

# BURNOUT AT WORK - AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHENOMENON IN ROMANIA

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**Rezumat:** Scopul acestei lucrări este analizarea corelației dintre burnout, suportul organizațional, plictiseala la locul de muncă și performanța în cazul angajaților din România. Această cercetare își propune să contribuie la reducerea lacunelor existente în literatura de specialitate din România privind fenomenul burnout-ului, precum și la nivel internațional în ceea ce privește relațiile dintre variabilele anterior menționate. Burnout-ul are un impact semnificativ în perspectiva angajaților față de locul de muncă, fiind legat strâns de performanța acestora. În prezenta cercetare s-a utilizat un chestionar care a urmărit toți acești factori. Intervalul în care chestionarul a fost distribuit pentru colectarea răspunsurilor prin intermediul rețelelor de socializare a fost de o lună, în luna decembrie a anului 2024. Studiul a fost realizat pe un eșantion de 113 respondenți, angajați în România, utilizând metode cantitative și cinci scale validate. Ipotezele au fost parțial confirmate. Astfel, angajații care beneficiază de suport organizațional vor avea un nivel mai scăzut de burnout, plictiseală sau procrastinare. În plus, angajații din sectorul public au un nivel mai mare de performanță față de cei din sectorul privat, neexistând diferențe în ceea ce privește nivelul de burnout între aceste două grupuri, iar procrastinarea mediază efectul plictiselii asupra performanței la locul de muncă.

**Cuvinte cheie:** burnout, performanță, procrastinare, suport organizațional, plictiseală.

**Abstract:** The aim of this paper is to analyze the correlation between burnout, organizational support, job boredom and performance in Romanian employees. This research aims to contribute to addressing the existing gaps in Romanian literature on the phenomenon of burnout, as well as at the international level regarding the relationships among the variables. Burnout has a significant impact on employees' perspective towards work and is closely related to their performance. In this research, a questionnaire was used to track all these factors. The interval in which the questionnaire was distributed to collect responses through social media was one month, in December 2024. The study was conducted on a sample of 113 respondents, employees in Romania, using quantitative methods and five validated scales. The hypotheses have been partially confirmed. Employees who receive organizational support will have lower levels of burnout, boredom or procrastination. Moreover, employees in the public sector have a higher level of performance than those in the private sector, with no differences in burnout levels between these two groups, while procrastination mediates the effect of boredom on job performance.

**Keywords:** burnout, job performance, procrastination, organizational support, boredom.

**JEL Classification:** M12, M54, J28, J81, D23.

## 1. Introduction

This paper aims to assess the relationship between burnout and job performance in Romanian employees, considering factors such as procrastination, boredom at work, organizational support felt by the employee, but also demographic variables such as age, gender, education level and professional background.

In a professional environment marked by high demands and fast-paced work, effective management of employees' mental health becomes essential to maintain productivity. Burnout is an increasingly common problem in today's work environment, influencing work outcomes, and the ability to be productive and mentally engaged at work is essential for both the employee and the employer. The issue of burnout is a particularly complex one, as there can be many psychological variables that can influence this syndrome. The fast pace of work and increasing demands on employees can lead to lack of motivation and emotional exhaustion. In this context, identifying the factors that contribute to burnout and understanding how it manifests itself is becoming a priority for both researchers and organizational leaders.

Although the burnout phenomenon has been studied internationally, the Romanian literature is still limited, especially in terms of approaches that simultaneously analyze these variables. Existing research often addresses these issues in isolation or without a clear contextualization in the Romanian labor market. Thus, this research aims to cover these gaps through an analysis of the relationships between burnout and individual and organizational factors. The results obtained can contribute both to the advancement of scientific knowledge in the field, and to the development of practical recommendations for the prevention and management of burnout.

## **2. Literature review**

Burnout is defined as a syndrome resulting from prolonged exposure to chronic stress at work that has not been successfully managed. In general, it is characterized in 3 dimensions: the feeling of exhaustion or fatigue, negative feelings towards the workplace, mental distancing from it and the feeling of inefficiency. Burnout refers strictly to the occupational context and should not be mentioned in other areas of life (WHO, 2024). Originally, burnout was identified in the 1970s, believing it to be a fleeting stage of the Baby Boomer generation. However, the burnout crisis is also present in the 21st century (Leiter et al., 2014), especially in the case of younger generations who have an increased level of stress and burnout (American Psychological Association, 2019). This is not just a simple fatigue, but a combination of physical symptoms (fatigue, headaches, gastrointestinal problems) and changes in behavior towards work (irritability, frustration) (Suwiknyo, 2022).

