

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Languages



Bachelor Thesis

**Fostering a Healthy Environment to Reduce
Burnout/Impact on Mental Health**

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BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Business Administration

Thesis title

Fostering a Healthy Environment to Reduce Burnout/Impact on Mental Health

Objectives of thesis

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the impact of burnout on the physical and mental health of the employee and how this correlates with employee performance and efficiency; determine the most common factors of burnouts and ways of avoiding them; analyze the methods of implementation of the healthy environment on the workplace; test the effect of impact on mental health on the companies' performance and turnover.

Methodology

The theoretical part is based on the most successful entrepreneurs' articles, books and interviews as well as research conducted in various fields. The practical part will be based on primary research made in Four Seasons branch located in Prague. The aims of the research are to examine the level of satisfaction of the employees and the evaluation of their working environment. This will be conducted through qualitative and quantitative data intake such as a questionnaire and pertinent hypothesis testing that follows.

The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

Keywords

mental health, environment, research, management, efficiency, burnout

Recommended information sources

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-

Expected date of thesis defence

2023/24 SS – PEF

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Electronic approval: 26. 2. 2024

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Prague on 06. 03. 2024

Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Fostering a Healthy Environment to Reduce Burnout/Impact on Mental Health" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 15.03.2024

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Jared Daniel Jacques and all other persons, for their advice and support during my work on this thesis.

Fostering a Healthy Environment to Reduce Burnout/Impact on Mental Health

Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate the impact of burnout on the physical and mental health of the employee and how this correlates with employee performance and efficiency; determine the most common factors of burnout and ways of avoiding them; analyze the methods of implementation of the healthy environment on the workplace; test the effect of impact on mental health on the companies' performance and turnover. The theoretical part is based on the most successful entrepreneurs' articles, books and interviews as well as research conducted in various fields. The practical part will be based on primary research made in the Four Seasons branch located in Prague. This is conducted through qualitative and quantitative data intake such as a questionnaire and pertinent hypothesis testing that follows. In the end, it is concluded that burnout is not likely to prompt employees of Four Seasons Prague to consider leaving the organization. On the other hand, there are visible differences between different groups of employees when it comes to the occurrence of burnout.

Keywords: mental health, environment, research, management, efficiency, burnout

Podpora zdravého prostředí ke snížení syndromu vyhoření / dopad na duševní zdraví

Abstrakt

Cílem této práce je prozkoumat dopad vyhoření na fyzické a duševní zdraví zaměstnance a jak to koreluje s výkonem a efektivitou zaměstnance; určit nejčastější faktory vyhoření a způsoby, jak se jim vyhnout; analyzovat metody implementace zdravého prostředí na pracovišti; otestovat vliv dopadu na duševní zdraví na výkonnost a obrat společností. Teoretická část je založena na člancích, knihách a rozhovorech nejúspěšnějších podnikatelů, jakož i na výzkumu prováděném v různých oblastech. Praktická část bude založena na primárním výzkumu provedeném v pobočce Four Seasons v Praze. To se provádí prostřednictvím kvalitativního a kvantitativního příjmu dat, jako je dotazník a příslušné testování hypotéz, které následuje. Nakonec se dospělo k závěru, že vyhoření pravděpodobně nepovede zaměstnance Four Seasons Prague k úvahám o odchodu z organizace. Na druhou stranu existují viditelné rozdíly mezi různými skupinami zaměstnanců, pokud jde o výskyt vyhoření.

Klíčová slova: duševní zdraví, životní prostředí, výzkum, management, efektivita, syndrom vyhoření

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1 Introduction

The concept of burnout and its significant implications on mental health have received wide recognition and have become increasingly prevalent in contemporary society. It is closely connected to the fast-paced nature and constant motion of modern existence. The persistent need to achieve success and approbation, the pressure of having to meet higher expectations and demands and the lack of self-care and work-life balance have shown a detrimental impact on the well-being of individuals in a variety of environments, particularly in the workplace.

The characteristics of burnout include emotional exhaustion, feelings of estrangement, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishments, which have appeared to be extremely harmful to both individuals and the companies they work for. The profitability, prosperity and success of an organisation are determined by its employees. Employee effectiveness is closely related to the implemented management styles, strategies and work environment fostered inside the organisation.

This bachelor thesis, titled "Fostering a Healthy Environment to Reduce Burnout/Impact on Mental Health" examines deeply the intricate connection between environmental factors and burnout prevalence. The importance of this research is impossible to avoid and overestimate as it strives to identify strategies that might initiate the creation of an empathetic and supportive environment, and as a result, reduce the chance of burnout and decrease its harmful impact on mental health.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the impact of burnout on the physical and mental health of the employee and how this correlates with employee performance and efficiency; determine the most common factors of burnout and ways of avoiding them; analyze the methods of implementation of the healthy environment on the workplace; test the effect of impact on mental health on the companies' performance and turnover.

2.2 Methodology

The theoretical part is based on the most successful entrepreneurs' articles, books and interviews as well as research conducted in various fields. The practical part will be based on primary research made in the Four Seasons branch located in Prague. The aims of the research are to examine the level of satisfaction of the employees and the evaluation of their working environment. This will be conducted through qualitative and quantitative data intake such as a questionnaire and pertinent hypothesis testing that follows.

3 Literature Review

The theoretical part of this thesis provides a cornerstone for comprehending the complex components of burnout, its influence on mental health, and the crucial role of the environment. A thorough framework for the following empirical research will be completed by providing the analysis of widely recognized burnout models and theories, exploring the multifaceted relationship between burnout and mental health, and then thoroughly researching the impact of the work environment.

The structure of the theoretical part is as follows:

- **Chapter 1:** introduction of the idea of burnout along with major models and theories on how it develops
- **Chapter 2:** discussion of the effects of burnout on mental health, emphasising the emotional and psychological damage from this condition
- **Chapter 3:** examination of the crucial influence of the work environment on the development of burnout, highlighting the significance of creating a healthy work environment
- **Chapter 4:** prevalence of burnout in the hospitality industry and factors contributing to it

The theoretical framework leads to empirical research, as practical strategies and auctions that companies may implement to foster a healthier environment will be researched. The aim of this research is to contribute a positive impact on the mental well-being of society and support and conserve individuals' potential and emotional equilibrium.

