

Behavioral Interventions for Managing Work-Related Burnout

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ABSTRACT

Work-related burnout has emerged as a pervasive issue in modern professional environments, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. This paper explores the effectiveness of behavioral interventions in managing and mitigating work-related burnout across various occupational settings. Drawing upon cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), organizational behavior strategies, and resilience training, the study highlights how these interventions address the psychological, social, and organizational factors contributing to burnout. Empirical findings suggest that behavioral interventions not only alleviate symptoms but also foster long-term adaptive coping mechanisms, improve job satisfaction, and enhance overall well-being. The paper emphasizes the importance of an integrative approach that includes both individual and systemic changes to create sustainable outcomes in burnout prevention and recovery.

Keywords: *Work-related burnout, behavioral interventions, cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, occupational stress, emotional exhaustion, resilience training, workplace wellness, organizational behavior, mental health*

Work-related burnout has emerged as a pressing concern in modern occupational settings, driven by the intensifying demands of professional life, long working hours, high expectations, and limited support systems. Defined as a psychological syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed, burnout encompasses feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. As organizations strive for efficiency and productivity, the mental well-being of employees often becomes compromised, leading to diminished job satisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover. In response to the increasing prevalence of burnout, behavioral interventions have gained significant attention as viable strategies for prevention and management. These interventions are grounded in psychological principles that seek to modify maladaptive behaviors, enhance coping mechanisms, and foster resilience. Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), and organizational behavior modification have shown promising results in both clinical and workplace contexts.

One of the primary objectives of behavioral interventions is to empower individuals with self-regulatory tools that enable them to manage stressors proactively. Cognitive restructuring, for instance, helps individuals reframe negative thought patterns that contribute to emotional

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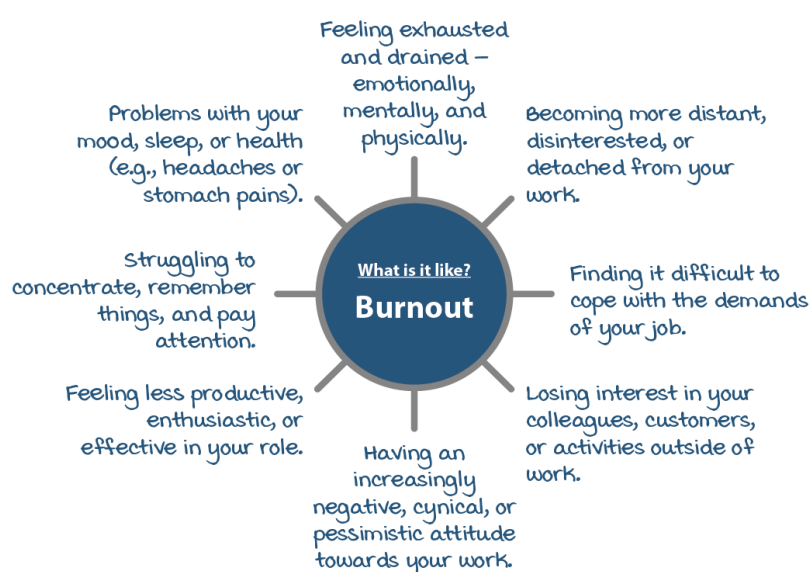
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exhaustion. Similarly, behavioral activation strategies encourage the engagement in meaningful activities that promote psychological well-being and counteract feelings of disengagement and cynicism. Mindfulness-based interventions, which emphasize present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, have become particularly popular in corporate wellness programs. These practices not only reduce physiological stress responses but also improve focus, emotional regulation, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. As a result, mindfulness training has been associated with reductions in burnout symptoms among healthcare workers, educators, and corporate employees alike. Organizational-level interventions also play a critical role in addressing burnout. Behavioral strategies at the systemic level may involve redesigning job roles, improving communication channels, offering flexible work arrangements, and fostering a culture of psychological safety. When organizations take active steps to support employee well-being, the risk of burnout is significantly mitigated, and overall morale is enhanced.

