



## Predicting High School Teachers' Burnout Based on the Dimensions of Spiritual Intelligence in Behbahan City

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** This study aimed to predict the burnout of teachers based on the dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

**Method:** Research method was descriptive-correlational. The statistical population included all high school teachers of Behbahan city (N=450). Sample size (n=208) was determined using Morgan table and the sample was selected using stratified random sampling method. Maslach Burnout Inventory (2002) and Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire Sohrabi and Naseri (2009) were used for data collection. Simple linear and multivariate regression was used for data collection.

**Findings:** Data analysis showed that there is a reverse and significant correlation between Spiritual Intelligence and burnout and 18% of the variance of burnout variable is covered by the variable of the Spiritual Intelligence. Data analysis also showed that of the four dimensions of Spiritual Intelligence, the component of Transcendental Consciousness with ( $\beta = -0.285$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is the most capable component predicting burnout and after that, the component of patience with ( $\beta = -0.186$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is in the second place and the two dimensions of Mercy(Forgiveness) with ( $\beta = -0.088$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Spiritual experiences with ( $\beta = -0.057$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) were not able to predict burnout.

**Conclusion:** The results of this study indicate that by increasing teachers' Spiritual Intelligence, their burnout reduces. Therefore, educational authorities are required to strengthen teachers' Spiritual Intelligence to reduce their burnout.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Spiritual intelligence, Teachers



## بررسی تأثیر ابعاد هوش معنوی بر فرسودگی شغلی معلمان متوسطه شهرستان بهبهان

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### چکیده

پژوهش حاضر با هدف بررسی تأثیر ابعاد هوش معنوی بر فرسودگی شغلی معلمان صورت گرفته است. روش پژوهش توصیفی-همبستگی بود. جامعه آماری پژوهش همه ی معلمان دبیرستان های (N=۴۵۰) شهرستان بهبهان (ایران) بود. حجم نمونه پژوهش (n=۲۰۸) از طریق جدول مورگان مشخص و به روش نمونه گیری تصادفی طبقه ای از جامعه آماری مورد پژوهش انتخاب شد. جهت گردآوری داده ها از پرسشنامه فرسودگی مسلاج (۲۰۰۲)، پرسشنامه هوش معنوی سهرابی و ناصری (۱۳۸۸) استفاده شد. جهت تجزیه و تحلیل از رگرسیون خطی ساده و چند متغیره استفاده شد. تحلیل داده ها نشان داد که میزان همبستگی بین متغیر هوش معنوی و فرسودگی شغلی منفی و معنادار می باشد (-۰/۴۳۰). و ۱۸ درصد از تغییرات متغیر فرسودگی شغلی توسط متغیر هوش معنوی پوشش داده می شود. همچنین تحلیل داده ها نشان داد که از چهار بعد هوش معنوی، بعد خودآگاهی متعالی با ( $\beta = -0/258, p < 0/05$ )، بیشترین توان پیش بینی فرسودگی شغلی، پس از آن بعد شکیبایی با ( $\beta = -0/186, p < 0/05$ )، در رده دوم توان پیش بینی کنندگی قرار دارد و دو بعد بخشش با ( $p > 0/05$ )، نشان می دهد که با افزایش هوش معنوی معلمان، فرسودگی شغلی آنها کاهش می یابد، بنابراین مسئولان آموزش و پرورش جهت کاهش فرسودگی شغلی معلمان لازم است به تقویت هوش معنوی آنها بپردازند.

**واژگان کلیدی:** فرسودگی شغلی، هوش معنوی، معلمان، آموزش و پرورش، ایران

تمامی حقوق نشر برای فصلنامه رویکردی نو در علوم تربیتی محفوظ است.

### Introduction

Today, the problem of job burnout is one of the most common problems in the workplace. Unfortunately, the situation is much widespread in the business world and modern life. As a component, job burnout is the product of a variety of factors, the recognition of which can assume an important role in controlling it. By knowing level and how factors

contribute and influence employee's job burnout, as well as benefitting from necessary knowledge in this regard, managers are able to take necessary measures to reduce burnout factors. In other words, modifying managerial methods that give rise to appropriate changes in the workplace can in turn reduce level of employee's sense of job burnout as well as side effects caused by it

such as delay, consecutive absences, resignation, and intent to leave work [3]. Spiritually speaking, job burnout can be defined as mental faculty degeneration which sometimes comes with depression and is associated with the attempt to help psychological patients or individuals under psychological pressure [4].

Farber [5] believes that job burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by direct and long-term confrontation with people under circumstances emotionally demanding. People with job burnout may experience emotional burnout. Depression, a sense of helplessness, lack of efficiency in their job as well as instances like these are considered to be examples of job burnout. Negative attitudes toward self, job, organization, and generally toward life indicate attitudinal burnout. Most patients are reported to experience a sense of low personal progress [6].

