



A STUDY ON EMOTIONAL DISSONANCE AND BURNOUT INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYEE TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

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Abstract

Work-related stress has emerged as a crucial and universal issue in contemporary work life. Increasing research evidence proves beyond dispute that stress has a dysfunctional impact on both individual as well as organizational outcomes. Turnover Intention of information technology professionals (IT turnover) remains one of the most persistent challenges that organizations facing currently. The main aim of this research is to identify whether the relationship between emotional dissonance and burnout components impact on turnover intention. The dependent variable is turnover intention and the independent variables are emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments). Data were collected from 150 IT professionals who are migrant workers in various designations in Coimbatore district, state of Tamilnadu in India. The results showed that emotional dissonance was positively related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments. Further findings in detail are enclosed in the study and these findings are applicable for migrant IT professionals.

Keywords: *Emotional Dissonance, Burnout, Turnover Intention, IT Professionals.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

Emotion work is considered as quite significant because emotional performance is an important aspect of the jobs for IT professionals. Emotion work can be defined as the process of regulating feelings and expressions as part of the work role (Grandey, 2000). More precisely, Morris and Feldman (1996) define emotion work as "the effort, planning and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during the interpersonal transactions" (1996). These rules for which expression is appropriate in a certain working context are referred to as feeling rules or display rules. The expression of an appropriate emotional display can be achieved through, Deep acting and Surface acting and the expression of genuine

emotion. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) point out that in most cases, the expression of emotion is a spontaneous process that does not cost any effort. Surface acting involves changing the observational expression while the inner feelings remain unchanged (fake smiles). Consequently, deep acting refers to the effort of changing these inner feelings in order to comply with the display rules (i.e., actively trying to replicate from a customer's point of view), (Hochschild, 1989). In this case, not only the emotional expression but also the inner feelings are regulated. Emotion work has positive and negative concerns. Hochschild (1983) was the first who described the possible negative consequences of emotion work for employee well-being. She wrote that

the “persistent, structural discrepancy between which emotions need to be displayed and what is really felt can produce alienation from one’s own authentic emotions”.

2. EMOTIONAL DISSONANCE

Emotions have a signal function that can be compared to, for example, pain signals. If these signals are neglected due to the performance of emotion work, employees can suffer from energy depletion and burnout on a critical level. In this case, the difference between displayed and felt emotions as part of the work role has been named and identified as ‘emotional dissonance’. Emotional dissonance is defined as the inconsistency and the conflict between the experienced emotions and the emotions expressed by an individual (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). The term “Emotional Dissonance” was coined by Arlie Russell Hochschild in the year 1983. It refers to the internal state of tension a person undergoes where he/she has to display emotions that are discrepant from the true emotions felt. In the words of Hochschild, “emotional dissonance,” can be defined as the sense of “strain” that results from feigning emotions that are not felt over the long run. Hochschild, (Hochschild, 1983) defined emotional dissonance as: “maintaining a difference between feeling and feigning”. The current study examines how emotional dissonance and burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) influence IT professional’s turnover intention.

3. BURNOUT

The word “burnout” was first used by Freudenberger (1974) and is denoted as the inability to function effectively in one’s job as a consequence of prolonged and extensive job-related stress. Burnout thus refers to negative psychological response to interpersonal stressors and contains three separate dimensions: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Reduced personal accomplishment (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). Emotional exhaustion represents feelings of fatigue that develop, as one’s energies get drained. Emotional exhaustion is thus characterized by a lack of energy and a feeling that one’s emotional resources are used up. Reduced personal accomplishment represents a deterioration of self-confidence, and dissatisfaction in one’s achievements. Reduced personal accomplishment thus involves low motivational and low self-esteem. It is characterized by a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively. Depersonalization denotes the development of negative and uncaring attitudes towards others, i.e. detachment and an emotional callousness towards clients and peers. It represents the tendency to treat clients as objects rather than people. Individuals may display a cynical, callous, uncaring and negative

attitude toward co-workers, clients and the organization (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993).