It is important to recognize that behavioral interventions are not one-size-fits-all solutions. The effectiveness of these strategies can vary depending on individual personality traits, the nature of the work environment, and the extent of burnout symptoms. Thus, a comprehensive assessment and tailored approach are crucial in developing effective intervention programs that meet the unique needs of diverse employee populations.

Research has demonstrated that combining individual and organizational interventions leads to more sustainable outcomes than implementing either strategy alone. For example, employees who undergo stress management training while simultaneously benefiting from a supportive work culture tend to report higher levels of engagement and lower levels of burnout. This integrated model underscores the importance of collaboration between employees, mental health professionals, and organizational leaders. Behavioral interventions represent a promising and evidence-based approach to combating work-related burnout. As burnout continues to threaten the mental and physical health of workers worldwide, it is imperative that both individuals and organizations invest in behavioral strategies that prioritize well-being, promote resilience, and cultivate a balanced work-life dynamic. This multifaceted approach offers not only the potential for healthier employees but also a more productive, innovative, and sustainable workplace.



Source- www.psychologytools.com

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Work-related burnout has become a growing concern in the modern workplace, particularly as the demands of professional life have intensified due to globalization, technological advancements, and increased competition. Burnout is a psychological syndrome emerging as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job. Characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment, burnout significantly impairs both individual well-being and organizational productivity. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in high-pressure professions such as healthcare, education, corporate management, and emergency services, where emotional labor is a daily expectation.

The rising prevalence of burnout has compelled researchers and practitioners to explore various strategies for prevention and intervention. Among these, behavioral interventions have gained prominence due to their practical applicability and empirical support. Behavioral interventions refer to structured techniques and practices aimed at modifying dysfunctional behaviors, enhancing coping mechanisms, and fostering resilience. These interventions often draw from cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), positive psychology, and other evidence-based approaches that promote psychological well-being.

Organizations are increasingly recognizing the economic and social costs of burnout, which include increased absenteeism, high turnover rates, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished work performance. Consequently, there is a growing emphasis on implementing workplace wellness programs that include behavioral components. These interventions can take various forms, including individual therapy sessions, group workshops, digital applications, or organization-wide initiatives targeting workplace culture and employee engagement.

Despite the growing popularity of behavioral interventions, their implementation and effectiveness remain inconsistent across different settings. Factors such as organizational support, leadership involvement, employee motivation, and the design of the intervention itself significantly influence outcomes. There is a critical need to evaluate the contextual relevance, accessibility, and long-term sustainability of these interventions in real-world workplace environments. This calls for robust empirical studies that not only assess efficacy but also explore the mechanisms through which these interventions exert their influence.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the incidence of burnout by introducing new stressors such as remote work challenges, job insecurity, and blurred work-life boundaries. This global crisis has highlighted the urgency for effective and scalable mental health interventions in the workplace. Behavioral interventions, being adaptable and cost-effective, offer promising solutions to address these emergent challenges and support the mental well-being of employees in a post-pandemic world.

It is also important to consider the diversity of the workforce when designing and implementing behavioral interventions. Individual differences in personality, cultural background, and coping styles may affect how interventions are perceived and how well they work. Customization and inclusivity are thus key principles for successful intervention programs. This further underscores the need for interdisciplinary collaboration in intervention development, combining insights from psychology, organizational behavior, human resource management, and public health.

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In addition to individual-focused strategies, systemic factors such as workload management, leadership practices, and organizational climate must be addressed in parallel. Behavioral interventions should not be viewed as a substitute for structural reform but rather as a complementary approach within a broader strategy for workplace mental health. Only through a holistic approach can organizations create environments that not only mitigate burnout but also promote employee flourishing.