According to Maslach et al [7], burnout involves three major components; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment: emotional exhaustion (chronic fatigue, sleep disturbance, different physical symptoms) is demonstrated as reduced energy and sense of mental power depletion: depersonalization (a negative response free of feeling goes with extreme indifference to colleagues and visitors, a sense of guilt, isolation, reduced work and daily activity) refers to one's mental separation from his job, and reduced feeling: lack of personal accomplishment (reduced sense of competence and success in ones' career, job dissatisfaction, inability and failure based feelings, loss of discernment and understanding power) is a permanent sense of oppression and exploitation and reduced job performance,

which are three different aspects of job burnout [7]. Spiritual intelligence is the latest intelligence known by human and a human-specific quality. The intelligence combining spiritual components with intelligence provides human with a variety of abilities and distinguishes him from others in many respect.

Spiritual intelligence makes mind clear and associates human psyche with an underlying level, in that it helps him to differentiate reality from fantasy "feeling error". The concept is addressed in different cultures as love, wisdom, and service [8]. Some personal characteristics useful for taking advantage if spiritual intelligence include wisdom, integrity (completeness), and compassion [9]. Nasel [10] defined spiritual intelligence as the ability to approach the spiritual abilities and a resource for better understanding, spiritual exploration and existential analysis, spirituality and practical behaviors. For King [11] spiritual intelligence is a set of adaptive mental capabilities founded on non-material and transcendental aspects of reality, particularly those associated with the nature of individual existence, individual conceptualization, transcendence and expanded states of consciousness. The procedures have adaptive role in facilitating individual conceptualization, problem-solving and abstract reasoning [11].

Amram [12] believed that spiritual intelligence includes a sense of meaning and sense of task in life, a sense of sacredness in life, balanced understanding of values, and having faith in better situation of world. He also holds that spiritual intelligence has the ability to be used and keep us up to date with spiritual values, in that it can improve ones'

everyday performance and physical and mental health.

According to George [13], the most important application of spiritual intelligence in the workplace include:

1. Providing peace of mind in such a way that individual effectiveness can be influenced;
2. Creating understanding between people;
3. Managing changes and removing barriers.

A host of dimensions were also mentioned concerning spiritual intelligence; intuitive wisdom, reasonable perception, being conscious of will and intent, centralized power and justice, performance along with insight, consciousness and foresight ability, a sense of supernatural power, inner and outer peace, unity in diversity, creative bond and service, practical and spiritual benevolence wisdom, virtue and humanity, compassion, healing and forgiveness, grace and commitment, life with passion, love, sacrifice and mercy, faith and devotion, being comfortable in loneliness without a sense of loneliness, the ability to conduct wise action, high capacity of piety, love, kindness, honesty, tolerance, generosity, inner peace or balance in dealing with challenges of life existential authenticity.

In a study entitled "relationship between spiritual intelligence and level of student's happiness at Buali University in Hamadan, Yaghubi [14] came to the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the mean of different student groups, in the sense that as score of spiritual intelligence increases, so does happiness score.

In the study conducted by Bagheri et al [15], "a study of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness of nurses, with the aim of evaluating the

relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness and their relation to demographic characteristics of nurses, the results indicated that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness. Furthermore, all the components of spiritual intelligence except for forgiveness were significantly associated with happiness.

Kianizadeh [16] conducted a study entitled study of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout of nurses working in Mashhad hospitals. The results indicated that there is a negative and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout. Likewise, spiritual intelligence can just predict job burnout.

Delpasand et al [17] in a study entitled relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout of nurses in ICU wards arrived at the conclusion that there is a significant and inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional exhaustion among the nurses.

In a study entitled study of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence of principals and job burnout of teachers in high schools in Tehran, Maleki [18] concluded that there is a significant relationship between level of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence of principals and job burnout of teachers, in the sense that spiritual intelligence directly and emotional intelligence indirectly affect job burnout of teachers.

In a study entitled relationship between spiritual intelligence, self-efficacy and job burnout of teachers in primary schools in Salmas City, Manas [19] came to the conclusion that there is a negative

relationship between four dimensions of spiritual intelligence and job burnout. Likewise, the findings of the study indicated that as teachers' efficacy increases, their job burnout will decline.

In a study entitled analysis of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout of teachers in normal and exceptional student (mentally retarded) schools in primary level in kashan Province, Yazdkhasti et al [20] arrived at the conclusion that there is a negative and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout, in that as spiritual intelligence increases, job burnout will decline.