3.1 Burnout: Concept, History, Importance

Phycologists Herbert Freudenberger and Christina Maslach first used the term “burnout” in the 1970s to describe the psychological and physical tiredness that people in helping professions faced. Burnout was originally identified by healthcare specialists and has subsequently migrated to other occupational domains, demonstrating its significance and universality (Heinemann and Heinemann 2017).

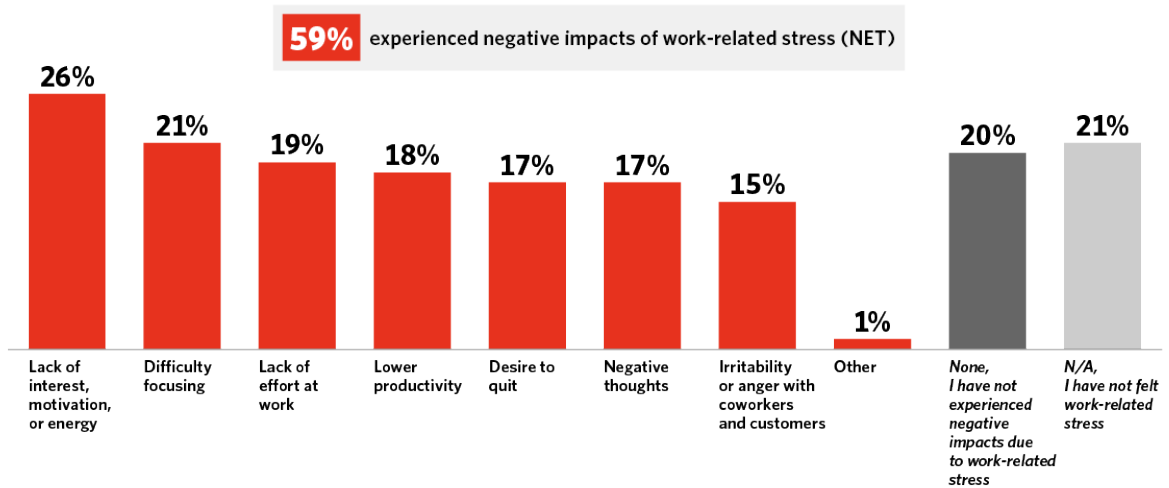
As practitioners and researchers strove to understand the wider picture and contributing elements, the concept transformed. It has expanded to include a wide range of professions and industries, moving beyond the original definition with jobs that include direct care of others. This evolution displays an increased awareness of how widespread burnout is and how it impacts diverse areas of work (Heinemann and Heinemann 2017).

Burnout is a severe issue that is developing in terrifying proportions and impacts people in a wide variety of industries and occupations. The concept is becoming more common as a result of technological development, globalisation, and the constantly increasing demands of the workplace. Mental exhaustion occurred to be a serious threat to both personal development and company efficiency, and has appeared not only in the professions with high levels of stress, it has spread to various sectors (Kaluza et al., 2022).

The relevance of burnout is still relevant in modern culture because of society's emphasis on continuous goal achievement, long working hours, and lack of work-life balance. Considering how widespread this phenomenon is, it is crucial to investigate strategies for fostering healthier environments that will successfully reduce burnout and its impact on mental health.

“Nearly three in five employees (59%) have experienced negative impacts of work-related stress in the past month” - reports the Work and Wellbeing Survey conducted by the American Psychological Association in 2021 (Figure 1). As can be seen from the table, 26% of workers experienced a lack of motivation and interest, 17% had negative thoughts and a desire to quit, and only 21% had not felt work-related stress.

Figure 1, experiences due to work-related stress in the past month (2021)



Source: American Psychology Association, 2021

In today’s fast-paced world, the condition of burnout is widely spread and can appear in multiple ways in people who are under constant workplace pressure and stress. It requires a theoretical framework that studies the complex interplay of various components that lead to burnout in order to completely understand its intricate nature, moving beyond surface-level observations.

The commonly utilised method for assessing burnout, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), according to Maslach et al. (2010) is a psychological syndrome with three key components:

- **Emotional Exhaustion:** This component represents feelings of emotional exhaustion and emotional depletion. People who are affected by emotional tiredness often notice feeling overwhelmed, drained of energy and lacking the emotional stamina required to maintain productive interpersonal relationships.
- **Depersonalization:** often referred to as cynicism, depersonalization involves the formation of negative attitudes and sentiments towards work itself, clients or coworkers. It leads to a feeling of disconnection and a predisposition to

treat people as objects, not taking into consideration their emotions and needs.

- **Diminished Personal Accomplishment:** this element contains a decrease in perceived competence and productive accomplishment in their performance with people as well as feelings of inefficiency. A diminished sense of personal satisfaction and accomplishment in work capacity are its most distinctive features.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model was introduced by The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, proposed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli 2001. It is a widely known paradigm for comprehending the roots and consequences of burnout. According to Demerouti et al. (2001), there are two primary categories into which job characteristics can be divided:

- **Job Demands:** The physical, psychological, social and organisational characteristics of the job that necessitate constant physical or mental activity and refer to specific physiological and psychological consequences. Not balanced high job demands may result in burnout.
- **Job Resources:** The organisational, social, psychological, and physical elements of a job that support human development, assist in work goal achieving, lessen workloads, and help in reaching objectives. Sufficient job resources act as motivative and protective factors against burnout.

In addition to the research of Baslach's burnout model and JD-R model, it is important to mention additional theoretical frameworks that deepen the comprehension of burnout. The two models that will be introduced further have a unique role in illuminating particular aspects and assisting in building a wider understanding of the burnout phenomenon:

- **Person-Environment Fit Theory.** This hypothesis was developed by John L. Holland and presents the alignment or misalignment between a person and their work environment. The fact that burnout can occur when an employee's

values, personality, and skills do not match the requirements and expectations of their work environment is highlighted (Feldman et al., 1999).

- **Effort-Reward Imbalance Model.** This model was presented by Johannes Siegrist and provides a distinctive perspective by focusing on the balance between the efforts an individual puts into their work and the benefits they obtain in return. Based on this framework, burnout may take place when there is a significant gap between an individual's high level of effort and an inadequate approach to rewards received. That may include salary raise, recognition and career growth. The imbalance leads to chronic stress and impact on mental health (Siegrist, 2016).