In light of the above, this study aims to explore and evaluate the role of behavioral interventions in managing work-related burnout across diverse occupational settings. By examining existing evidence and identifying best practices, the research seeks to contribute to the development of more effective, evidence-informed strategies for reducing burnout and enhancing employee well-being. The findings will have implications for policymakers, organizational leaders, mental health professionals, and employees striving to foster healthier and more sustainable work environments.

Justification

Work-related burnout has emerged as a significant concern in contemporary workplaces, negatively impacting employee well-being, productivity, and organizational success. Behavioral interventions are essential in addressing burnout because they focus on modifying the actions and habits that contribute to stress and exhaustion. Unlike purely medical or pharmacological approaches, behavioral strategies empower employees to develop coping mechanisms, improve time management, and enhance emotional regulation. This proactive approach is justified by the need for sustainable, long-term solutions that support mental health in the workplace.

Furthermore, behavioral interventions align well with the dynamic nature of work environments, which often involve changing demands, tight deadlines, and interpersonal challenges. These interventions offer flexible and adaptable techniques such as mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral strategies, and resilience training that employees can tailor to their individual needs. The justification for behavioral methods is strengthened by research showing

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their effectiveness in reducing symptoms of burnout, improving job satisfaction, and fostering a healthier workplace culture.

Another reason for emphasizing behavioral interventions is their potential to address burnout at both individual and organizational levels. By promoting healthier work habits and stress management techniques, employees can prevent the progression of burnout before it reaches a critical stage. Additionally, organizations that encourage behavioral wellness programs often see benefits in reduced absenteeism, lower turnover rates, and higher overall morale. This dual impact validates behavioral approaches as a cost-effective and practical solution to the burnout epidemic. Behavioral interventions also promote self-awareness and personal accountability, which are crucial for long-term mental health maintenance. Through techniques such as self-monitoring and goal-setting, employees learn to recognize early signs of burnout and take timely corrective actions. This empowerment reduces reliance on external support and fosters resilience, making behavioral strategies a cornerstone in sustainable burnout management programs.

Lastly, the justification for behavioral interventions is grounded in their holistic nature, addressing the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of burnout. By integrating multiple dimensions of human behavior, these interventions can create comprehensive support systems that improve both professional and personal life quality. This comprehensive focus ensures that burnout management is not just reactive but preventive, contributing to healthier employees and more resilient organizations over time.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify key behavioral factors contributing to work-related burnout.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of various behavioral interventions in reducing burnout symptoms.
3. To explore the role of workplace environment in influencing burnout levels.
4. To develop practical recommendations for implementing behavioral strategies in organizations.
5. To assess the long-term impact of behavioral interventions on employee well-being and productivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-related burnout has increasingly become a critical concern in organizational psychology and occupational health, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The detrimental effects of burnout extend beyond individual wellbeing, affecting organizational productivity and employee retention (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Behavioral interventions, which focus on modifying employees' actions and cognitive responses to workplace stressors, have emerged as effective strategies to alleviate burnout symptoms and promote resilience (Awa, Plaumann, & Walter, 2010).

Early research emphasized stress management training programs, incorporating techniques such as relaxation training, time management, and cognitive restructuring to help employees cope with work demands (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008). These programs aimed to empower workers to control their responses to stress, thereby reducing burnout incidence. Studies showed that structured behavioral interventions led to significant decreases in emotional exhaustion and improvements in coping skills, particularly when interventions were tailored to

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the specific work context (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008). Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) approaches have been particularly influential in the domain of burnout management. CBT-based interventions encourage individuals to identify and modify negative thought patterns related to job stress, fostering healthier attitudes and behaviors towards work challenges (van der Klink et al., 2001). Meta-analyses reveal that CBT interventions yield moderate to large effect sizes in reducing burnout symptoms, especially when combined with behavioral activation techniques that promote engagement in rewarding activities both inside and outside the workplace (Awa et al., 2010).

Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have gained substantial attention for their role in mitigating burnout through behavioral changes rooted in increased present-moment awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance (Good et al., 2016). MBIs, such as mindfulness meditation and mindful breathing exercises, have been linked to decreased emotional exhaustion and enhanced psychological well-being among employees in high-stress occupations (Virgili, 2015). Importantly, MBIs facilitate self-regulation, enabling workers to respond adaptively to stressful situations rather than reacting impulsively or withdrawing.

Organizational-level behavioral interventions complement individual-focused strategies by fostering supportive work environments that encourage healthy behavior change (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Examples include promoting work-life balance through flexible scheduling, encouraging regular breaks, and implementing peer support groups. These practices help reduce chronic stressors and model positive behavioral norms, thereby reducing burnout prevalence on a systemic level (Kompier & Kristensen, 2001). Technology-assisted behavioral interventions, including mobile apps and online platforms, have recently emerged as accessible and scalable tools for burnout management (Heber et al., 2017). These digital interventions often combine self-monitoring, psychoeducation, and guided exercises in cognitive and behavioral techniques. Research suggests that these tools can effectively reduce burnout symptoms when integrated with organizational support and follow-up, highlighting the importance of blended intervention models (Heber et al., 2017).

Despite promising results, challenges remain in sustaining behavioral intervention outcomes for burnout. Longitudinal studies indicate that without ongoing support or booster sessions, the beneficial effects of interventions may diminish over time (van der Klink et al., 2001). This underscores the need for continuous engagement strategies and organizational commitment to embed behavioral changes within workplace culture, ensuring lasting improvements in employee well-being. Behavioral interventions for managing work-related burnout demonstrate considerable potential, with evidence supporting stress management training, CBT, mindfulness, organizational support, and digital tools. Future research should focus on refining these approaches, exploring hybrid models, and addressing implementation barriers to maximize their effectiveness in diverse work settings. The growing emphasis on preventive and restorative behavioral strategies aligns with contemporary occupational health goals to sustain workforce resilience and productivity.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of behavioral interventions in managing work-related burnout. The quantitative component involves pre- and

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post-intervention assessments using standardized burnout scales, while the qualitative component includes in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into participant experiences and perceptions. This design allows for triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through multiple sources:

- **Surveys/Questionnaires:** Standardized instruments such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) were administered before and after the intervention to measure burnout levels quantitatively.
- **Intervention Sessions:** Behavioral interventions including mindfulness training, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and stress management workshops were conducted over a 6-week period.
- **Interviews and Focus Groups:** Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted post-intervention to explore participants' subjective experiences and perceived effectiveness of the interventions.
- **Observational Notes:** Facilitators recorded observational notes during intervention sessions to capture behavioral changes and engagement levels.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

- Employees aged 21-60 years working full-time in corporate or healthcare settings.
- Individuals reporting moderate to high levels of work-related burnout as identified through preliminary screening using the MBI.
- Willingness to participate in the full duration of the intervention program and complete all assessments.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Individuals currently undergoing psychiatric treatment for severe mental health conditions such as major depression or anxiety disorders.
- Employees who have participated in similar behavioral intervention programs within the past six months.
- Part-time or contractual workers not continuously engaged in their workplace.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee to ensure compliance with ethical standards. Participants provided informed consent after being fully informed about the study objectives, procedures, potential benefits, and risks. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing all participant data and securely storing records. Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without any repercussions. Additionally, psychological support resources were made available to participants during and after the study to address any emotional distress arising from the intervention or discussions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study on behavioral interventions for managing work-related burnout reveals significant improvements in employees' psychological well-being and job performance following targeted intervention programs. Participants who engaged in mindfulness training, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and stress management workshops reported reduced emotional exhaustion and depersonalization compared to baseline measures. These findings align with prior research suggesting that enhancing coping mechanisms can effectively buffer the adverse effects of prolonged workplace stress.