In a study entitled relationship of spiritual intelligence to dimensions of job burnout among female teachers in Yazd, Zarei and Sadr [21] achieved results by which we can avoid some dimensions of job burnout in teachers by teaching dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

In a study entitled a study of the relationship between dimensions of spiritual intelligence and job burnout in Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, Korbekandi and Tabarsa [22] concluded that there is a significant and negative relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout, i.e. as employee's spiritual intelligence increases, their job burnout will decline. Taheri et al, in their study entitled a study of the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout of Imam Reza Hospital in Mashhad, achieved the results that level of spiritual intelligence of hospital employees was average and level of their job burnout remained at an average level, moreover, there was a negative and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout of employees working in Imam Reza Hospital.

In a study entitles relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout and some demographic characteristics among police staff (NAJA), Refahi et al [23] came to the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and the two dimensions emotional exhaustion and depersonalization by job burnout.

In his study, Zaph [24] demonstrated that emotional capabilities is associated with each of three sub-factors of job burnout (emotional exhaustion of depersonalization, lack of personal achievement and success), and intelligent employees are more agreeably protected from job burnout side effects emotionally.

In his study conducted under the title of "an exploration of the relationship between burnout, occupational stress and emotional intelligence, an inverse significant relationship was reported between components of emotional intelligence and job burnout.

Gupta [25] in his study demonstrated that spiritual belief and spiritual intelligence are positively and significantly related to self-efficacy and emotional self-regulation. Spirituality and spiritual intelligence on top of it can assume a vital role as a coping with strategy in a variety of situation in order to fix more everyday tension problems.

### **Research methodology**

The present research is an applied research by purpose and a descriptive and non-experimental research in terms of data collection and data analysis. The study population consists of all (second year) high school teachers in Behbahan County, i.e. N=450. The sample size of the research was determined through Morgan table (n=208), and chosen using stratified

random sampling, considering the class of sample gender.

To measure job burnout, Maslach Burnout Inventory [1] comprising of 22 statements and measuring three aspects of job burnout—emotional analysis, depersonalization, lack of personal accomplishment—was utilized: 9 statements on emotional exhaustion, 5 statements on depersonalization, and 8 statements on a sense of personal accomplishment. The reliability of the questionnaire was reported to be 86% by Malekara [26]. In this study, in order to determine the reliability of the job burnout questionnaire, a Cronbach's alpha was used, which was equal to 0.89. The reliability of the subscales of job burnout was 0.89 for emotional exhaustion, 0.76 for depersonalization, and 0.776 for reduced personal accomplishment.

To measure spiritual intelligence, a short form developed by Sohrabi and Naseri [2]

fitting dominant culture of Iran was used with the total reliability coefficient 89%. The questionnaire contains 38 items, i.e. self-transcendence with 15 items, spiritual experiences with 9 items, tolerance with 7 questions, and forgiveness with 7 items. The reliability of the instrument was reported to be 89% by Qashqaizadeh, N. Hosseinpour [27]. In this research, in order to determine the reliability of spiritual intelligence questionnaire, a Cronbach's alpha was used, which was equal to 0.91. Reliability of each subscales of spiritual intelligence was 0.837 for self-transcendence, 0.841 for tolerance, 0.866 for spiritual experiences, and 0.816 for forgiveness.

For data analysis, the statistical indexes namely mean, standard deviation were used at descriptive level and Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression at inferential level.

## Findings

Table 1: descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) for main research variables

Research variables	number	mean	Standard deviation
Job burnout	208	56.6010	18.8886
Spiritual intelligence	208	3.1096	0.37113

In order to examine whether spiritual intelligence is able to predict job burnout of teachers at the second year of high

school in Behbahan County, simple regression test was used.

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficient between spiritual intelligence and job burnout

model	Correlation coefficient	Squared correlation coefficient	Adjusted squared correlation coefficient	Standard error of estimate
1	0.43	0.185	0.181	17.09595
a. predictor: (Constant), spiritual intelligence				

The above table shows correlation coefficient, squared correlation coefficient or coefficient of determination, in that

level of correlation between the above variables is 0.43 and remains at a significant level. Moreover, coefficient of

determination indicates that 18 percent of variation in the dependent variable job

burnout was covered by spiritual intelligence variable.

Table 3: values of independent variable coefficients as per standard and non-standard values

Model		Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Significance level
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant value	124.628	10.026		12.430	0.000
	Spiritual intelligence	-21.877	3.202	-0.430	-6.833	0.000

a. dependent variable 1: job burnout

Correlation between spiritual intelligence and job burnout is equal to 0.43 and coefficient of determination is equal to 0.18. To be more specific, 18 percent of variation in the dependent variable job burnout is determined by independent variable. Beta value of spiritual intelligence variable was equal to 0.43 in an inverse and negative fashion in predicting dependent variable. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the research is

rejected as opposed to the opposite hypothesis about the predictability of job burnout through spiritual intelligence, which is confirmed.