The burnout mainly comes from an unpleasant relationship between the employee and the employer (Khan, 2016). Although organizations yearn to become more and more successful, being a thing to appreciate, they have been criticized for making it the only objective, compromising the mental health of employees (Jourdain & Chenevert, 2014). The high level of work, but also the unrealistic demands of employers and managers can lead to poor mental health of employees, a lack of motivation and can even lead to resignation. Dissatisfaction with the workplace and resignation intentions are often associated with a high level of burnout (Dyrbye et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2021).

The labor market is constantly changing, technology is continually advancing, and contemporary work is often inconclusive. Entire teams contribute to the creation of a product, which can make the feedback process difficult, as the line between the employee's individual contribution and the specific outcome becomes blurred (Leiter et al., 2014). Thus, mental burnout syndrome can occur in any industry, regardless of the employee's educational level (Jamaludin & You, 2019). However, burnout is more prevalent in females (Purvanova & Muros, 2010).

Performance in the workplace is the result of the work done by the employee, adapted to his role in the company. Burnout affects performance at work (Ma et al., 2021), the main factors contributing to this being emotional exhaustion and personal fulfillment. To improve the work performance of employees, managers need to pay attention to the factors that can cause emotional exhaustion (Suwiknyo, 2022). Organizational support is extremely important in preventing burnout, because generally when people feel they are receiving social support from others, they feel less psychological tension (Jawahar et al., 2007). Also, according to Eze (2014), employees with poor organizational support have a higher rate of burnout than those who enjoy proper support. Organizational support brings positive results to employers, employees becoming loyal and having a lower resignation rate (Altinoz et al., 2016).

Boredom at work is another factor that can affect the quality of an employee's work, being characterized by a low level of motivation. Abject boredom, the lack of mentally stimulating tasks for the employee and the absence of opportunities for advancement and promotion can reduce his involvement in the workplace (Abubakar et al., 2021). This type of boredom is growing due to automation and technological developments. Although occasional boredom is harmless, it can lead employees to procrastination and other activities during working hours (Harju et al., 2022).

Procrastination is described as an intentional delay in initiating or completing an important activity, or a work task, and is often associated with an increased rate of burnout (Ma et al., 2021).

Although the boredom described above and burnout result from different factors - boredom is the result of redundant, repetitive tasks, and burnout from increased and unrealistic requirements - they have in common the lack of motivation of the employee. Burnout can also be developed due to mentally unsatisfactory work, creating a connection between boredom and burnout (Harju et al., 2022). With this in mind, it is very important that the employee receives support from the manager and the organization. Employees who feel that their organization is genuinely interested in their well-being will have lower levels of burnout (Jawahar et al., 2007).

In the case of an employee suffering from burnout, it is important to raise awareness of it, but also appropriate behavior to relieve symptoms, such as a healthy diet, breath control, time management, enough sleep, exercises for rest and relaxation or even changing the profession (Altinoz et al., 2016).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research hypotheses

The purpose of this research is defined by the correlation that performance, boredom, procrastination at work and organizational support may have with the level of burnout of employees in Romania, considering various demographic factors. To interpret the variables, we formulated the following hypotheses:

**H1:** *The lower the level of organizational support, the higher the burnout level of employees.* Previous studies have confirmed that employees who experience strong organizational support will have lower levels of burnout, due to their sense of belonging and loyalty to the company (Jawahar et al., 2007; Altinoz et al., 2016). This study aims to test this hypothesis in the context of the Romanian labor market.

**H2:** *Age is negatively associated with burnout levels, with younger employees having higher burnout levels.* Previous research findings are aligned with this hypothesis, suggesting that young people experience higher levels of stress and burnout (American Psychological Association, 2019). This research aims to test this hypothesis in the context of the Romanian labor market.