4. TURNOVER INTENTION

Turnover means the employees’ movement within an organization. Turnover also refers to quit, attrition, exits, mobility, migration or succession. There are 3 characteristics: voluntariness, avoidability and functionality. Voluntary turnover is referring to those employees who move from the organization voluntarily, for example, resignation. Involuntary turnover is referring to those employees who are not initiated to move, for example, dismissal, retrenchment, and death. Avoidability turnover is referring to prevent the voluntary employees from leaving the organization. Turnover intention is not explicit. It defines as an employee who has his or her own conscious and deliberate intent to leave or resign from the organization at some point in the near future (Hemdi, 2006). It reflects the probability that an employee will change his or her job within a certain period and thus resulting in turnover. Turnover will be increased when the turnover intention is increased. It also captures the employees’ perception and evaluation of job alternatives (Perez, 2008). Turnover will bring both positive and negative effects to an organization. In terms of positive impacts, it brings in better skills and capabilities employees. On the other hand, it will lead to high cost and lower the employees’ morale (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010). The present study emphasizes on IT professional’s turnover intention, because burnout and turnover are common phenomena among these employees. These employees perform two functions: they represent the organization to outsiders and influence their perceptions, expectations, and ideas about the organization (Friedman & Podolny, 1992). Being at the boundary, they either display or are expected to display organizationally desired emotions irrespective of their felt emotions, which often causes emotional dissonance. Emotional dissonance may be one of the critical determinants of employees’ turnover intention, which is becoming a chronic problem in service occupations.

5. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To understand the socio demographic profile of IT professionals
- To analyze the difference between the gender and factors
- To examine the difference between the demographic profile and factors of emotional dissonance
- To evaluate the relationship among the factors influencing the turnover intention
- To investigate the impact of Emotional dissonance, depersonalization, Emotional

exhaustion, personal accomplishment on Turnover intention.

➤ H0₄: Emotional dissonance does not have impact on Turnover intention.

6. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The Null Hypotheses are;

- H0₁: Emotional dissonance does not have impact on emotional exhaustion.
- H0₂: Emotional dissonance does not have impact on depersonalization.
- H0₃: Emotional dissonance does not have impact on personal accomplishment.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were collected through a questionnaire administrated to information technology professionals. From 200 IT employees, 150 usable responses were obtained. Respondent's positions ranged from Programmers, system analysts, project manager, data processing and network administration. Multi stage sampling technique is used.

Table-1: Variables Measure

Measurement Items		
S.No	Factors	Source of Measures
1	Emotional Dissonance	Chu and Murrmann, 2006
4	Emotional Exhaustion	Maslach and Jackson, 1981
5	Depersonalization	Maslach and Jackson, 1981
6	Personal Accomplishments	Maslach and Jackson, 1981
7	Turnover Intention	Moore 2000a

8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table-2: Socio demographic details of the respondents – (n = 150)

General Information	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	69.3
	Female	46	30.7
Age	Less than 30	62	41.3
	31 – 35	61	40.7
	36 – 40	17	11.3
	> 40	10	6.7
Job Position	Programmer	2	1.2
	System analyst	7	4.7
	Project manager	61	40.7
	Data Processing	49	32.7
	Network administration	31	20.7
Educational Qualification	Under Graduate	102	68.0
	Post Graduate	34	22.7
	Others	14	9.3
Work Experience	Less than 1	5	3.3
	1-3	50	33.3
	4-6	58	38.7
	> 7	37	24.7