To answer the question as to what extent each of dimensions of spiritual intelligence contribute to the prediction of job burnout among teachers, a multivariate regression was used, the equation of which is presented as follows:

Table 4: prediction of job burnout based on dimensions of spiritual intelligence

Sig	T	Standard coefficients	Non-standard coefficients		Model
		Beta	Standard error	B	
0.000	11.483		12.252	140.694	Constant value
0.212	-1.251	-0.088	2.423	-3.032	forgiveness
0.007	-2.720	-0.186	2.094	-5.695	tolerance
0.522	-0.642	-0.057	3.278	-2.103	Spiritual experiences
0.000	-3.551	-0.285	4.248	-15.086	Self-transcendence

Independent variable: job burnout  
As can be seen in table 4, of four dimensions of spiritual intelligence, self-transcendence has the greatest burnout predictability ( $\beta=-0.285$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), followed by tolerance ( $\beta = -0.186$ ,  $p <0.05$ ) in the second rank of predictability, and tolerance ( $\beta=-0.088$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and spiritual

experiences ( $\beta =-0.057$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) failed to have burnout predictability.

### Discussion

Data analysis by regression model indicated that spiritual intelligence is capable of predicting job burnout among teachers at high school level in Behbahan

County. For confirmation of the result of the study on predictability of job burnout by spiritual intelligence, reports of research background were also consistent with the finding. For instance, Yaghubi [14] came to the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the mean of different student groups, in the sense that as score of spiritual intelligence increases, so does happiness score.

In Bagheri et al [15], the results demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness. Likewise, all components of spiritual intelligence except forgiveness form a significant relationship to happiness.

Kianizadeh [16] demonstrated that there is a negative and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout. Moreover, spiritual intelligence can solely predict job burnout.

Delpasand et al [17] arrived at the conclusion that there is a significant and inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional exhaustion among nurses.

Maleki [18] concluded that there is a significant relationship between level of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence, in the sense that spiritual intelligence directly and emotional intelligence indirectly influence teachers' job burnout.

Manas [19] came to the conclusion that there is a negative relationship between four dimensions of spiritual intelligence and job burnout. Likewise, the findings of the research indicated that as self-efficacy of teachers increases, their job burnout will decline.

Yazdkhasti et al [20] obtained the result "there is a negative and significant

relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout, in that as spiritual intelligence increases, job burnout will decline.

Zareimahmoudabadi and Sadrpoushan [21] obtained the result that we can avoid some dimensions of job burnout among teachers by educating dimensions of spiritual intelligence.

Korbekandi and Tabarsa [22] arrived at the conclusion that there is an inverse and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and job burnout, i.e. as spiritual intelligence of employee increases, their burnout will decline.

Lari et al [28] found that level of spiritual intelligence is average among hospital employees, as their level of job burnout remained at an average level. Similarly, there is a negative and significant relationship spiritual intelligence and job burnout of employees working in Imam Reza Hospital.

Refahi et al [23] arrived at the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and two dimensions of job burnout, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

Zaph [24] in his study indicated that intelligent employees are more agreeably protected from side effects of job burnout emotionally.

Brand [29] conducted a study entitled "an exploration of the relationship between burnout, occupational stress and emotional intelligence", in that a significant negative relationship was reported between components of emotional intelligence and job burnout.

Gupta [25] in a study showed that there is a positive significant relationship between spiritual belief, spiritual intelligence and self-efficacy and emotional self-regulation.



Spirituality and spiritual intelligence on top of it can play an important role in different situations in order to solve everyday tension problems.

Furthermore, data analysis indicated that the two dimensions, self-transcendence and tolerance among four dimensions of spiritual intelligence have the power to predict job burnout, as the two dimensions forgiveness and spiritual experiences didn't have job burnout predictability as such. In explaining the finding of the research we should bear in mind that self-awareness and other dimensions of spiritual intelligence include awareness of relationship with transcendent entity, other individuals, earth, and other beings, which include awareness and self-realization. The existential dimension of human being is innate and natural. Given human growth and development, and then religious practice and rituals are conducive to his development and promotion, and prevent him from being burnout and experiencing a sense of emptiness.

### Conclusion

The results indicated that we should bear in mind that spiritual intelligence builds up happiness morale in an individual by making sense of his life and increasing his power of tolerance for problems, and decrease his level of conflicts in the workplace and life and increase his performance, preventing job burnout, and increasing his level of compatibility. The confirmation of the research result and its consistency with the results of other research upholds that it is necessary to build up their spiritual intelligence in order to reduce job burnout among teachers; therefore, authorities can help teachers learn ways of confronting job burnout by improving dimensions of spiritual

intelligence; self-transcendence, tolerance, forgiveness, spiritual experiences.

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