These frameworks provide different perspectives on burnout. The Person-Environment Fit Theory examines how an employee's attributes correspond with the work environment and The Effort-Reward Imbalance Model concentrates on the relationship between the effort an individual puts in and the reward he or she is getting in return. Integrating knowledge from multiple frameworks provides a deeper comprehension of the complex nature of burnout and guides towards the development of inclusive solutions that are compatible with the particular aspects of the working environment. By incorporating these various theoretical perspectives, the complexities of burnout can be better addressed and the conceptual toolkit can be expanded (Lee et al., 2013).

3.2 Burnout and Mental Health

The analysis of the connection between burnout and mental health is an essential aspect of understanding the broader impact on a person's general well-being. The investigation goes beyond cursory observations and examinations, aiming to clarify the complex relationships between variables that connect burnout with distinct aspects of mental health.

A multifaceted interaction of physiological, psychological, and emotional dynamics describes the link between mental health and burnout. Chronic job-related stress and exhaustion lead to burnout and become deeply established in an individual's mental environment. A person's mental health is impacted by burnout in a reciprocal way, meaning that the dynamic relationship is not linear or unidirectional.

- **Psychological Impact.** A relationship's psychological aspect demonstrates the significant effects that burnout can have on emotional regulation, cognitive functions, and general psychological health. Continuous contact with burnout-related factors can disrupt memory retention and cause issues with focus, concentration and decision-making processes. Elevated responsiveness, irritation, and mental exhaustion indicate poor emotional control. A deeper comprehension of the complex relationship that develops between burnout and an employee's mental health status is developed through the investigation of these psychological factors (Golembiewski, 2001).
- **Emotional Consequences.** The study extends to the emotional effect of burnout. Emotional tiredness, which is the primary component of burnout, can lead to increased emotional responsiveness and a decreased ability to feel positive emotions. People who are experiencing burnout may struggle with a variety of emotions, ranging from an overwhelming feeling of indifference to an enduring feeling of frustration and disappointment. If such emotional instability is not addressed, it may become a major contributor to mental health issues (Lambert et al., 2015).
- **Physiological Responses.** In addition to psychological and emotional dimensions, the connection between burnout and mental health is also defined by physiological aspects. Physiological modifications, including disturbed sleep cycles, weakened immune system performance, and a rise in cortisol levels (the stress hormone) can be a result of chronic stress linked to burnout. These physiological reactions impact mental health in a broader context, potentially rendering existing illnesses worse or fostering conditions that lead to the development of new problems (Cherniss, 1992).

The relationship between burnout and mental health is shaped by biological, social, and physiological factors. Such a complex approach highlights the necessity to investigate and address physiological variables in addition to the emotional components of the issue. A comprehensive approach that takes into consideration the diverse nature of burnout is required in order to establish a comprehensive understanding that transcends symptoms and

directs focused approaches to deal with these complex interactions between factors that are linked to exhaustion, burnout and other mental health issues.

Comprehending the mental health effects of burnout requires an understanding of its psychological and emotional consequences. The complex dynamics that occur when an individual experiences burnout over an extended period of time, according to Maddock (2023) are presented below:

- **Anxiety.** A typical impact caused by burnout is an increased level of anxiety. Long-term exposure to chronic pressure can cause a hypersensitive response to stress that results in a constant sense of tension and fear. This elevated level of anxiety compounds emotional exhaustion that is hard to deal with without intervention.
- **Emotional exhaustion.** Burnout is characterised by emotional tiredness, which has serious emotional significance. Employees who are experiencing burnout frequently notice that their emotional energy is being diminished and their vulnerability to negative emotions such as melancholy, frustration, and irritation is increased.
- **Impact on work motivation.** An individual's essential enthusiasm and passion for their work can be strongly impacted by burnout. It can cause a decreased sense of personal accomplishment that depletes a person's excitement and drive for their professional goals. Such reduction in work motivation can also cause struggles with insecurity and feelings of incompetence.
- **Depression.** Depression is a shadow produced by burnout, that manifests itself as a consistently negative mood that is widespread and makes a person see the world in dark colours. The symptoms can arise as a result of emotional exhaustion, and feelings of decreased accomplishment, disconnection, hopelessness and dissatisfaction.

These essential factors are obligatory to understand and take into consideration in order to foster a healthy environment and find focused solutions that deal with the underlying causes of burnout. Organisations can establish strategies to address burnout by carefully

investigating its behavioural, emotional, and motivational aspects. Such an approach can assist in managing the existing symptoms of burnout and prevent it from occurring in future (Marques et al., 2021).

3.3 Role of the Working Environment

“While employers have a responsibility to provide a safe and hazard-free workplace, they also have abundant opportunities to promote individual health and foster a healthy work environment” (CDC, 2021). This section examines the complex impact of the work environment on mental health, highlighting the essential role that organisational elements play in determining an employee's mental state and well-being at work, as they are greatly influenced by the organisation's culture.

Firstly, an employee's work environment has a significant impact on how they perceive their professional experiences. This includes the actual workspace as well as the organisational culture, human interactions, and structural components that build the work experience. The work environment has a drastic influence on a human's career path. Secondly, job demands have a direct effect on people's well-being. High job demands can lead to stressors that increase the chance of burnout, such as unreasonable expectations, inadequate time limits, and unmanageable workloads.

The investigation of the workplace is essential in order to build a sophisticated understanding of how particular job requirements interact with personal capabilities, accordingly, influencing the overall work-related stress. Work-related stressors, such as resource scarcity and interpersonal disputes, are the basic components of the work environment. Identifying the dynamics of these stressors, recognising how they interact with personal resilience, and discovering their cumulative effect on mental health are necessary steps in exploring their influence. This examination offers perceptions of focused interventions which cope with particular stressors in the context of the organisation.

An influential factor that has a major impact on workers' well-being is organisational culture. A culture that is positive and encouraging, rewards employee contribution, promotes open communication, and develops a sense of belonging. In contrast, a toxic workplace culture characterised by a shortage of resources, intense competition, or punitive methods of

motivation might exacerbate burnout (Pink, 2011). Exploring the impact of organisational culture entails interpreting the implicit customs, principles, and ideologies that create the entire work environment. The contemporary workplace includes remote and virtual work environments in addition to traditional office spaces. Acknowledging the dynamic relationship between physical and virtual spaces is crucial to comprehend the modern work environment. For example, working remotely brings up additional difficulties such as a feeling of loneliness and isolation, an overlapping of professional and personal spheres, and a need for efficient digital communication.

