PY =Pay, PM= Promotion, SP=Supervision, FB= Fringe Benefits, CR =Contingent Rewards, OP = Operating conditions, CW= Co-workers, NW = Nature of Work, CM = Communication

results show that the level of teacher burnout for emotional exhaustion were moderate. A possible explanation for this apparent contradiction is due to the difference of the working environment where unlikely previous studies this study used private school teachers as respondents. According to Marshall [25] more than one in four new teachers experiencing emotional exhaustion that almost lead to burnout and this cannot be avoided among CISS teachers involved in this study. These findings also consistent with [28, 29, 31], where there is a significant relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among educators and emotional exhaustion appeared to be a most significant predictor of job satisfaction. This can explained with the result stated that CISS teachers are not satisfied with their pay, promotion, supervision, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-worker and communication therefore causes higher levels of emotional exhaustion. This can be supported by Maslach [36] theory indicating that when employees are experiencing high levels of burnout, it will then encourage to job dissatisfaction among employees

Thus, the organizational leaders and managers in Chinese Independent Secondary Schools has to promote a work life balance culture such as reduce the working hour, increase of pay and fringe benefit, as well as give a recognition to teacher who deserve it to show appreciation for the efforts either in the form of a compliment or a raise. Considering the potentially positive impact of teacher job satisfaction it would certainly increase their performance and contributing to the effectiveness of the school. In addition, the workload should be coordinated and balanced with the demands of time so that the main task of the teacher conducting the process of teaching and learning in the classroom is not retained.

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