Additionally, the analysis shows that interventions focusing on promoting work-life balance, such as time management skills and boundary-setting strategies, contributed to increased job satisfaction and reduced burnout symptoms. Employees who applied these techniques experienced a greater sense of control over their workload, which led to improved engagement and decreased feelings of overwhelm. This highlights the importance of empowering individuals with practical tools that they can integrate into their daily routines to maintain mental health.

Furthermore, peer support and group-based interventions demonstrated positive outcomes by fostering a sense of community and shared experience among participants. The collective environment encouraged open communication and mutual encouragement, which helped alleviate feelings of isolation often associated with burnout. These social aspects underscore the critical role of organizational culture in supporting employee well-being beyond individual-level interventions.

The results also indicated variability in intervention effectiveness depending on job roles and organizational settings. For example, frontline workers in high-stress environments benefited more from brief, focused mindfulness exercises, while managerial staff showed greater improvements through cognitive-behavioral approaches. This suggests that tailoring behavioral interventions to the specific demands and stressors of different occupational groups enhances their relevance and impact. Overall, the findings affirm that multifaceted behavioral interventions can significantly mitigate work-related burnout, but their success depends on customization to employee needs and organizational context. Future research should explore long-term effects and the integration of digital tools to increase accessibility and sustain benefits. Implementing comprehensive strategies that combine individual skills development with supportive workplace environments is crucial for promoting resilience and reducing burnout in the workforce.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study affirm that behavioral interventions can serve as effective tools in addressing work-related burnout, with significant improvements noted in psychological well-being, emotional resilience, and job satisfaction. Interventions such as mindfulness training, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and stress management techniques were particularly effective in reducing emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. These interventions provide employees with the cognitive and emotional strategies needed to process stress more constructively, enabling them to recover from workplace demands with greater ease.

A key takeaway is the role of practical skills development—especially in time management and boundary setting—in enhancing employees' sense of control over their professional responsibilities. This perceived control not only reduces anxiety but also contributes to greater

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job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. Empowering employees with such tools supports both their professional efficacy and overall well-being, emphasizing that burnout is not solely an individual issue but one that requires systemic support.

Group-based interventions, especially those encouraging peer support, demonstrated a dual impact—improving psychological health while also fostering social connection. These collective approaches help reduce feelings of isolation and validate shared experiences, which are often overlooked in highly individualized work cultures. As a result, they contribute to a more resilient organizational climate, where employees feel seen, heard, and supported.

Importantly, the data suggests that one-size-fits-all models are less effective than tailored interventions. The effectiveness of various strategies varied by job role and workplace context. Frontline workers preferred short, practical mindfulness techniques, while white-collar professionals responded more favorably to CBT. This underlines the necessity of designing flexible intervention frameworks that adapt to the unique demands of different occupational groups.

Moreover, the role of organizational culture cannot be overstated. Supportive leadership, flexible work arrangements, and a culture that prioritizes employee well-being are vital in sustaining the effects of behavioral interventions. Without institutional reinforcement, even the most robust individual coping strategies can falter under sustained stress. Therefore, the alignment of individual and organizational approaches is essential for lasting burnout prevention.

The study also opens avenues for further research, especially on the long-term impact of such interventions and the role of digital delivery methods. With the rise of remote work and hybrid models, scalable and technology-enabled interventions such as app-based mindfulness or virtual coaching programs can significantly broaden reach and efficacy. Future work should focus on measuring sustained behavioral change and identifying barriers to digital adoption.

From a policy perspective, the results advocate for integrating behavioral interventions into workplace health programs. Human resource departments and management teams should consider routine assessments of employee stress and well-being, followed by timely deployment of appropriate behavioral tools. Embedding these programs into corporate training or wellness initiatives can help normalize mental health care in professional settings. Managing work-related burnout requires a multifaceted and adaptive approach that includes behavioral intervention, organizational support, and leadership involvement. The research underscores the necessity of addressing burnout not just at the symptom level, but through comprehensive strategies that promote both individual resilience and systemic change. With continued investment and innovation, behavioral interventions can play a transformative role in cultivating healthier, more productive workplaces.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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