The investigation addresses the dynamic character of workplaces and their influence on psychological well-being. Determining how much the organisation prioritises employee well-being is another significant aspect of examining the impact of the work environment. Organisations that strategically invest in fostering a supportive, positive and healthy work environment tend to reduce or even prevent burnout and perform successful results for mental health.

Essentially, a comprehensive investigation into the impact of the work environment is a smart investment in the well-being and success of the organisation. Companies may point out areas in need of change or improvement and conduct specialised interventions. It gives executives the ability to create a work environment that actively fosters the growth of their most valuable resource - the wellness of their workforce - while additionally avoiding burnout (Wright & Davis, 2003).

The concept of a healthy work environment includes an integrated strategy that supports employees' overall development and growth within the company and extends beyond the traditional understanding of physical health. Fundamentally, a healthy work environment is one that creates conditions that are beneficial to personal satisfaction as well as professional development (Prochazka et al., 2018). It is defined as an ecosystem that places a high priority on employees' well-being, taking into consideration that their mental, emotional, and physical health are interrelated components necessary for long-term engagement and efficiency.

Fostering a healthy work environment includes multiple elements and every element plays an important role towards improving the general well-being and satisfaction of individuals within the organisation. According to American Psychology Association (n.d.)

1. **Clear communication.** Open and honest communication is essential to a productive leader. This includes providing information about changes, expectations, and goals of the department and organisation in a way that is easy to understand. Open communication decreases the level of uncertainty, increases trust, and provides a feeling of stability.
2. **Work-life balance.** Policies and procedures that support employees in finding a balance between their professional and private lives and responsibilities are highly promoted and effectively implemented in a healthy work environment. Establishing clear boundaries between work and leisure time and allowing flexibility in work arrangements are important components of a long-term and satisfactory work-life balance.
3. **Supportive leadership.** A positive work environment is based on effective leadership. Team members' wants and difficulties are recognised and supported by a manager. Guidance is provided through a strong role of a mentor. Emotionally intelligent leadership promotes psychological safety and trust and respects both individual and professional well-being.
4. **Recognition and reward systems.** A positive workplace culture values and honours employees' contributions. Formal and informal reward and recognition programs provide the feeling of being valued and appreciated by an organisation. Sensitivity to contributions increases job satisfaction, lowers the risk of burnout, and promotes a sense of accomplishment.
5. **Professional development opportunities.** It is critical to invest in employees' continuous learning. Opportunities for professional development, training, and skill improvement are provided by companies that promote a healthy work environment.

Regular education helps the worker individually as well as improves the workplace resilience and adaptivity.

- 6. Psychological and physical safety.** Making emotional health a priority is essential to a productive workplace, including fostering an environment of psychological safety where employees can freely express their opinions, concerns, and ideas feeling comfortable and not fearing repercussions. Open communication reduces stressors that may impact mental health.
- 7. Diverse and inclusive culture.** Diverse experiences, backgrounds, and viewpoints are appreciated in a positive work environment. It provides a sense of community, supports creativity and innovation, and reduces the probability of isolation, which improves general satisfaction and well-being.
- 8. Physical well-being support.** Workplaces that prioritise health and well-being support wellness initiatives that empower staff members to have a healthy lifestyle. This contains activities that improve physical health and general workplace happiness, like health checks, fitness programs, and free protein snacks.

A healthy work environment is a dynamic system that changes and develops according to the dynamic demands of the workforce, societal norms, and corporate objectives. The dedication to comprehensive well-being is a constant commitment rather than an occasional statement, recognising that the success of an organisation is closely linked to the happiness of its most valuable source - its employees.

Such dedication is demonstrated by the policies, procedures, and societal norms that place comparable value on the health and well-being of each member of the entire organisational ecosystem as well as professional accomplishment. A company's commitment to fostering an environment where workers may flourish both personally and professionally is demonstrated by a healthy work culture, providing a sustainable and rewarding way to success.

There is a more profound dedication to the general welfare and efficiency of the staff members that goes beyond the visible aspects of the company benefits and comfortable workstations. These are significant factors to consider while fostering a healthy work environment that implements interactions, connections, and social norms inside an organisation. Six key components are described in Figure 2.

Figure 2, the six components of fostering a positive work environment



Source: The Economic Times, 2023

Cultivate a positive company culture. It provides the foundation of the entire organisational environment and represents the common ideologies, values, and customs that influence how people communicate and collaborate with each other. Firstly, it is essential to establish the organisation’s core values and come up with basic ideas that best represent the company’s spirit. Include staff members in the process of defining these principles. A sense of connection and alignment with the core values are fostered by such inclusion. Once determined, clearly state the fundamental principles and integrate them into daily operations such as assessments of performance and decision-making procedures. Use a variety of platforms, including internal communications, training sessions, and team meetings, to

consistently convey and reinforce them. Promote an environment where employees value each other's contributions, actively recognise both individual and group accomplishments, and take time to honour professional, personal, or project-related achievements. Share success stories across team members, making the team culture more pleasant and encouraged by common experience (Blattner & Walter, 2015).

Facilitate team building. It includes making deliberate moves to improve team member communication. Arrange team-building experiences that resonate with individuals' interests and dispositions, such as problem-solving tasks, outdoor activities, and even virtual team-building experiences for remote employees. Take into account individual preferences as well as physical and cultural issues in order to ensure that everyone feels involved. Assign team members alternative responsibilities matching the varied collaborations and interests and additionally promoting leadership and teamwork. Align the activities with the company's objectives so the experiences become more practically relevant. Hold briefing sessions to go over the lessons learned, how applicable they are in the workplace, and how performance and collaboration can be improved. Plan regular team celebrations to mark collective efforts and honour accomplishments, develop traditions that involve the entire team, and promote informal conversations by establishing special areas both in person and online. Informal conversations strengthen interpersonal connections and recognise the diversity of the team (De Meuse & Liebowitz, 1981).