**H3:** *There are differences in the level of burnout between employees in the public sector and those in the private sector.* Existing research on the level of burnout of public and private employees in Romania is limited, however, international research supports the fact that private employees report a higher level of burnout, and those in the public sector report a higher level of job satisfaction (Gastearena-Balda et al., 2021; Yousaf et al., 2021).

**H4:** *There are no differences in the level of burnout among employees with different levels of education (high school, bachelor's, master's).* Previous studies report that the level of burnout and depersonalization is not affected by employee studies (Jamaludin and You, 2019), and this research aims to test the hypothesis in the context of Romania.

**H5:** *There are differences in burnout levels between men and women.* The existing literature confirms this hypothesis, highlighting gender differences in burnout levels, especially due to biological, psychological, and social factors (Purvanova and Muros, 2010). This research wants to test this hypothesis in the analyzed context.

**H6:** *Procrastination mediates the effect of boredom on workplace performance.* Previous research highlights the negative correlation between procrastination and performance, but also the

mediating role of procrastination in the relationship between performance and boredom (Kim and Seo, 2015; Al-Mashadani, 2022). The study aims to test this hypothesis in the specific context analyzed.

### **3.2. Participants**

This research aimed to analyze the burnout level of employees in Romania, in various fields of activity, regardless of age or seniority in work. In order to carry out the research, we conducted a questionnaire in Google Forms, distributed on social networks. This questionnaire was addressed to people who currently have a job.

Following the distribution of the questionnaire, 113 answers were completed, with a minimum age of 21 and a maximum age of 58. Of these, 58.4% were female and 41.6% male. In terms of work sector, 69.9% are employed in the private sector and 30.1% in the public sector. The length of employment of the respondents is distributed as follows: 2.7% of the respondents have less than 1 year of experience, 47.8% have between 1 and 3 years of experience, 15% are in the category of 3-5 years of experience, 13.3% have between 5 and 10 years of experience and 21.2% have more than 10 years of experience. Data were also collected regarding the respondents' educational background, most of them, 59.3%, have a bachelor's degree, 24.8% have a master's degree, 15% are high school graduates, and 0.9% have a post-secondary or vocational school.

### **3.3. Instruments**

For this research, I used five scales translated into Romanian from Research Central, <https://researchcentral.ro/index.php> all of which are from the field of Work and Organizational Psychology. For each of these scales I have calculated the Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) internal consistency coefficient using the JASP program. The coefficient values are between 0.884 and 0.955, indicating a very good level of internal consistency of the scales. As the removal of any item does not positively influence the internal consistency coefficient, all items were retained in the final analysis.

1. Maslach Burnout Inventory (Scale 412), consisting of 16 items and 3 subscales - Exhaustion, Inefficacy, and Cynicism (Schaufeli et al., 1996). The internal consistency coefficient  $\alpha$  of the scale is 0.948.
2. Dutch Boredom Scale (Scale 375), consisting of 6 items (Reijseger et al., 2016). The internal consistency coefficient  $\alpha$  of the scale is 0.884.
3. Workplace Procrastination Scale (Scale 384), consisting of 12 items and 2 subscales - Soldiering and Cyberslacking (Metin et al., 2016). The internal consistency coefficient  $\alpha$  of the scale is 0.919.
4. Perceived Organizational Support Scale (Scale 397), consisting of 17 items (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The internal consistency coefficient  $\alpha$  of the scale is 0.955.
5. Performance Evaluation Scale (Scale 430), consisting of 16 items and two subscales - Contextual Performance and Task Performance (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999). The internal consistency coefficient  $\alpha$  of the scale is 0.892.

### **3.4. Data analysis**

In this research, the data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using quantitative statistical methods, including descriptive statistics, the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests, and Spearman correlation analysis. These methods were appropriate for examining both relationships and differences between variables. Quantitative methods allow objective measurement of psychological variables, mediated using validated scales and facilitate the testing of research hypotheses. The analysis of the data was conducted in several steps, starting with descriptive analysis and continuing with hypothesis testing. For data processing, the JASP

software (Version 0.19.3; JASP Team, 2023), version 0.19.3.0, an open-source platform for statistical analysis, was used.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptive analysis

The values in Table 1 indicate that no variable has a normal distribution, according to the Shapiro-Wilk test. For each of these variables,  $p < 0.05$ . So, non-parametric tests will be used to verify the hypotheses.