From the above table it is clear that of the 150 respondents, 104 (69.3 per cent) were male respondents and the remaining 46 (30.7 per cent) were female respondents. The age of the respondents 41.3

per cent (62 respondents) were with the age less than 30 years, 40.7 per cent (61 respondents) were between the age group 31 – 35 years, 11.3 percent (17 respondents) were between the age group 36 – 40 years and the remaining 6.7 percent (10 respondents)

were above 40 years. Of the total sample, 40.7 percent (61 respondents) were project manager, 32.7 per cent (49 respondents) were data processing and 20.7 per cent (31 respondents) were network administration. Of the total sample, 68 per cent (102 respondent) have done their under graduate programme like B.E, B.Tech and 22.7 per cent (34 respondent) have their post graduate level of higher education like M.Tech, MBA, M.Com and the remaining 9.3 per cent (14

respondents) have undergone other courses. Of the total sample, 38.7 percent (58 respondents) were having 4 – 6 years' work experience, 33.3 per cent (50 respondents) were having 1 – 3 years' work experience, 24. 7 per cent (37 respondents) were having above 7 years' experience and remaining 3.3 per cent (5 respondent) were having less than 1 year experience.

Table-3: Independent sample t – test between Gender of the respondents and All factors

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Std. Error Mean	t - value	Sig
Emotional Dissonance	Male	104	3.726	.762	.074	.496	.620
	Female	46	3.665	.538	.079		
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	104	3.556	.846	.083	.882	.379
	Female	46	3.434	.598	.088		
Depersonalization	Male	104	3.838	.863	.084	-.352	.725
	Female	46	3.887	.527	.077		
Personal Accomplishment	Male	104	3.582	.867	.085	1.062	.290
	Female	46	3.432	.627	.092		
Turnover Intention	Male	104	3.490	.790	.077	1.691	.093
	Female	46	3.260	.708	.104		

From the above table shows the independent sample t- test between gender of the respondents and IT professional's emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment) and turnover intention. The independent sample t-test is used to determine if a difference exist between the means of two independent groups. The independent samples t-test for the difference between two groups probability value is not

significant. From this statistical result it is evident that there is no significant difference in respondent's opinion on emotional dissonance, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment and turnover intention. The respondents do not differ in their emotional dissonance, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment and turnover intention seems to be common with both male and female IT professionals irrespective of their gender.

Table-4: One – Way ANOVA between Demographic profiles of the respondents with Emotional Dissonance

Demographic variable	Emotional Dissonance	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Age	Between Groups	41.295	28	1.475	2.427	.001
	Within Groups	73.538	121	.608		
	Total	114.833	149			
Job Position	Between Groups	41.965	28	1.499	2.285	.001
	Within Groups	79.368	121	.656		
	Total	121.333	149			
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	14.339	28	.512	1.999	.005
	Within Groups	30.995	121	.256		
	Total	45.333	149			
Work Experience	Between Groups	35.929	28	1.283	2.299	.001
	Within Groups	67.544	121	.558		
	Total	103.473	149			

From the above table shows that One-way ANOVA result between the demographic profile of the respondents and the emotional dissonance of Information technology professionals. One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the respondents' opinion on emotional dissonance differ among the age,

Job position, Educational qualification and work experience of the respondents. It could be inferred from the table there is significant difference found in respondent's opinion on Emotional dissonance with respect to their Age, job position, Educational Qualification and work experience.

Table-5: One – Way ANOVA between Demographic profile of the respondents with Emotional Exhaustion

Demographic variable	Emotional Exhaustion	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Age	Between Groups	28.634	25	1.145	1.648	.039
	Within Groups	86.200	124	.695		
	Total	114.833	149			
Job Position	Between Groups	34.693	25	1.388	1.986	.007
	Within Groups	86.640	124	.699		
	Total	121.333	149			
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	6.046	25	.242	.763	.780
	Within Groups	39.287	124	.317		
	Total	45.333	149			
Work Experience	Between Groups	45.724	25	1.829	3.927	.001
	Within Groups	57.749	124	.466		
	Total	103.473	149			

From the above table shows that One-way ANOVA result between the demographic profile of the respondents and the burnout component of emotional exhaustion of Information technology professionals. One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the respondents' opinion on emotional dissonance differ

among the age, Job position, Educational qualification and work experience of the respondents. It could be inferred from the table there is significant difference found in respondent's opinion on Emotional exhaustion with respect to their Age, job position and work experience.