Invest in employee well-being. It includes developing an environment that is comprehensive, promotes workers' mental and physical health and goes beyond traditional benefits. Introduce employee assistance programmes or counselling services, and arrange stress management seminars. Encourage healthy food habits by setting up healthy snack stations and conducting nutritional workshops. Provide fitness programs considering preferences and encourage physical activity. This can contain online exercise programmes, in-person courses, gym membership, or even collective sports activities. Promote movement in the office by adding walking routes, standing desks, or special spaces for quick exercises. Prioritise comfort and practicality when creating workstations by taking into account such elements as natural lighting, noise reduction, and the general design of the office. Make sure that technological devices are user-friendly and do not cause physical stress (Strelecky, 2008).

Promote work-life balance. Organisations that value employees' capacity to maintain a decent work-life balance foster an environment in which people can flourish. Establish the company's working hours policies and clearly communicate expectations of overtime and remote work standards. This way workers will be able to organise and manage their time productively and understand that working long hours on a regular basis has a significant impact on physical and mental health and reduce productivity. By respecting the scheduled working hours and avoiding sending non-urgent emails and requests late, leaders set an example for the desired behaviour and encourage a culture where staff members are free to put their personal time first without experiencing stress or pressure. Remind employees to take frequent breaks during the day and, in addition, provide areas to rest. Elaborate the vacation policy in detail and make sure that individuals are encouraged and supported to take all of their vacation time. Implement clear handover procedures, make sure that tasks are completed when staff members are on vacation, and cross-train the team to reassure individuals that their absence does not provide additional stress for their coworkers (Diebig et al., 2017).

Implement effective conflict resolution. Clearly stated organisation's policies and procedures that explain the formal conflict resolution methods offer a foundation for trust, justice, and certainty. If direct communication fails to resolve the issue, involve an impartial third party, which guarantees the implementation of an independent and fair procedure. Highlight the value of confidentiality, removing the fear of retaliation and making people feel more comfortable communicating their challenges. Set deadlines for conflict resolution, postponements may intensify tensions and affect group dynamics and efficiency. Provide staff and managers with conflict resolution training courses that include negotiation strategies, effective interpersonal interaction, and attentive listening. Model conflict situations where participants can develop their skills in a safe environment, learn to handle disagreements with compassion and recognise the viewpoints and emotions of each party (Hillman, 2014).

Encourage adaptivity and flexibility. Promoting adaptivity and flexibility is essential in a fast-paced, constantly evolving modern environment. The role of leadership is crucial in establishing a culture that is open to change, where managers lead by example and are

open to new perspectives. Such an approach establishes a hierarchical structure that motivates staff members. Assist employees in understanding the ways to implement change by communicating the organisation's mission. Recognise and reward creative thinking and effective change management and develop a cooperative environment that promotes the exchange of concepts and perspectives. Provide opportunities for continuous development, emphasising skills like problem-solving, computer literacy, and adaptivity to changing market conditions. Employees can develop resilience and manage transitions with the support of the community. Consider implementing flexible work arrangements like remote work opportunities or flexible scheduling. Deliver staff members the equipment and resources to adjust to new work practices, such as project management software and collaboration platforms (Żołnierczyk-Zreda, 2020).

To sum up these strategies, it is important to mention that companies create a workplace that is flexible and adaptable and that is based on the well-being of its employees, going beyond fostering a positive work environment. This dedication is evident in the everyday experiences, interpersonal communications, and accomplishments of the staff members who are more than the confines of office walls.

Organisations that prioritise the overall well-being of their employees not only strengthen their internal foundation but also create the conditions for long-term success and creativity in a dynamic workplace. Companies that embrace a resilient, holistic work environment create conditions where people thrive and contribute to a more compassionate, dynamic, and sustainable future (White, 2020).

3.4 Burnout in the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality sector is not an exception to the widespread problem of burnout. Elevated stress levels among employees can be attributed to various reasons, including the demanding and high-pressure nature of hospitality employment, long working hours, inconsistent scheduling, and the requirement to constantly maintain a high level of customer service and interaction. An increased rate of burnout in the hospitality sector is concerning since it has an effect on employees' mental health and general well-being and directly affects the quality of provided service. A complicated psychological mental issue known as burnout is typified by constant work-related stress that is not well managed. Burnout is a widespread

problem that progressively decreases employees' mental resilience and passion for their work as they struggle with the complex and multi-faced demands of their roles. Fundamentally, burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental tiredness that is frequently accompanied by feelings of disengagement from work and cynicism. Workers who experience burnout not only suffer from a demanding schedule, but also find themselves trapped in a never-ending loop of stress and struggle from a sense of overwhelm, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, addictions, depression, and diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Rožman et al., 2022).

The hospitality sector promotes a culture of unconditional dedication and customer satisfaction, creating an atmosphere where burnout has pleasant conditions to flourish due to a constant flow of customers, unpredictable and extended working hours and the complex nature of high standards of service. Employees in the hotel industry face a wide range of issues beyond any seen in other professions (Pienaar & Willemse, 2008).

According to Walters & Raybould (2007), these are crucial aspects:

- **High workload and stressful environment:** the dynamic and fast-paced nature of the hospitality industry puts a significant strain on employees' workload and stress levels. Staff members have to deal with an endless barrage of requests, and frequently work under extreme pressure managing ongoing arrivals and providing flawless service. Burnout is largely caused by the expectation of perfection, and quick execution during peak seasons when the level of stress is already increased.
- **Long and irregular working hours:** The traditional work-life balance is disrupted by the industry's operating responsibilities, including weekends, night shifts, and holidays and this is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the hospitality sector. These schedule conflicts and sacrifices contribute to emotional exhaustion and might hinder the development of reliable routines. The challenges to sufficiently rest and recover ultimately raise the risk of burnout.
- **Emotional labour and customer interactions:** the hospitality industry requires having control over one's emotions to reach customer satisfaction. Employees

experience a significant toll from the variety of client interactions, which range from extremely favourable and polite to challenging and aggressive. Emotional exhaustion provoked by a need to show sincere kindness and patience creates a cumulative effect of emotional labour and leads to depersonalisation.

- **Limited control over work environment:** workers in the hospitality sector frequently struggle with having limited control over their workplace. Managing a kitchen having to deal with high temperatures, controlling hotel operations working in tight spaces, or operating in the fast-paced environment of a restaurant following strict procedures creates a lack of autonomy and contributes to an employee's sense of helplessness and frustration.