Table 1

| Descriptive analysis        |         |         |                 |                        |             |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------|
|                             | Burnout | Boredom | Procrastination | Organizational support | Performance |
| <b>N</b>                    | 113     | 113     | 113             | 113                    | 113         |
| <b>Mean</b>                 | 33.885  | 14.735  | 27.575          | 75.292                 | 52.912      |
| <b>Standard Deviation</b>   | 19.484  | 5.831   | 16.280          | 22.947                 | 7.655       |
| <b>Skewness</b>             | 0.412   | 0.531   | 0.565           | -0.206                 | -0.213      |
| <b>SE Skewness</b>          | 0.227   | 0.227   | 0.227           | 0.227                  | 0.227       |
| <b>Kurtosis</b>             | -0.550  | -0.566  | -0.441          | -0.365                 | -0.960      |
| <b>SE Kurtosis</b>          | 0.451   | 0.451   | 0.451           | 0.451                  | 0.451       |
| <b>Shapiro-Wilk</b>         | 0.968   | 0.953   | 0.956           | 0.977                  | 0.956       |
| <b>P-Value Shapiro-Wilk</b> | 0.009   | <0.001  | <0.001          | 0.046                  | <0.001      |
| <b>Min value</b>            | 0.000   | 6.000   | 0.000           | 19.000                 | 36.000      |
| <b>Max value</b>            | 87.000  | 30.000  | 68.000          | 119.000                | 64.000      |

Source: Author

### 4.2. Testing hypotheses

Since the data does not comply with the normal distribution, Spearman correlation analysis was performed. Regarding the relationship between organizational support and burnout, the H1 hypothesis was formulated, according to which a lower level of organizational support is associated with a higher level of burnout among employees. The results of the analysis presented in Table 2 support this hypothesis.

Table 2

| Correlation according to Spearman test |         |        |        |        |       |     |
|--|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-----|
| Variable                               |         | (1)    | (2)    | (3)    | (4)   | (5) |
| <b>Burnout</b>                         | Rho     | -      | -      | -      | -     | -   |
|  | P-value | -      | -      | -      | -     | -   |
| <b>Boredom</b>                         | Rho     | 0.755  | -      | -      | -     | -   |
|  | P-value | <0.001 | -      | -      | -     | -   |
| <b>Procrastination</b>                 | Rho     | 0.656  | 0.757  | -      | -     | -   |
|  | P-value | <0.001 | <.001  | -      | -     | -   |
| <b>Organizational support</b>          | Rho     | -0.676 | -0.612 | -0.504 | -     | -   |
|  | P-value | <0.001 | <0.001 | <0.001 | -     | -   |
| <b>Performance</b>                     | Rho     | -0.339 | -0.303 | -0.348 | 0.127 | -   |
|  | P-value | <0.001 | 0.001  | <0.001 | 0.182 | -   |

Note: Rho represents the correlation coefficient, which measures the strength and direction of a monotonic relationship between two variables.

Source: Author

The correlation between organizational support and burnout is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the Rho Spearman coefficient is negative (-0.676), indicating a strong negative correlation between organizational support and burnout. Therefore, high organizational support is associated with lower burnout levels. There are also strong positive correlations between burnout and boredom (0.755), boredom and procrastination (0.757), burnout and procrastination (0.656), but also strong negative correlations between organizational support and boredom (-0.612) and organizational support and procrastination (-0.504).

Regarding the correlation between employee age and burnout level, the H2 hypothesis was assumed, according to which younger employees tend to show a higher level of burnout. To test this hypothesis, we first conducted Spearman correlation analysis between age variables, work seniority, and burnout. According to Table 3, the correlation between age and burnout is statistically significant ( $p = 0.015 < 0.05$ ), as well as the correlation between work seniority and burnout ( $p = 0.003 < 0.05$ ). The Spearman Rho coefficient is negative for both age (-0.228) and seniority (-0.273), indicating a negative correlation between them and burnout.