Table-6: One – Way ANOVA between Demographic profile of the respondents with Depersonalization

Demographic variable	Depersonalization	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Age	Between Groups	44.817	17	2.636	4.970	.001
	Within Groups	70.016	132	.530		
	Total	114.833	149			
Job Position	Between Groups	20.850	17	1.226	1.611	.070
	Within Groups	100.484	132	.761		
	Total	121.333	149			
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	13.342	17	.785	3.238	.001
	Within Groups	31.992	132	.242		
	Total	45.333	149			
Work Experience	Between Groups	22.416	17	1.319	2.147	.008
	Within Groups	81.057	132	.614		
	Total	103.473	149			

From the above table shows that One-way ANOVA result between the demographic profile of the respondents and the burnout component of depersonalization of Information technology professionals. One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the respondents' opinion on emotional

dissonance differ among the age, Job position, Educational qualification and work experience of the respondents. It could be inferred from the table there is significant difference found in respondent's opinion on depersonalization with respect to their Age, educational qualification and work experience.

Table-7: One – Way ANOVA between Demographic profiles of the respondents with Persona Accomplishment

Demographic variable	Personal Accomplishment	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Age	Between Groups	23.738	26	.913	1.233	.222
	Within Groups	91.095	123	.741		
	Total	114.833	149			
Job Position	Between Groups	35.834	26	1.378	1.983	.007
	Within Groups	85.499	123	.695		
	Total	121.333	149			
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	9.281	26	.357	1.218	.235
	Within Groups	36.052	123	.293		
	Total	45.333	149			
Work Experience	Between Groups	48.859	26	1.879	4.232	.001
	Within Groups	54.614	123	.444		
	Total	103.473	149			

From the above table shows that One-way ANOVA result between the demographic profile of the respondents and the burnout component of personal accomplishment of Information technology professionals. One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the respondents' opinion on emotional

dissonance differ among the age, Job position, Educational qualification and work experience of the respondents. It could be inferred from the table there is significant difference found in respondent's opinion on personal accomplishment with respect to their job position and work experience.

Table-8: One – Way ANOVA between Demographic profiles of the respondents with Turnover Intention

Demographic variable	Turnover Intention	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Age	Between Groups	9.333	14	.667	.853	.611
	Within Groups	105.501	135	.781		
	Total	114.833	149			
Job Position	Between Groups	33.665	14	2.405	3.703	.001
	Within Groups	87.668	135	.649		
	Total	121.333	149			
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	11.579	14	.827	3.308	.001
	Within Groups	33.755	135	.250		
	Total	45.333	149			
Work Experience	Between Groups	16.259	14	1.161	1.798	.045
	Within Groups	87.214	135	.646		
	Total	103.473	149			

From the above table shows that One-way ANOVA result between the demographic profile of the respondents and turnover intention of Information technology professionals. One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the respondents' opinion on emotional dissonance differ among the age, Job

position, Educational qualification and work experience of the respondents. It could be inferred from the table there is significant difference found in respondent's opinion on turnover intention with respect to their job position, educational qualification and work experience.

Table-9: Pearson correlation between factors influencing Turnover Intention

Factors	Emotional Dissonance	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment	Turnover Intention
Emotional Dissonance	1				
Emotional Exhaustion	.704**	1			
Depersonalization	.830**	.665**	1		
Personal Accomplishment	.694**	.991**	.667**	1	
Turnover Intention	.568**	.447**	.447**	.412**	1

**Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is inferred that the factors emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal

accomplishment) and turnover intention positively correlated. And the correlation values are found to be significant.