The hard nature of work, difficult working circumstances, and concerns about job security and professional advantages contribute to burnout in the hospitality industry. Developing focused interventions and initiatives to promote a healthier work environment and lower the prevalence of burnout in the hotel sector requires a deep understanding of the specific issues experienced by hospitality professionals.

4 Practical Part

4.1 Research Design

The research design that is at the basis of the empirical part of this bachelor thesis is concerned with the questionnaire analysis. This particular approach allows to focus not on the qualitative analysis based on secondary data and publications of other authors but on collecting primary data first and then processing it, thus drawing own conclusions and positively contributing to the state of knowledge about burnouts and the process of building a healthy working environment.

The research design is split into a couple of essential steps, which are:

- 1) Identifying the main research questions and objectives. These are associated with the original series of aims and objectives of the bachelor thesis, so this step is already finished by this chapter.
- 2) Making up a portrait of participants of the questionnaire that will be used for collecting data.
- 3) Constructing the questionnaire. This is one of the most vital steps as the questionnaire cannot anyhow be modified during the process of collecting data as it would entail performing the process of collecting data from the very beginning.
- 4) Sampling. Sampling is often viewed as one of the most important processes within the settings consisting of a questionnaire analysis since based on the quality of sampling, the quality of the estimate is defined.
- 5) Data collection and distribution of the questionnaire.
- 6) Data processing and analysis of data.

7) Formulation of recommendations and conclusions.

The first sub-chapter of the practical part of the bachelor thesis is centred around the objective of commenting on the methods used for each step of the research design, starting with the second one since the objectives of the thesis have already been defined prior. As such, the goal of the bachelor thesis is to analyse an existing working environment, which would generally result in the analysis of the way how employees feel about particular issues. Based on those considerations, it is logical to focus on workers of just one particular hotel, where Four Seasons Prague strikes as the most obvious selection due to the author's personal experience of working there in the past. Additionally, it is vital to specify that the second criterion apart from participants being currently affiliated with any working position within the hierarchy of Four Seasons Prague is their physical age which has to exceed 18 years.

Consequently, based on the theoretical basis laid in the earlier part of the thesis, a questionnaire was created that consists of a total of 14 questions, where the questions are closed and are either nominal, ordinal, or scale-type questions. The full transcript of the questionnaire as well as options for answering the questions are presented in the list of appendices to this bachelor thesis, in the sub-chapter 8.4.

When it comes to sampling, it is vital to specify that given the fact that not just actual workers within the hotel but also the ones responsible for management and office work are included in the sample, the sample that is collected is of a representative nature respectively to the whole population since the whole population are all workers of Four Seasons in Prague, the number of which slightly exceeds 100, whereas 100 people were sampled for the analysis. Such an accurate number is justified by the limitation imposed by the platform used for the analysis – Survio, which allows registering the responses of up to 100 people. The sampling technique that was used is snowball sampling, which is especially useful for corporate environments, where different departments and people are engaged in communication with others.

The data collection for the bachelor thesis was performed in December 2023 and the questionnaire was distributed in the online form with the link sent to the first group of people consisting of 10 participants who then shared the questionnaire with their colleagues and

colleagues of their colleagues, eventually reaching the number of 100 responses registered three weeks after the start of the data collection process.

For the sixth and seventh points, the latter parts of the bachelor thesis are used, whereas the next sub-chapter specifies and addresses the hypotheses that are eventually tested in the part dedicated to the questionnaire analysis.

4.2 Hypotheses

Based on the goals and objectives of the bachelor thesis, as well as the theoretical foundation of the work, it was decided to pay attention to specific aspects of the way how employees of Four Seasons Prague feel about their company with regard to the overall workload and pressure at the job. The following hypotheses are constructed as a consequence:

- 1) There is a relationship between experiencing burnout and gender.
- 2) There is a difference between people with their first experience and not first when it comes to the evaluation of the pressure.
- 3) There is a difference in the evaluation of pressure according to different levels of education obtained.
- 4) There is a relationship between experiencing burnout and considering the hotel as a healthy working environment.
- 5) There is a difference in the evaluation of the attitude towards the employer between people who had burnout and those who did not.
- 6) There is a difference in the evaluation of the work-life balance between different age categories.
- 7) There is a relationship between having burnout and considering changing the employer.

- 8) There is a difference in the evaluation of the likelihood of leaving the company between people who had burnout and those who did not.
- 9) There is a relationship between the working experience and considering the current hotel as a healthy working environment.

Testing of all the hypotheses is performed in the SPSS version 19 application, where for the purpose of not overloading the manuscript with excessive technical details, the actual results of the tests per each hypothesis are presented in the list of appendices in the subchapter 8.5.

4.3 Testing and Interpretation

Consequently, after meticulously analysing the output of the hypothesis testing that involved the following types of tests: Chi-square tests, ANOVA tests and two sample t-tests, Table 1 containing the overview of hypotheses, their essence and the outcome of the testing is indicated in the narrative on the next page.

Table 1, the table for interpretation

Index	Hypothesis	Outcome
1	There is a relationship between experiencing burnout and gender	Rejected
2	There is a difference between people with their first experience and not first when it comes to the evaluation of the pressure	Rejected
3	There is a difference in the evaluation of pressure according to different levels of education obtained	Rejected
4	There is a relationship between experiencing burnout and considering the hotel as a healthy working environment	Not rejected

5	There is a difference in the evaluation of the attitude towards the employer between people who had burnout and those who did not	Not rejected
6	There is a difference in the evaluation of the work-life balance between different age categories	Not rejected
7	There is a relationship between having burnout and considering changing employer	Rejected
8	There is a difference in the evaluation of the likelihood of leaving the company between people who had burnout and those who did not	Not rejected
9	There is a relationship between the working experience and considering the current hotel as a healthy working environment	Not rejected

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

The very first hypothesis concerned the statement that there is a relationship between experiencing burnout while working in Four Seasons Prague and gender. This hypothesis was introduced for the purpose of understanding if any of the genders are more prone to burnout during work. As a matter of fact, based on the results of the testing, it came out as obvious that there is no particular association between the two phenomena. Hence, it is possible to conclude that there is no statistical difference between genders when it comes to the occurrence of burnout, both genders are identically likely to have burnout or not to have it, which is an important assumption to be made that could potentially indicate that the company is keen on building a sustainable environment without any particular discrimination of workers based on their gender.