Table 3

Correlation according to Spearman test

| Variable       |         | Age           | Work seniority | Burnout |
|----------------|---------|---------------|----------------|---------|
| Age            | Rho     | -             | -              | -       |
|                | P-value | -             | -              | -       |
| Work seniority | Rho     | 0.749         | -              | -       |
|                | P-value | <0.001        | -              | -       |
| Burnout        | Rho     | <b>-0.228</b> | <b>-0.273</b>  | -       |
|                | P-value | 0.015         | 0.003          | -       |

*Note: Rho represents the correlation coefficient, which measures the strength and direction of a monotonic relationship between two variables.*

*Source: Author*

To further test the hypothesis we performed the Kruskal-Wallis test, dividing the respondents by age into the following categories: under 25, 25-34, 35-44, over 45. The p-coefficient of the test is 0.039 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which confirms that there are differences between the groups in terms of burnout level. We also performed the Post Hoc test using Tukey's method to understand the concrete difference between the above-mentioned age groups. The only p-value is less than 0.05 when comparing the groups under 25 and over 45, with a p-value equal to 0.026. Looking at the mean difference, we can observe that it is negative (-15.573), which confirms that the group under 25 years of age experiences a higher level of Burnout than the group over 45 years of age, the hypothesis being confirmed. At the same time, this difference may be due to the different sample - the number of respondents under 25 is 66 and the number of respondents over 45 is 15.

As part of the research, hypothesis H3 was proposed, stating that there are significant differences in the level of burnout between employees in the public sector and those in the private sector. Mann-Whitney test was used to test this hypothesis. Table 4 shows the differences by sector of work, but also that there are no statistically significant differences between private and public sector employees in terms of Burnout ( $p = 0.827 > 0.05$ ). The only significant difference between these two groups is performance, which is statistically significant ( $p = 0.028 < 0.05$ ). The mean of the responses given regarding the performance of private sector employees is 51.899 and public sector employees is 55.265, observed in Table 5. Thus, public sector employees have higher performance level than private sector employees and the initial hypothesis has been disproved.



Table 4

## Mann-Whitney test - differences by work sector

| Variable                      | U        | p     | Biserial correlation coefficient | Standard Error |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Burnout</b>                | 1378.500 | 0.827 | 0.026                            | 0.118          |
| <b>Boredom</b>                | 1640.000 | 0.063 | 0.221                            | 0.118          |
| <b>Procrastination</b>        | 1634.000 | 0.069 | 0.217                            | 0.118          |
| <b>Organizational support</b> | 1312.000 | 0.849 | -0.023                           | 0.118          |
| <b>Performance</b>            | 992.000  | 0.028 | -0.261                           | 0.118          |

*Note: the U statistic is the test statistic used to determine whether there is a significant difference between two independent groups on a continuous or ordinal variable.*

*Source: Author*

Table 5

## Mann-Whitney test - group description by work sector

| Variable                      | Group          | N  | Mean   | Standard Deviation | Standard Error | Variation coefficient |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----|--------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Burnout</b>                | Private sector | 79 | 34.139 | 19.822             | 2.230          | 0.581                 |
|                               | Public sector  | 34 | 33.294 | 18.952             | 3.250          | 0.569                 |
| <b>Boredom</b>                | Private sector | 79 | 15.354 | 5.776              | 0.650          | 0.376                 |
|                               | Public sector  | 34 | 13.294 | 5.787              | 0.992          | 0.435                 |
| <b>Procrastination</b>        | Private sector | 79 | 29.481 | 16.570             | 1.864          | 0.562                 |
|                               | Public sector  | 34 | 23.147 | 14.890             | 2.554          | 0.643                 |
| <b>Organizational support</b> | Private sector | 79 | 74.544 | 24.419             | 2.747          | 0.328                 |
|                               | Public sector  | 34 | 77.029 | 19.323             | 3.314          | 0.251                 |
| <b>Performance</b>            | Private sector | 79 | 51.899 | 7.595              | 0.854          | 0.146                 |
|                               | Public sector  | 34 | 55.265 | 7.374              | 1.265          | 0.133                 |

*Note: N refers to the sample size - the number of observations in each group being compared.*

*Source: Author*

Regarding employees with different levels of education, hypothesis H4 was proposed, stating that there are no differences in the level of burnout based on their educational background. In order to test this hypothesis, the post-secondary or vocational school category was excluded as it contained only one observation, which was insufficient for statistical analysis. Therefore, the hypothesis was tested for respondents with high school, bachelor's or master's degrees. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to analyze the differences between groups, and the result obtained showed a p-value of 0.811, which is above the 0.05 threshold, as can be seen in Table 6. Consequently, the test did not reveal statistically significant differences, and the level of education does not significantly influence the level of burnout.