Table-10: Model fit influence of Emotional dissonance and Turnover Intention

Model summary					
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
.568 ^a	.322	.318	.63718	70.386	.001 ^b
a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Dissonance					

From the above table it is inferred that the model has R² value of 0.32 thus implying that emotional dissonance contribute 32% of IT Professionals' turnover intention integrated in the model. R value of 0.568 shows moderate and

significant relationship (F=70.386) between turnover intention. And also the probability value less than 0.05 hence the null hypothesis rejected (H₀₁), the variables taken in the model explain around thirty two percent of the variations and the model emerged a best fit.

Table-11: Model fit of the influence of burnout and Turnover Intention

Model summary					
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
.556 ^a	.309	.295	.64783	21.755	.001 ^b
a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Personal Accomplishment, Depersonalization, Emotional Exhaustion 1					

From the above table it is inferred that the model has R² value of 0.30 thus implying that burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) contribute 30% of IT Professionals' turnover intention integrated in the model. R value of

0.556 shows moderate and significant relationship (F=21.755) between burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment). The variables taken in the model explain around thirty percent of the variations and the model emerged a best fit.

Table-12: Multiple Regression results between burnout and Turnover Intention

Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.298	.285		4.547	.001
Emotional Exhaustion1	2.221	.522	2.243	4.258	.001
Depersonalization	0.297	.092	0.298	3.229	.002
Personal Accomplishment	-1.934	.508	-2.012	-3.807	.001

The above table shows the multiple regression results of the relationship between burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) and turnover intention. Form the table it could be inferred that the burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) influences turnover intention. The regression values are found to be significant, hence the null hypotheses rejected (H₀₂, H₀₃, H₀₄). Using multiple regression analysis, the results showed that burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) influences IT professional turnover intention.

9. FINDINGS

Independent samples t-test was run as test of the statistical significance of the means of the responses between the gender of the respondents and Emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) and turnover intention of IT Professionals. There is no difference in Gender of the respondents for all the factors. All are affected equally by Emotional dissonance, burnout and turnover intention irrespective of the gender. Probability value is not significant, emotional Exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment and emotional dissonance seems to be common with both male IT professionals and female IT professionals

irrespective of their gender. Collected data proves that Turnover Intention seems to occur approximately at the same time irrespective of the gender of the IT workers.

One way ANOVA was run between all the other demographic variables (age, job position, educational qualification, and work experience) and emotional dissonance in order to assess the difference in opinion among the respondents. It was found that there exists a significant difference on respondent's opinion on emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) and turnover intention based on their age, job position, educational qualification and work experience.

Correlation was run between the factors emotional dissonance, burnout components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) and turnover intention, all the factors are positively correlated. And the correlation values are found to be significant.

Simple and Multiple regression results of the relationship between emotional dissonance, burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) and turnover intention. It is found that the burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) influences turnover intention. The regression values are found to be significant. Using multiple regression analysis, the results showed that burnout components of (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment) influences IT professional turnover intention.

10. SUGGESTION

In IT organizations employees are present in different age categories. It was found that there exists a significant difference on respondents' opinion on emotional dissonance, burnout components ((emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) and turnover intention based on their age. The manager can play a key role in helping the employee identify the cause of exhaustion. IT managers can take the responsibilities to understand the emotional dissonances faced by his subordinates irrespective of their age and act accordingly towards them.

11. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that emotional dissonance influenced IT professional's emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment, which reduced employee job satisfaction and ultimately increased IT professional's turnover intention. This result support previous study by [McGee \(1996\)](#); [Moore \(2000\)](#) and [Ahuja et al. \(2007\)](#) were found that technology professionals experiencing

higher levels of work exhaustion reported lower levels of job satisfaction and higher intentions to leave organization. IT professionals become exhausted due to work overworked like pressurized targets, day-to-day task completion and organization-critical systems. Unless adequate steps are taken to safeguard the IT professionals from this pressure filled job, it could hit their emotions and suppress them. Emotional dissonance positively related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment and turnover intention.

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