The second hypothesis was concerned with the personal evaluation of the pressure, the averages of which were compared against people who were having their first working experience at all and those who had been working somewhere else prior. Based on the analysis, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the pressure experienced by workers regardless of whether they work for the first time or not, which is also a strong point to add to the overall assessment of Four Seasons Prague, indicating that the company builds

a good environment that helps people to quickly adapt to the working conditions in the company.

The third hypothesis again concerns the variable indicating the level of pressure, but this time compares it against different levels of education obtained by workers. As a matter of fact, no statistically significant difference was found, which indicates that the company's working conditions are equally suitable for all people regardless of the level of education obtained. At the same time, it is fair to anticipate that those who have a lower level of education are more associated with manual work rather than administrative.

The fourth hypothesis identifies if there is any association with the fact of having burnout while working for Four Seasons Prague and considering the place as a healthy working environment. Unsurprisingly, the frequency of people who had had a burnout of not categorizing the hotel as a healthy working environment is higher, and upon testing, it is identified that the difference is statistically significant. Henceforth, it is possible to conclude that people who had at some point had a burnout whilst working for the enterprise are less likely to categorize the company as a healthy working environment. This is an interesting conclusion that potentially indicates that for workers with a burnout at some point it could be more sensible to start looking for alternatives.

The fifth hypothesis is somewhat similar to the fourth one, but it takes a look at the issue from a slightly different perspective that might theoretically explain the reason why people do not consider their work as a healthy working environment after burnout. As a matter of fact, the average evaluation of one's attitude towards the employer is lower than the one of people who had never had a burnout. Furthermore, this difference is statistically significant, which itself is crucial to understanding why some workers might consider leaving the company. As a matter of fact, burnouts seem to have a very serious impact not just on the quality of the work performed by employees but also on the relationships within the organization.

The sixth hypothesis took an insight into the evaluation of the current work-life balance among different age categories, it came out that the older participants are less satisfied with the work-life balance that they currently have while working for Four Seasons Prague. As a

matter of fact, this difference is statistically significant, which leads to the important conclusion that the conditions set within the company might not be fully suitable for older participants who have their families, while the conditions are more satisfactory for younger participants who potentially spend less time with their loved ones.

Hypothesis number seven was concerned with the question of whether employees who had had burnout are more prone to considering changing their current employees. Surprisingly, especially in contrast with the earlier findings, there is no statistically significant association between wanting to quit and having burnout. Therefore, it is possible to indicate that burnout, based on the results of the earlier hypotheses, deteriorates the overall satisfaction and attitude towards the employer, but it does not lead to workers considering leaving the place. This might be a consequence of the fact that the enterprise is always regarded as one of the most prominent representatives of the hospitality industry and finding an equal alternative might rather be complex.

On the other hand, the results of hypothesis eight indicate that despite no factual desire to leave the company at once, the likelihood of leaving for people with burnout in the past is higher. Furthermore, the difference is statistically significant, which perfectly complements the comments provided earlier.

At last, the final hypothesis revealed that people with higher working experiences are more prone to consider Four Seasons Prague as a healthy working environment, which indicates that as people work for a longer period of time within the organization, they potentially grow to love it more and become more accustomed to it, compared to those who are just starting their journey within the organization. At last, the difference is statistically significant. The next chapter of the bachelor thesis concerns the interpretation of the results and the provision of valuable recommendations.

5 Results and Discussion

The analysis conducted at Four Seasons Prague has yielded insights into the aspects of the work environment, shedding light on burnout, workplace pressure, education levels, perceptions of a healthy working environment, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. These findings not only contribute to an understanding of the organization's dynamics but also provide a foundation for strategic recommendations to enhance the overall well-being of the workforce and the organizational culture.

One of the focal points of the thesis was the exploration of burnout in relation to gender. Contrary to conventional expectations, the results did not reveal any significant association between gender and burnout. This indicates that both male and female employees at Four Seasons Prague are equally susceptible to experiencing burnout, suggesting a gender-neutral work environment. Such a revelation is indicative of the organization's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable culture, free from gender-based discrimination. Moving forward, sustaining this gender-neutral ethos should be prioritized to ensure a workplace where all individuals feel equally valued and supported.

Examining the evaluation of workplace pressure among employees with varying levels of work experience, the study found consistent pressure levels regardless of whether individuals were entering the workforce for the first time or had prior experience. This suggests that Four Seasons Prague has successfully cultivated a work environment conducive to the seamless integration of both experienced and novice employees. It would be prudent for the organization to maintain and enhance these supportive structures, recognizing the importance of adaptability to accommodate diverse workforce backgrounds.

The relationship between education levels and workplace pressure was also investigated. Interestingly, the results indicated no statistically significant difference in perceived pressure levels based on educational qualifications. While employees with different educational backgrounds may engage in distinct roles within the organization, the uniformity in perceived pressure underscores the organization's ability to create a work environment that caters to the needs of individuals irrespective of their educational

background. Leveraging this insight, Four Seasons Prague could continue fostering an environment that values skills and contributions beyond academic qualifications.

A crucial finding emerged from the examination of burnout and its correlation with perceiving the workplace as a healthy environment. The study revealed a significant link between burnout experiences and a diminished perception of the company as a healthy workplace. Employees who had encountered burnout were less likely to categorize Four Seasons Prague as a healthy working environment. This emphasizes the imperative for the organization to address burnout comprehensively, recognizing its impact not only on individual well-being but also on the broader perception of the work environment. Initiatives aimed at preventing and managing burnout, such as wellness programs and mental health support, could be instrumental in fostering a healthier workplace culture.

Beyond burnout, the study explored attitudes towards the employer, revealing a significant difference between employees who had experienced burnout and those who hadn't. Those with a history of burnout reported lower evaluations of their attitude towards the employer. This indicates the potential far-reaching consequences of burnout, not only affecting the individual but also influencing their relationship with the organization. Addressing burnout should thus be viewed as an integral part of nurturing positive employee-employer dynamics.

The study's investigation into work-life balance across different age groups exposed significant dissatisfaction among older participants. This implies that Four Seasons Prague may need to tailor its policies and practices to better accommodate the needs of older employees, particularly those with families. Offering flexible work arrangements, family support programs, and other initiatives could contribute to aligning the organization's policies with the diverse needs of its workforce.