Table 6

## Kruskal-Wallis Test - Burnout level by education

| Factor           | Statistic | df | p     |
|------------------|-----------|----|-------|
| <b>Education</b> | 0.419     | 2  | 0.811 |

*Source: Author*

Hypothesis H5 was proposed, standing that there are significant differences in the level of burnout between male and female individuals. To test this hypothesis, I have used the Mann-Whitney test. As it can be seen in Table 7, there are no differences in burnout levels between male and female individuals, with the result indicating a coefficient p of 0.639, above the threshold of 0.05. The hypothesis is not confirmed. Also, no value of p exceeds the same threshold, there are no differences between male and female gender neither in terms of level of boredom, procrastination, organizational support or performance.

Table 7

## Mann-Whitney Test- Differences by gender

| Variable                      | U        | p     | Biserial correlation coefficient | Standard Error |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Burnout</b>                | 1632.000 | 0.639 | 0.052                            | 0.110          |
| <b>Boredom</b>                | 1507.000 | 0.800 | -0.028                           | 0.110          |
| <b>Procrastination</b>        | 1608.000 | 0.740 | 0.037                            | 0.110          |
| <b>Organizational support</b> | 1518.000 | 0.850 | -0.021                           | 0.110          |
| <b>Performance</b>            | 1521.000 | 0.863 | -0.019                           | 0.110          |

Source: Author

To analyze the mediation between variables, the H6 hypothesis was issued, according to which procrastination mediates the effect of boredom on performance at work. I have conducted a mediation analysis, where the independent variable is boredom, the dependent one is performance, and the mediator variable is procrastination. For each of the tables below, the estimator used is that of maximum verisimilitude. The analysis of direct effects, presented in Table 8, shows that boredom does not have a significant effect on performance ( $p = 0.598$ ), suggesting that performance is not directly influenced by boredom. According to the statistically significant indirect effect ( $p = 0.037 < 0.05$ ), boredom in the workplace leads to a higher level of procrastination, which leads to a lower performance.

Table 8

## Direct, indirect and total effects

|                         |  | Estimate | Standard Error | z      | p     | 95% confidence interval |
|-------------------------|--|----------|----------------|--------|-------|-------------------------|
| <b>Direct effects</b>   | <b>Boredom -&gt; Performance</b>                       | -0.092   | 0.175          | -0.528 | 0.598 | -0.435; 0.250           |
| <b>Indirect effects</b> | <b>Boredom -&gt; Procrastination -&gt; Performance</b> | -0.277   | 0.133          | -2.089 | 0.037 | -0.537; 0.017           |
| <b>Total effects</b>    | <b>Boredom -&gt; Performance</b>                       | -0.369   | 0.119          | -3.115 | 0.002 | -0.601; 0.137           |

Source: Author

Table 8 also shows the total, statistically significant effect ( $p = 0.002 < 0.05$ ), the estimate equal to -0.369 highlighting the negative effect that boredom has on performance. But given that the results of the direct effect were not significant, the tests suggest that the effect of boredom on performance is entirely mediated by procrastination. The same is confirmed by the trajectory coefficients presented in Table 9, statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.034$ ). The hypothesis was confirmed.

Table 9

## Trail coefficients

|  | Estimate | Standard Error | z      | p       | 95% confidence interval |
|--|----------|----------------|--------|---------|-------------------------|
| <b>Procrastination -&gt; Performance</b> | -0.133   | 0.063          | -2.121 | 0.034   | -0.255; 0.010           |
| <b>Boredom -&gt; Performance</b>         | -0.092   | 0.175          | -0.528 | 0.598   | -0.435; 0.250           |
| <b>Boredom -&gt; Procrastination</b>     | 2.085    | 0.175          | 11.937 | < 0.001 | 1.743; 2.427            |

Source: Author

## 5. Discussion

This research makes a valuable contribution to literature, confirming the relationships between burnout and the behavioral variables analyzed. At the same time, the research highlights certain methodological limitations. First, performance was measured by self-reporting, which can introduce cognitive biases or results influenced by participants' self-awareness levels. Secondly, the uneven distribution of respondents may affect the external validity of the findings.