Surprisingly, the study did not find a significant association between burnout and the desire to quit the job. This counterintuitive result suggests that, despite the negative impact of burnout on satisfaction and attitudes, external factors such as limited alternative opportunities in the highly competitive hospitality industry may be influencing employees' decisions to stay. While immediate resignation might not be apparent, it is essential for Four

Seasons Prague to understand the underlying factors contributing to employee retention in the face of burnout.

Contrasting with the lack of immediate desire to quit, the study revealed a significant likelihood of employees with a history of burnout considering leaving the company in the future. This highlights the long-term impact of burnout on employee turnover. Addressing burnout not only as a current issue affecting satisfaction but also as a precursor to potential turnover should be a key consideration for the organization. Implementing retention strategies and creating a supportive environment for those recovering from burnout could be pivotal in mitigating the long-term consequences.

Lastly, the study unveiled a positive correlation between higher working experiences and perceiving Four Seasons Prague as a healthy working environment. This suggests that, over time, employees develop a stronger affinity for the company. The organization should leverage this insight by recognizing the value of long-term employment, possibly through tailored recognition programs, mentorship opportunities, and career development initiatives.

In addition, to enhance the overall well-being of the workforce and fortify the organizational culture, several strategic recommendations can be considered. Initiatives addressing burnout, such as wellness programs and mental health support, should be implemented to create a healthier workplace culture. Tailoring policies to support the diverse needs of older employees, enhancing adaptability for both experienced and novice staff, and sustaining a gender-neutral and inclusive ethos are essential for long-term organizational success. Recognizing the impact of burnout on employee-employer dynamics and proactively addressing it can contribute to fostering positive workplace relationships. By understanding the findings of the study, Four Seasons Prague can embark on a journey of continuous improvement, ensuring the well-being and satisfaction of its employees while cultivating a thriving and resilient organizational culture.

6 Conclusion

The goal of the bachelor thesis was to analyse burnout among workers at Four Seasons Prague, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, with hypothesis testing via SPSS as the primary approach. The analysis provided insights into various aspects of the work environment, including burnout, workplace pressure, education levels, perceptions of a healthy working environment, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. The findings contribute to understanding the organization's dynamics and offer strategic recommendations for enhancing the well-being of the workforce and fostering a positive organizational culture.

Contrary to expectations, the study found no significant association between gender and burnout, indicating a gender-neutral work environment. The organization's commitment to inclusivity and equity should be sustained. Additionally, the evaluation of workplace pressure showed consistent levels regardless of work experience, suggesting a supportive environment for both experienced and novice employees.

The study revealed no significant difference in perceived pressure based on education levels, emphasizing the organization's ability to create an inclusive work environment. Burnout was linked to a diminished perception of the workplace as healthy, highlighting the need for comprehensive initiatives, such as wellness programs, to address burnout and promote a healthier culture.

Employees with a history of burnout reported lower evaluations of their attitude towards the employer, emphasizing the need to address burnout for positive employee-employer dynamics. Dissatisfaction among older participants regarding work-life balance suggests tailored policies for this demographic. Surprisingly, no immediate desire to quit was found, but a significant likelihood of future turnover for employees with a history of burnout.

Lastly, employees with higher working experiences perceived Four Seasons Prague as a healthier working environment. Recognizing the value of long-term employment through tailored recognition programs and career development initiatives could further enhance employee satisfaction and organizational culture. In conclusion, the study's insights provide

a foundation for strategic recommendations to improve the well-being of the workforce at Four Seasons Prague.

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8.3 List of Abbreviations

MBI	Maslach Burnout Inventory
JDR	Job-Demands Resources

8.4 Questionnaire

- 1. What is your name?**
- 2. What is your age?**
 - a) 18-35
 - b) 35-51
 - c) >51
- 3. What is your gender?**
 - a) Male
 - b) Female

c) Prefer not to say

4. What is your level of education?

a) No education

b) School degree

c) University degree

5. For how many years have you been working in the hospitality industry?

a) Less than a year

b) 1-4 years

c) >4 years

6. Is Four Seasons your first experience of working in the hospitality industry?

a) Yes

b) No

7. Have you ever experienced a burnout while working with your current employer?

a) Yes

b) No

8. How would you evaluate the degree of pressure at your current job?

- Scale from 1 to 5

9. How would you rate the work-life balance provided by your employer?

- Scale from 1 to 5

10. How likely are you to change your employer because of the workload?

- Scale from 1 to 5

11. Does your company conduct evaluation of your wellbeing?

a) Yes

b) No

12. Do you consider your hotel as a healthy working environment?

a) Yes

b) No

13. What is your overall attitude towards your employer?

- Scale from 1 to 5

14. Have you thought about shifting to another industry?

a) Yes

b) No

8.5 Testing Results

Table 2, hypothesis 1

	Male	Female
Experiencing a burnout - Yes	24	33
Experiencing a burnout - No	26	17
Statistics	$X^2 = 3.30$	$P = 0.06$

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 3, hypothesis 2

	First experience - Yes	First Experience - No
Averages	3.24	3.15
Statistics	$P = 0.46$	

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 4, hypothesis 3

	No education	School degree	University
Averages	2.98	3.08	3.03
Statistics	$P = 0.06$		

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 5, hypothesis 4

	Healthy environment - Yes	Healthy environment - No
Experiencing a burnout - Yes	19	27
Experiencing a burnout - No	39	15
Statistics	$X^2 = 9.74$	$P = 0.001$

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 6, hypothesis 5

	Burnout - Yes	Burnout - No
Averages	3.11	2.94
Statistics	$P = 0.04$	

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 7, hypothesis 6

	18-35	35-51	>52
Averages	3.17	2.85	2.79
Statistics	$P = 0.03$		

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 8, hypothesis 7

	Changing the employment - Yes	Changing the employment - No
Experiencing a burnout - Yes	29	31
Experiencing a burnout - No	15	25
Statistics	$X^2 = 1.14$	$P = 0.28$

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 9, hypothesis 8

	Burnout - Yes	Burnout - No
Averages	3.42	2.97
Statistics	P = 0.02	

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data

Table 10, hypothesis 9

	Healthy environment - Yes	Healthy environment - No
<1	12	15
1-4	14	23
>4	24	12
Statistics	$X^2 = 6.52$	P = 0.03

Source: own processing in SPSS based on primary data