The first hypothesis confirmed the negative correlation between organizational support and burnout, but also between organizational support and workplace boredom or procrastination. A positive correlation between burnout, boredom and procrastination has also been confirmed. How the organization supports employees and values their work is crucial to their mental well-being. This result is in line with literature (Jawahar et al., 2007; Altinoz et al., 2016), confirming the alignment of the specific context with international literature. Therefore, also on the Romanian labor market, employees will feel the sense of belonging to the organization when they receive increased organizational support, leading to a lower level of burnout and decreasing the chances of boredom or procrastination at work. For both the employer and the employee, organizational support is crucial.

The second hypothesis was confirmed, with the category of employees under 25 having a higher level of burnout than employees over 45 years. Although the result is aligned with the literature (American Psychological Association, 2019), which supports the high level of stress and burnout of young people, the result obtained in this analysis may be influenced by the high share of employees under 25 years in the analyzed sample. For a more specific analysis, a study could be conducted on equal-sized samples or samples focused on the same industry.

As regards the third hypothesis, no significant differences were identified in the level of burnout between employees in the public and private sectors, which contradicts the existing literature (Gastearena-Balda et al., 2021; Yousaf et al., 2021), which states that private sector employees report higher levels of burnout. This result may differ from the literature due to the unequal number of respondents (79 private sector employees and 34 public sector employees). Future research could focus on this specific context using a balanced sample. However, self-reported performance was higher in the public sector, which aligns with the higher satisfaction levels of these employees, as highlighted by previous research. This observation is worth exploring in future studies, segmented by specific industries.

The fourth hypothesis was not confirmed; the burnout level was not influenced by the level of education of employees. Although the result is aligned with existing literature (Jamaludin and You, 2019), which argues that the working environment is a more intense factor for the occurrence of burnout, compared to the level of education, it can be influenced by the unequal distribution of the participants in the sample, most of the respondents (59.3%) being graduates of undergraduate studies. Moreover, the burnout level is influenced more by environmental factors, such as organizational support, or overwork and high demands, than by education.

The fifth hypothesis was not statistically supported; no significant gender burnout differences were identified, contrary to other specialist studies (Purvanova and Muros, 2010) supporting the difference between the two genera in terms of burnout, given the biological and psychological differences between them. The discrepancy can be explained by the small sample size, uneven data distribution in terms of gender or self-reported character of the data. The problem can be investigated in different cultural contexts or by more accurate measurements of burnout, such as combining objective data with self-reported ones. The last hypothesis was confirmed, according to the existing literature (Al-Mashadani, 2022; Kim and Seo, 2015), which emphasizes that sterile apathy and lack of involvement, specific to boredom, lead to postponing tasks, reducing the efficiency and quality of work of employees. Thus, boredom does not directly influence performance, but acts by indirect mechanism, leading to an increase in procrastination, which in turn reduces perceived performance.

## 6. Conclusions

Burnout can affect an employee's daily life, even outside of working hours. It is a difficult-to-manage syndrome that can have serious consequences on their mental health. By providing support, organizations can improve employees' well-being and contribute to a smoother career path. The study's results support the idea that organizational support plays a key role in preventing burnout, fostering a collaborative, open, and employee-centered work environment.

In view of these limitations, future research should consider collecting more detailed demographic data, such as the position occupied in the organization, industry, work style or size of the organization. An analysis of organizational interventions could also help develop effective employee support strategies. Further research can be tailored to specific industries, allowing analysis in particular contexts.

Future research directions include identifying effective forms of organizational support to reduce burnout levels, exploring psychological and environmental factors that contribute to employee resilience, investigating the impact of leadership styles on performance and psychological state, and analyzing the evolution of the burnout over time and proposing effective recovery strategies to prevent absenteeism or even leaving the job.

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